THE APPROPRIATION OF IDEAS, THEORIES, CONCEPTS AND MODELS BY MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS.

Laurence Robinson

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Abstract

During the second half of the 20th century there has been both a burgeoning intellectual interest in business and management as a topic and an exponential growth in the formal study of business and management as an academic subject. Indeed by the end of the century it was estimated that worldwide there were 8,000 business schools and more than 13 million students of business and management. In addition, it was estimated that worldwide annual expenditure on university level business and management education had reached US $15 billion (The Global Foundation for Management Education, 2008).

However, despite this there is a lack of clarity regarding both the scale and the nature of the influence that academic scholarship exerts over managers. Accordingly this research study has sought to investigate the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

The thesis has reviewed and evaluated the two most obvious, most established and most influential potential explanations. These were diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 1962) and fashion theory (Abrahamson, 1991 & 1996; Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999). It has been concluded that whilst both these potential explanations provided important insights, neither was able to provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for this research study. Accordingly, a much broader range of pertinent scholarship was reviewed and evaluated. This included, but is not limited to, the scholarship that is associated with learning by adults (Dewey, 1933; Bartlett, 1967; Schank & Abelson, 1976; Mezirow, 1977).

Although this additional scholarship provided a further range of potential explanations, the extent to which any of these would be found within the particular setting of management practitioners remained unclear. In addition, the literature review highlighted a number of unresolved debates regarding issues such as (i) whether management was a science or an applied science; (ii) whether it was a craft or a profession; (iii) whether in reality there were fashionable trends in management practice or whether in fact such practices were remarkably stable; and (iv) whether management theoreticians, gurus and consultants actually exerted significant influence over management practitioners. The literature review also highlighted methodological concerns relating to the use of citation analysis as a proxy for primary information regarding managerial practice.

Hence, this research is situated in a gap which is delineated by the unresolved issues that are associated with both diffusion theory and fashion theory; the applicability of the broader range of scholarship to a management setting; the unresolved debates within this field of interest and the need to obtain primary information relating to management practice, rather than being dependant upon citation analysis.

The research study has utilised qualitative data and inductive reasoning to examine these matters and the overarching research philosophy has been that of realism (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Ultimately, 39 semi-structured, recorded interviews were undertaken using the critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954). Collectively these interviews lasted for 35 hours and obtained information relating to 160 critical incidents. The verbatim transcripts of the interviews totalled 350,000 words.

A case study analysis of this data was undertaken to examine the decision making of the interviewees in relation to some of their most challenging managerial situations. This analysis concluded that for the 'generality' of these interviewees; theory played little, or no, overt part in their decision making. The data was also subjected to a content analysis using a bespoke compendium of 450 'terms' that represented the development of theorising about management over the whole of the 20th century. This analysis concluded that the influence of the 20th century's management theoreticians over these interviewees was weak. Finally, the possibility that any such influence might be a covert, rather than an overt; phenomenon was examined using both the insights of intertextuality (Allen, 2000; Bazerman, 2004) and the framework analysis technique (Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor, 2003). This analysis demonstrated that the discourse, dialogue and language of these interviewees could be indexed to four domains; (i) the theoretical; (ii) the conceptual; (iii) the tactical; and (iv) the practical.

The intertextual indexing outcomes were corroborated both by substantial extracts from the verbatim interview transcripts and by three unrelated strands of scholarship. These were (i) adaptive memory systems (Schacter, 2001); (ii) the realities of management (Carlson, 1954; Stewart, 1983; Mintzberg, 1989) and (iii) the role of concepts and conceptual thinking in nursing (McFarlane, 1977; Gordon, 1998; Orem, 2001).

On this basis it has been concluded that management can be characterised as a conceptual discipline; that in its essential nature management is at least as conceptual as it is either theoretical or practical; and that managers appropriate concepts and ideas, rather than theories and models per se.

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Chapter 1

Research Overview

1.1 Introduction

At the heart of this research study is a desire to clearly identify the role that the more formal, more academic ideas about management play in helping managers both to address their personal challenges and to discharge their organisational responsibilities. In this regard the expression 'the more formal, more academic ideas about management' is intended to convey both a sense of scholarship and a requirement for the creation of knowledge through a process of enquiry that conforms to the requirements of academia. This is to wittingly distinguish this kind of knowledge from that which may be gained, for example, from anecdotal impressions, personal reflection, careful observation or the communal sharing of practical expertise.

Whilst the author wishes to make this distinction, this is not to imply that this knowledge is being granted some kind of privileged status. However, this distinction suggests that one of the starting points for these enquiries should be the history of management as an academic discipline.

In this regard the first significant book on the subject of business would appear to be Frederick W. Taylor (1911), 'Scientific management' (Kennedy, 1998). However, the 'first comprehensive account of executive management' was provided by Henri Fayol (1916) in his book 'Administration Industrielle et Generale' (Harvard Business Review, 1997). Although a French language version of this was published in 1916, it was 1949 before Constance Storr translated the book into English.

In the next 35 years only three additional significant books on the subject of business and management were published (Kennedy, 1998). These were Elton W. Mayo (1933), 'The human problems of an industrial civilisation'; Chester Barnard (1938), 'The functions of the executive'; and Peter Drucker (1946), 'Concept of the corporation'.

Furthermore, in the subsequent 20 years only another five significant books on the subject of business and management were published (Kennedy, 1998). These were Chris Argyris (1957), 'Personality and organisation'; Frederick Herzberg *et al* (1959), 'The motivation to work'; Douglas McGregor (1960), 'The human side of enterprise'; Alfred D. Chandler (1962), 'Strategy and structure'; and Reg Revans (1966); 'The theory of practice in management'. In addition, this period saw the first publication of a book in the genre that subsequently became identified as the ‘hero manager’ (Clark & Salaman, 1998). This was Alfred P. Sloan (1963), ‘My years with General Motors’.

In fact it took until the 15 years between 1970 and 1985 for the first books to emerge by authors such as Abraham Maslow (1970), Henry Mintzberg (1973), Charles Handy (1976), Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977), Edgar H. Schein (1973), Michael Porter (1980), John P. Kotter (1982) and John Adair (1983).

However, by the end of the 20th century the annual market for new books on the subject of business and management had grown to more than 3,000 books and the total annual value of business and management book sales was considered to be £700 million (Alvarez, Mazza & Mur, 1999: 114). In addition, it was estimated that there were at least 30,000 business books in print (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006: 33).

This general picture of a burgeoning intellectual interest in business and management towards the end of the 20th century is confirmed by Thomson (2001: 102) who concludes both that ‘management was not an area of academic analysis for most of the last century’ and that ‘not until the 1960s did any serious analysis start in the universities’. In addition, van Aken (2005: 32) concludes that the “scientization” (sic) of business and management studies ‘was triggered by the Ford and Carnegie Foundation reports on American Business Schools’ (Gordon & Howell, 1959; Pierson, 1959).

Furthermore, The Tuck School of Business, which was founded in 1900 and is part of Dartmouth College, provided the first graduate school of business in America and it was also the first academic institution to award a masters degree in the subject. However, it was the Graduate School of Business Administration at Harvard University that in 1908 provided the world’s first MBA programme.

However, these institutions were the exceptions and by contrast it was not until 1957 that Insead became the first European business school to provide an MBA programme. In addition, it was 1965 before both Manchester Business School and London Business School provided an MBA programme in the UK.

The growth in the academic study of business and management has been such that by the beginning of the 21st century The Global Foundation for Management Education (2008: 26 & 27) conservatively estimated, that on a worldwide basis; there were at least 13.2 million students of business and management; that there were at least 8,000 business schools and that the annual expenditure on university level business and management education was at least US $15 billion. In addition, Ferlie, McGivern & De Moraes (2010: S60) point out that, at

223,041 full-time equivalent students in 2005 – 2006, ‘business schools now account for about a seventh of all students in UK higher education’.

In terms of this research project’s interest in the appropriation of ideas, concepts, theories and models, it is Mintzberg (2004) who puts this data into perspective with his observation that :

> “The university is society’s instrument for developing and disseminating good theories”.
>
> (Page 249)

In addition, Watson (2002: 26), in work undertaken for the Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership, concludes both that ‘business schools see research as an important part of their mission’ and that ‘the notion of teaching grounded in research theory is part of their specific attraction to employers’.

Hence, this exponential growth, both in the market for books on business and management and in the market for the academic study of business and management, would seem to imply an increasingly significant role for the more formal, more academic ideas about the practice of management.

However, Thomson (2001: 102) concludes both that ‘management in Britain has been an empirical and instrumental, rather than an intellectual occupation’ and that ‘pragmatism rather than theory has been the basis of progress’. In addition, there are other academics who share Thomson’s pessimism regarding both the impact and influence of academic theorising upon the practice of management (Daft & Wiginton, 1979; Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Mintzberg, 2004; Pearce, 2004).

Furthermore, within academia there is a longstanding and currently unresolved debate regarding whether it is axiomatic that research undertaken with appropriate levels of academic rigour will always suffer from a lack of practical relevance. This debate tends to be conducted via the short hand notation of either ‘rigour versus relevance’ (Schon, 1983; Svejenova & Alvarez, 1999; Mintzberg, 2004; Van Aken, 2005; Kieser & Leiner, 2009; Fincham & Clark, 2009; Hodgkinson & Rousseau, 2009), or ‘the relevance gap’ (Weick, 2001; Starkey & Madan, 2001; Aram & Salipante, 2003; Rousseau, 2006; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006).

In the light of this somewhat contradictory evidence it seems clear that it would be helpful, particularly in view of both the size and the financial value of these markets, for there to be some clarity regarding the appropriation, by practitioners, of the more formal, more academic theories, ideas, concepts and models about management.

In particular it would be helpful to ascertain whether the generality of management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management and assuming that they do, the extent to which they do so. In this regard the expression ‘generality’ is intended to convey a sense of those managers who are both working in normal, unexceptional circumstances and whose managerial practices are mainstream, conventional and unremarkable. In addition, it would also be helpful to the core enquiries to establish the fundamental nature of the processes of appropriation and the factors that might determine whether an appropriation process is successful. In this context the expression ‘successful’ is intended to convey the sense that the outcome of the appropriation process is that the individual concerned ‘makes the idea theirs’. Furthermore, it would be helpful to establish the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models, once appropriated, might play in helping the generality of management practitioners to discharge their organisational responsibilities.

These areas of interest are reflected in the specific research objectives that are listed in Section 1.4.

1.2 A summary of existing scholarship

An initial exploration of the extant scholarship highlighted two established theories which provided important contextual information regarding this area of interest. These were the ‘diffusion of innovations’ (Rogers, 1962) and ‘fashion theory’ (Abrahamson, 1991 & 1996; Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999). In fact the diffusion of innovation literature is concerned with the spread of innovations over time and space and fashion theory is concerned with fashionable, or even faddish, trends in ideas about management. These two sets of literature helped both to set the scene and to provide the context for the overall research study. In addition, they are indicative both of the starting place for the more detailed and more specific enquiries that followed and of the kind of personal intellectual journey of exploration and discovery that has been a key feature of the author’s experience. Furthermore, the critical evaluation of both sets of literature played a significant role in dispelling some important potential misunderstandings that are common in this field of enquiry.

Everett M. Rogers has produced the definitive, encyclopaedic review of more than 4,000 studies that constitute the body of knowledge that has come to be described as the innovation – diffusion literature. Diffusion theory is often referred to and understood in relation to the diffusion of technical innovations, but in fact Rogers (2003: 12) adopts both a broad definition of an innovation and a broad description of its applicability. This specifically includes the diffusion of new ideas.

However, the roots of diffusion theory lie in the Ryan & Gross (1943) study of the uptake of a new hybrid corn seed in rural Iowa, USA and it was these two researchers who first used the term 'diffusion'. In fact, Rogers' initial contribution was to show that the S - shaped adopter curve, which had been produced by Ryan & Gross, closely followed that of a normal distribution. This allowed Rogers to divide the adopter curve into a number of sub - categories which he used to categorise the adopter population into five generic types. The core of the categorisation system divides the normal distribution curve into four parts by utilising the mean and the standard deviation. The area lying to the extreme left of the normal distribution curve is then sub-divided by utilising the mean and two standard deviations (Rogers, 1958). Accordingly the adopter categorisation is a purely statistical phenomenon, undertaken for descriptive and illustrative purposes.

However, diffusion theory is dependent upon a number of assumptions that appear to be problematic and the theory also seems to contain a number of other limiting characteristics. Firstly, it is clear that the overall approach of the diffusion of innovations model incorporates a 'centre - periphery bias' (Schon, 1971). This reflects the origins of the model and the fact that the new seed corn was by developed by a government agency which subsequently distributed the seed corn to local farmers (Rogers, 2003). However, if this model of diffusion is translated to the setting of ideas about management, it would imply the need for centralised 'think tanks' to develop and perfect ideas about management prior to their diffusion to practitioners. Clearly business schools could be proposed as the institutions capable as fulfilling the role of the centralised 'think tanks'. However, for the diffusion of innovations model to be potentially applicable to a management practitioner setting, it would also be necessary to demonstrate that there were effective channels of diffusion and communication to the practitioner community. In fact there is an overwhelming weight of evidence to confirm that such channels do not exist (Bailey & Ford, 1996; Nohria & Eccles, 1997; Thomson, Storey, Mabey, Thomson, Gray & Farmer, 1998; Svejenova & Alvarez, 1999; Kieser, 2002; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Rynes, Brown & Colbert, 2002; Mintzberg, 2004; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006; Forster, 2007). In addition, there is evidence that practitioners themselves are the creators of the majority of management innovations, rather than any presumed 'think tank' (Mol & Birkinshaw, 2008).

Of equal importance is the fact that an adopter S - curve, upon which the model is based, and the subsequent division of this into sub - categories is an 'after - the - fact' phenomenon that only exists for those innovations that diffuse completely (Rogers, 1958). Accordingly the model has no predictive capability and in addition, it is unable to explain why poor innovations diffuse and good ones do not (Abrahamson, 1991 & 1996). Finally, the model has a 'pro-innovation bias' and assumes that innovations always have a beneficial impact (Downs & Mohr, 1976; Kimberley, 1981; Rogers, 1962, 1983; Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971; Van de Ven, 1986; Zaltman, Duncan & Holbeck, 1973).

Indeed the development of ‘fashion - setting’ theory by Abrahamson (1991, 1996) and later by Abrahamson & Fairchild (1999) was a direct response to the perceived inability of Rogers’ classical diffusion model to explain why some ineffective ideas about management appeared to successfully diffuse, whilst some effective ideas apparently did not.

In fact ‘fashion - setting’ theory aligns managerial fashion with aesthetic fashion; and in so doing it assumes that both aesthetic fashion and managerial fashion are the product of ‘fashion-setters’. In relation to the apparently fashionable patterns in ideas about management the role of ‘fashion – setters’ is assigned to consulting firms; management ‘gurus’; business mass media publishers; business schools; book editors and publishers; ghost - writers; conference organisers and video production companies (Abrahamson, 1996; Clark, 2003). In a later development the notion of a ‘fashion – niche’ was introduced. Each organisational ‘fashion – niche’ is viewed as containing managerial challenges of such significance that there is the continuous need for new and improved management techniques. However, such ‘fashion - niches’ are assumed, but not demonstrated to exist (Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999).

Fashion - setting theory raises concerns for some scholars because it can be seen as overstating the power of discourse and oratory and because it also assigns practitioners a role that can be viewed as both passive and gullible (Clark & Salaman, 1998; Clark, 2003; Clark & Greatbatch, 2004; Mazza, Alvarez & Comas, 2001). This is a view of practitioners that is not supported by other literature, particularly that which is associated with leadership (Heller, 2002). It can also be seen as ignoring the evidence that trends in aesthetic fashion can and do occur by processes such as ‘contagion’ (Gladwell, 2000; Granovetter: 1978; Granovetter & Soong: 1983), or even ‘swarm intelligence’ (Beni & Wang: 1989), rather than through the efforts of ‘fashion-setters’. In addition, fashion theory, like diffusion theory, is contrary to the evidence that practitioners themselves are the creators of the majority of management innovations (Mol & Birkinshaw, 2008).

Thus, both Rogers’ ‘diffusion theory’ and Abrahamson’s ‘fashion theory’ provided important contextual information. In addition, they were indicative both of the starting place for the more detailed and more specific enquiries that followed and of the intellectual journey that has been a key feature of this research study. However, perhaps unsurprisingly, neither was able to provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models.

Accordingly, it became clear that the search for a comprehensive and complete theoretical understanding of the processes that might be at work would require the evaluation of a wider and more broadly based range of scholarship. This included, but was not limited to, ‘reflective thinking' (Dewey, 1933); 'self theory' (Rogers, 1969); 'meaning - perspectives' (Mezirow, 1977); 'trustworthy recipies' (Schutz, 1964) 'scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema' (Bartlett, 1967; Koffka, 1935; Abelson, 1976; Minsky, 1975; Louis, 1980); 'memory systems', (Baddeley, 1986; Craik & Tulving, 1975); 'tacit knowledge' (Polanyi, 1962; Nonaka 2007); 'metaphor and analogy' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Hofstadter, 2001); 'sense – making' (Weick, 1995); 'requisite variety' (Ashby, 1956); 'decision – making' (Klein, 1993); 'intuition', (Hofstadter, 2001, Hodgkinson, Langan-Fox & Sadler-Smith, 2008); 'action research' (Lewin, 1948) and 'communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger; 1991).

As a result of widening the scope of the scholarship it became clear that, unlike children, adults have no continuing reason to learn. Indeed it is suggested that 'perplexity, confusion and doubt'; anomalies in 'meaning - perspectives' and 'cognitive dissonance' are the key prerequisites that have the capability to trigger a learning episode by an adult. In addition, it is proposed that whilst information and additional competencies can be an important 'after - the - fact' element, they cannot, of themselves; bring about a new 'meaning - perspective' (Dewey, 1933; Mezirow, 1977; Hofstadter, 2001). It is also suggested that scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema provide a schematic store of life experiences (Bartlett, 1967; Koffka, 1935, Abelson, 1976; Schank & Abelson, 1997; Minsky, 1975) and that these provide the 'trustworthy recipes' that enable adults to handle many situations without the need for overt thinking (Schutz, 1964). Finally, it is suggested the ability to deconstruct an experience and to reconstruct it, so that it is relevant to a different situation, is a distinctive skill in adult homo sapiens (Bartlett, 1967).

Furthermore, the scholarship relating to memory suggests that the elaboration, encoding and consolidation of experiences is a key factor in the effective storage and subsequent retrieval of memories (Craik & Tulving, 1975). However, there appears to be an unresolved difference of opinion regarding whether tacit knowledge is acquired tacitly (Ravetz, 1971; Spender, 1996); whether it is acquired explicitly but becomes tacit over time (Berry, 1987); or whether it is solely the memory retrieval process that is tacit (Tulving, 2000). In addition, the scholarship regarding metaphor and analogy suggests that these not just figures of speech and grammatical structures, but both methods of perceiving and of thinking (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1986) and of connecting new information to existing memory structures (Hofstadter, 2001).

In addition, the scholarship relating to decision - making in high intensity, operational situations such as fire fighting, suggests that experienced individuals, unlike novices, utilise 'recognition primed decision – making'. This involves firstly expert diagnosis; then the retrieval of memory based response options and finally the rapid evaluation of these to identify a single response that is the most likely course of action (Klein, 1993). However, it would appear that corporate, strategic decision – making utilises a different process that can be characterised as ‘groping and cyclical’ (Mintzberg, Raisingham & Theoret, 1976).

Finally the scholarship regarding management itself appears to involve a series of intense and unresolved debates as to (i) whether management can be regarded as a ‘science’, or an ‘applied science’ (Moore, 1970; Schein, 1973; Mintzberg, 2004); (ii) whether it is viable for management to be researched as a social science, or whether it is axiomatic that the ‘rigour’ of this approach leads to a loss of practical ‘relevance’ (Schon, 1983; Svejenova & Alvarez, 1999; Mintzberg, 2004; Kieser & Leiner, 2009; Fincham & Clark, 2009; Hodgkinson & Rousseau, 2009; Weick, 2001; Starkey & Madan, 2001; Aram & Salipante, 2003; Rousseau, 2006; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006); and (iii) whether management can be effectively taught via business schools and academic qualifications such as an MBA, or whether it is a ‘craft’ that is learnt through an individuals active involvement in a ‘community of practice’ (Bailey & Ford, 1996; Nohria & Eccles, 1997, Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Daft & Wiginton, 1979; Pearce, 2004; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Orr, 1996).

Thus, a critical evaluation of ‘diffusion theory’ and ‘fashion theory’ served both to provide some important contextual information and to dispel some important potential misunderstandings regarding the essential nature of management. In addition, the extension of the literature review to other disciplines and traditions served to provide some key theoretical insights. However, a comprehensive explanation of the processes, that might be found within the particular context of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners, remained elusive. Finally, the review of scholarship regarding the researching, teaching and learning of management highlighted a number of intense and seemingly unresolved debates, rather than clarity and certainty.

Furthermore, with the honorable exceptions of the very early research into the realities of management practice (Carlson, 1951; Burns, 1954; Horne & Lupton, 1965; Stewart, 1967; Mintzberg, 1973; Sayles, 1979; Kotter, 1982) and the observational work undertaken in relation to ‘fire ground commanders’ in the USA (Klein, 1993); it became clear that the absent voices were those of practicing senior managers discussing the part that the more formal, more academic theory, ideas, concepts and models played in helping them to discharge their organisational responsibilities.

1.3 Some key definitions

Implicit in the reference to the ‘appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners’ is the need to provide definitions for a number of these terms. However, the detailed textual analysis and the indexing of interview extracts also required that definitions be provided for both these and a number of other terms. Accordingly an explanation of the majority of these definitions will be provided in the third chapter of this thesis which deals with methodology and methods. However, it is intended that the terms ‘management’ and ‘appropriation’ should be provided with definitions here.

In this regard, the term ‘management’ was discovered to have its linguistic root in the Old French word *‘menagement’*, meaning ‘the art of conducting and directing’ and in the Latin *‘agere’*, meaning ‘to lead by the hand’. Thus, the root of the word provides a sense of the role being to lead and direct either the whole of, or part of an organisation. In addition, the early 20th century writer on the subject of management, Mary Parker Follett (1941) defined management as :

“The art of getting things done through people”.

Accordingly, the sense in which the research project has used the term ‘management’ is that of ‘leading and directing an organisation’ and ‘getting things done through people’. Thus the ideas, theories, concepts and models that have been of interest are those that have a direct bearing upon this definition of management. Hence, ideas, theories, concepts and models that are pertinent to the functional responsibilities of individuals within specialist roles such as accounting, law, marketing, production and IT have generally been excluded from the scope of this project.

A byproduct of adopting this definition it is that it enables this research study to bypass the academic discussion regarding leadership versus management. The rationale for this is that ‘leading and directing’ clearly relates to the leadership part of this debate; whilst the ‘getting things done through people’ relates to the application of managerial skills and competence that come from the management part of the debate. In addition, the interviewees were of sufficient seniority that it was clear that on occasions they would be providing leadership to individuals, teams, groups and departments and that on other occasions they would need to be utilising managerial skills and competencies. Accordingly this research project uses the terms leadership and management synonymously (Mintzberg, 2009).

The term ‘appropriation’ has been used in the sociological sense of ‘the assimilation of concepts into a governing framework’ that is attributed to Sosnoski (1989: 43). However, the word also contains the Latin root *‘proprius’* which carries the connotation not only of property, but also of proper, stable, assured and indeed of common or ordinary. Thus, something is appropriated when the individual ‘makes it theirs’ in a manner with which they feel comfortable. Hence, the sense in which the term ‘appropriation’ has been used is that of ‘incorporation within a governing framework’ in a ‘stable, assured and comfortable’ way.

1.4 Overall aim and specific objectives

The overarching research question that this thesis is seeking to address is the extent to which the generality of management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management.

Hence, the overall Aim is as follows:

To develop a model of the appropriation of management ideas, theories, concepts and models by individual management practitioners.

Embedded within this overall aim were two other related areas of interest. The first was to establish the fundamental nature of the process of appropriation and the factors that might determine whether the process of appropriation is successful. The second was to establish the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models, once appropriated, might play in helping the generality of management practitioners to discharge their organisational responsibilities.

However, there are a number of more specific, subsidiary areas of interest and these are reflected in the specific research objectives that are listed below.

Specific Objectives:

1. To identify the work situations and circumstances in which management practitioners have experienced their most significant learning

2. To establish the resources that management practitioners draw upon when deciding how to approach their most significant challenges.

3. To describe the nature of the decision making processes that management practitioners utilise when deciding how to approach their most significant challenges.

4. To assess the influence exerted by the thinking of the 20th century's 'management gurus' in the course of these decision making processes.

5. To determine the role that the more formal, more academic ideas about management play in influencing these decision making processes.

6. To explain the nature of the generic processes by which management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management.

1.5 Methodology and methods

The scholarship regarding the realities of management, which is reviewed in Section 2.2 of this thesis, has indicated that the practice of management is an intensely oral tradition. From this perspective it has been demonstrated that managers spend up to three quarters of their time 'persuading, justifying, and legitimising past, present and future courses of action' (Davis & Luthans, 1980). In addition, it had been suggested that management was an intensely 'pragmatic' discipline (Thomson, 2001). Furthermore, a key objective of this research project is to undertake primary research with management practitioners and to ensure that 'the voice' that is represented by their professional insights and experiences is amongst those that are heard. Accordingly it seemed important to provide both a methodology and methods that are congruent both with these observations and this ambition.

Hence, this research study has been founded upon an approach that acknowledged the importance of discourse, dialogue, language, perception and meaning to the practice of management and it was undertaken from an overarching philosophical perspective of realism. The study utilised a case study research strategy, qualitative data and inductive reasoning to examine whether management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas about management in an overt way. It subsequently used both content analysis and the insights of 'intertextuality' to explore, analyse, categorise and index extracts from verbatim, interview transcripts. The purpose of this was to examine whether management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas about management in a much more covert, subtle, tacit or even subconscious way.

A related phase of the textual analysis involved the creation of a bespoke compendium of 450 managerial 'terms' that were collated, from a number of key academic sources, utilising 'snowball' sampling. Collectively these terms represented the evolution of thinking about management by the pre-eminent management 'gurus' from the whole of the 20th century. A content analysis then established the frequency with which each of these terms had occurred in the verbatim transcripts of the practitioner interviews. The objective of this analysis was to examine the influence of the thinking of the management 'gurus' over the management practitioners. An additional, content analysis also established the frequency with which each of these terms occurred in the publicly available, strategic documents from four of the five employing organisations. The objective of this analysis was to examine the extent of any organisational influences.

The complete data set was formed by the verbatim transcripts of two sets of semi-structured recorded interviews. The first involved 24 face to face interviews conducted with established, senior managers from five different organisations, representing all sectors of the economy. The second involved 15 telephone interviews conducted with similarly experienced and similarly established practitioners, who were also in the midst of part-time study for an MBA. The purpose of this difference was to explore the possibility that the process of appropriation and the scale and nature of any theoretical influence might vary according to the interviewees overall setting. The structure of the interviews was modelled upon the critical incident technique and accordingly each of the interviewees was asked to recount the details of some of their most significant current and historical managerial challenges. Once this information had been obtained the interviewees were also asked a number of other directly related questions. The 39 semi-structured, recorded interviews lasted a total of 34 hours 53 minutes; provided information in relation to 160 critical incidents and the verbatim transcripts totalled 355,000 words.

Hence, the methodology and methods provided an appropriate, scholarly means of undertaking primary research with management practitioners that provided the realistic prospect of providing further, more specific insights regarding their appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models.

1.6 The research gap

The introduction to this first chapter of the thesis has highlighted the evidence regarding the exponential growth both in books on the topic of business and management. It has also highlighted the same kind of growth in the numbers of individuals who are undertaking academic studies in business and management. In addition, the introduction has also highlighted the assertion that in relation to managerial practice; pragmatism, rather than theory, has been the basis of any progress that has been made. It has also been asserted that the impact and influence of academic theorising upon the practice of management has been weak. Furthermore, the same section of the thesis has drawn attention to the unresolved debate regarding whether it is axiomatic that research into business and management, when conducted with the appropriate level of academic rigour, will result in a loss of practical relevance. Hence, in so far as it may relate to the appropriation of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management by management practitioners, this evidence can best be described as uncertain, ambiguous, equivocal and perhaps even contradictory?

In addition, the summary of the literature review has suggested that ‘diffusion theory’ and ‘fashion theory’ are important in terms of both setting the scene and providing the context for the overall research study. In addition, the critical evaluation of both sets of literature proved to be an important part of dispelling some important potential misunderstandings that are common in this field of enquiry. Furthermore, these two sets of literature are both indicative of the starting place for the more detailed and more specific enquiries that followed and of the kind of personal intellectual journey of exploration and discovery that has been a key feature of the author’s experience. However, perhaps unsurprisingly, neither has provided a comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models.

Furthermore, whilst the broader range of interdisciplinary scholarship that has been considered provided interesting and important insights regarding the processes that might be at work; the extent to which these may be found within the particular circumstances of management practitioners remains unclear. In addition, the issues raised by the six ‘specific objectives’ for this research study remain unresolved.

Finally, it became clear that the ‘absent voices’ were those of practicing senior managers explaining the part that the more formal, more academic theory, ideas, concepts and models play in helping them to discharge their organisational responsibilities.

Accordingly, the overall research gap that has been identified is the need to conduct primary research with practicing managers and to develop a model for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models about management by management practitioners.

1.7 The structure of this thesis

In the second chapter of this thesis a detailed, critical evaluation of the substantive scholarship in this field of interest is provided. In addition, a diverse range of other academic insights, from a variety of disciplines, is highlighted. The third chapter provides details of the overall theoretical framework, the design of the research study and the specific data collection and data analysis techniques that have been utilised. The discoveries of the case study examination of the overt influence that is exerted by the more formal, more academic ideas about management are both reported and explored in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter both reports and explores the discoveries of the textual analysis that was undertaken to examine whether such ideas exert a covert influence. The sixth chapter discusses the implications of the discoveries that have been made, highlights the linkages between the discoveries and the extant literature, discusses the limitations of the study, considers the implications for professional practice, makes observations regarding potential further work and provides details of the final model. The final chapter considers the progress that has been made in relation to the aims and objectives; provides a consolidation of the key discoveries; identifies the contribution that this research project has made to scholarship; and provides some concluding reflections.

1.8 Conclusions

This first chapter of the thesis has provided an overview of the research project; has explained why the research is necessary and has identified the areas in which it is expecting to make a contribution to scholarship. In addition, it has provided information regarding; (i) the formal aims and objectives; (ii) some key definitions; (iii) the methodology and methods; and (iv) the structure of the thesis itself.

The next chapter of the thesis will provide a detailed review of the extant literature.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter of the thesis will seek to review the existing scholarship and to provide a critical evaluation of the established thinking regarding the ‘appropriation of ideas theories, concepts and models’. Accordingly, where necessary and appropriate, it will discuss some of the limitations, deficiencies and uncertainties that are inherent in the current explanations.

However, this chapter will also seek to identify, describe and provide an analytical synthesis of a much more diverse body of knowledge, from a wide variety of disciplines, which has the capacity to shed new light upon the questions that are at the heart of this research study.

Accordingly, the chapter begins with an examination of the research data regarding the realities of management practice. These findings provide both a clear context for the discoveries which have been made and an important means of subsequently evaluating these (Stewart, 1983).

The second and third sections of this chapter discuss the two most established and well documented theories within this general field of interest. These are the diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 1962) and fashion theory (Abrahamson, 1991 & 1996; Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999). The fourth section reviews a wide spectrum of scholarship regarding learning by adults and this is followed by a section that reviews sense – making, decision – making and intuition.

The penultimate section reviews the scholarship relating to management as a profession, as an applied science and as a ‘craft’, together with the implications of each of these positions for research, teaching, learning and practice. The final section considers the role that conceptual thinking might play in relation to the creation of theory.

2.2 The realities of management practice

A key objective of this research study is that the resulting model of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners should both meet the academic requirements of scholarship and be an aid to the acquisition of insight and understanding by management practitioners themselves. Implicit in both these propositions is the need for the research outcomes to be grounded in the broadest possible understanding of the realities of managerial life, rather than some idealised abstract of these.

In this regard Stewart (1983) asserts as a guiding principle that :

> "Management theories rest on assumptions about managerial behaviour. These assumptions may be explicit or they may be implicit, even quite unrecognised. Whichever they are, they should be identified and then checked against what research has taught us about how managers behave".
>
> (Page 82)

Symptoms of the kind of 'ungrounded' thinking alluded to by Stewart can be found in some of the theories that are currently proposed as explanations of the apparently cyclical, some would suggest 'fashionable' or even 'faddish', trends in ideas about management. Accordingly the starting point of these enquiries into the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners is explicit acceptance of the need to establish with both clarity and certainty the research evidence regarding the realities of management practice and behaviours.

A traditional picture of managerial life is one where management practitioners spend their days in the calm pursuit of long term, corporately aligned, strategically significant goals and the fulfilment of shorter term, tactical plans (Carlson, 1951; Stewart, 1963; Mintzberg, 1973; Sayles, 1979). In this presumed environment rationality and cognition reign supreme. Unfortunately not only would many managerial practitioners fail to recognise this kind of sublime existence, the overwhelming weight of research evidence confirms that this kind of picture is a seriously misleading unreality.

Carlson (1951) provides what is now widely recognised as the first authoritative study of executives at work. The study investigated the working realities of nine managing directors and utilised both organisational data, such as diary entries and telephone records and extensive interviews with the executives. The study highlighted the extent to which it was rare for executives to have undisturbed time whilst at work; the shortness of any undisturbed intervals (the mean for the sample being only 8 minutes) and the frequency of the informal contacts with people from within the organisation. In addition, these senior executives reported the need to take home work amounting to an average of one hour and a half per day, where the nature of the task was such that it required that they were undisturbed.

Carlson concluded that :

> "Before we made the study, I had always thought of a chief executive as the conductor of an orchestra, standing aloof on his platform. Now I am in some

> respects inclined to see him as the puppet in a puppet-show with hundreds of people pulling the strings and forcing him to act in one way or another".
>
> (Page 52)

In an early British investigation, Burns (1954: 78) studied a group of four departmental executives and found that they spent '80% of their total time in conversation'. Similarly, Dubin & Spray (1961: 103) studied eight executives from five different organisations, using a modified version of Burns' self recording method. They highlighted that the form of their verbal interactions were overwhelmingly 'face to face'. Equally, Copeman, Luijk & de P. Hanika (1963: 3) studied the working reality of 58 executives, using a self administered time survey sheet. They described the managerial experience as being 'at everyone's beck and call'; 'attending to other people's problems' and 'finding that events were controlling you'. They also discovered that these individuals were interrupted on average '70 times a day' and they calculated that 'during an eight-hour day, this works out at once every 7 minutes!'

In addition, Horne & Lupton (1965: 24 - 27) examined the work activities of 66 'middle' managers. Their study concluded that the managers spent 'much more of their time facilitating, manipulating and regulating than they did deciding about objectives, policies and plans'. Indeed, the general picture that emerged was one of managers who spent most of their time 'organising, unifying and regulating' and little time either policy making, or planning. In practical terms this meant that their time was spent 'creating, collecting, assembling, integrating and regulating the necessary resources'. Overwhelmingly the largest 'slice of total time was spent talking, or listening to other people'. The focus of this time was the 'giving, receiving, and seeking of information' and the conversations were conducted 'mostly face to face, or in a small group informally'. They concluded that :

> "They seem not given to solitary reflection on their problems, or on anything else, while they are at work".
>
> (Page 26)

Similarly, Rosemary Stewart studied the way a large sample of 160 'middle' and 'senior' managers spent their time, over a four week period. Stewart (1967: 43, 68, 70 & 81) concluded that 'discussions were the dominant activity of nearly all the managers' and that in particular 'informal' discussion on average occupied 'more than half the managers' time'. The study also showed that 'on average managers spent two - thirds of their time with other people' and that their jobs were characterised by 'fragmentation' and that the managers spent 'only one period of half an hour, or longer', without 'fleeting interruptions', 'every other day'.

Equally, Henry Mintzberg investigated the work of five chief executives in an ethnographic study which lasted for a total of 202 hours. Mintzberg (1973: 171) also found that a manager's activities were characterised by 'brevity, variety and fragmentation'. For a supervisor, activities had a typical duration of only a few seconds and even for a chief executive, activities typically lasted only a few minutes. Amongst the great variety of tasks that were performed, there was ‘no obvious pattern’. In addition, the ‘trivial were interspersed with the consequential’, with the subsequent need for rapid changes in both mood and approach. Where managers were able to choose the activities that they would undertake they tended to ‘gravitate towards the current, the well-defined and the non-routine’. Mintzberg (1973: 173) concluded that, ‘with the increasing complexity of organisations and their problems’, managers were ‘driven to both brevity and superficiality’. There was a requirement ‘to focus on that which is current and tangible’, even though this was frequently at the expense of more complex and long term concerns. The managerial role was not one that produced strong, reflective thinkers and strategic planners; but highly adaptive, information junkies and verbal communicators, who thrived in a high stimulus and rapid response environment.

Davis & Luthans (1980: 74 & 65) also cite the research evidence that ‘few practicing managers even get as far as preparing a plan for their own use’. They also confirm that the ‘modern manager’s world is a verbal’ one in which up to three quarters of their time can be spent orally communicating with others with the objective of ‘persuading, justifying, and legitimising past, present and future courses of action’.

Leonard Sayles discusses why management is so problematic and why good managers are so scarce. Sayles (1979: 4, 16 & 17) concludes that contributing factors are that the reality of being a manager is far different from the expectation. The most striking differences between the reality and the preconception, relate to the ‘pressurised, time-constrained and energy consuming’ nature of the daily routine. He summarises the research evidence as being that managers are peripatetic, with their working lives being a ‘never-ending series of contacts with other people’. Managers ‘must talk and listen, telephone and attend meetings, argue and negotiate’. They may have hundreds of contacts with people every day and the work is demanding, pressurised, hectic and fragmented. In fact it is the ‘diametric opposite’ of the kind of calm, studious, sequential, analytical, regulated work of other professionals, who expect, and indeed demand, the time to do the kind of careful, considered and complete job that will provide them with a sense of both pride and satisfaction.

John Kotter inquired into the working lives of 15 ‘general managers’ from different organisations that represented a broad spectrum of enterprises. The study lasted more than a year and each participant was studied for around a month. This included the continuous observation of the managers for three complete days. Kotter (1982: 80 – 81) discovered that the general managers spent around 70% of their time with other people and that this included many others, besides their boss and their subordinates. In addition, he found that whilst the ‘general managers’ asked a lot of questions, it was very rare for them to be seen either making big decisions or giving direct orders. He also discovered that frequently the substantive issue being discussed in these conversations was relatively unimportant and that the breadth of the topics discussed during these mostly informal contacts was very wide. Finally, he found that their time with others was rarely planned in advance and that it was usually characterised by short, disjointed conversations.

Rosemary Stewart, in the second edition of her 1963 book, highlights the difference between the expectation and the reality as follows :

> "When we turned to what is known about the manager's work practice, we found that research into what managers do gives a different picture from traditional accounts of the functions of a manager".
>
> (Page 20)

Stewart (1985: 20) summaries the overall evidence as being that 'the reality of management is that it is less planned, orderly, rational, or objective than traditional accounts of management suggest'. She summarises the research evidence from the observational studies of managers at work as being that 'most managers spend their time in brief, fragmented activities, switching every few minutes from one person or problem to another'. She also asserts that 'managing is mostly about working with people and that it is even more so than most managers realise'.

Stewart (1979: 37 - 39) notes that many managers seem to work without any specific, overarching, personal plan that might constitute any kind of 'explicit agenda for what they are seeking to achieve in their job'. Indeed, whilst most managers were fully conversant with the organisational objectives that they had been given – the formal demands and constraints – they had no clear agenda for the areas where they were going to exercise personal choice and thereby make a unique and discretionary contribution to the fulfilment of their role. In addition, most managers even lacked a planned and structured approach to their working day and instead they appeared to 'prefer a fragmented pattern' in which they 'switch their attention much more often than the situation demands'. In effect they 'do what comes into their mind next', they deal with issues via 'their stream of consciousness' and 'the momentum of the job carries them along', even where doing so is at the expense of something non-urgent but genuinely important.

Stewart (1983) concludes that :

> 'The picture that emerges from studies of what managers do is of someone who lives in a whirl of activity, in which attention must be switched every few minutes from one subject, problem, and person to another; of an uncertain world where relevant information includes gossip and speculation about how other people are thinking and what they are likely to do; and where necessary, particularly in the more senior posts, to develop a network of people who can fill one in on what is going on and what is likely to happen. It is a picture, too,

> not of a manager who sits quietly controlling but who is dependent upon many people, other than subordinates, with whom reciprocating relationships need to be created; who need to learn how to trade, bargain and compromise; and a picture of managers who, increasingly as they ascend must learn how to influence people other than their subordinates, how to manoeuvre, and how to enlist support for what they want to do'.
>
> (Pages 96 – 97)

Finally, after nearly 40 years of research into the realities of the managerial existence, Mintzberg (1989: 10) concludes that 'study after study has shown that managers work at unrelenting pace, that their activities are characterized by brevity, variety and discontinuity, and that they are strongly orientated to action and dislike reflective activities'.

This characterisation of the realities of management practice is in stark contrast to the kind of calm, systematic, strategic, thinking and decision - making that is depicted by much of the writing about management. It also appears to have little of the process elegance that is proposed by 'reflection in learning' (Moon, 1999) or the questioning of fundaments that underpins 'critical reflection' (Reynolds, 1998). Indeed, Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner (2007: 172 & 173) assert that the first stage of 'reflective practice requires a deliberate slowing down to consider multiple perspectives'. Accordingly, from this perspective, the behaviour of managers may actually seem to be both irrational and perverse.

However, writing from the perspective of 'systems theory', Daft & Wiginton (1979: 189, 185 & 188) conclude that the behaviour of managers is appropriate, given the nature of their role and the complex nature of the system in which they operate. Thus, from a systems viewpoint managers are seen as being 'control points in organisations' and as such they 'are centres of information networks'. Thus, 'they are constantly giving and receiving information about ill - defined events and processes' and 'the ability to understand the nature of these processes based upon high variety language inputs' is an essential part of their role. In addition, from the perspective of the principle of 'requisite variety' (Ashby: 1956) a 'natural language', which utilises an extensive vocabulary of words, which are verbally communicated, will provide the kind of high variety information that is necessary for an 'ill - defined, complex top management job'. Furthermore, the seeming preference of managers for spoken rather than written communication provides additional rich information in the form of tone of 'voice, pitch, inflection and pauses' together with 'gestures, posture and facial expressions'. This is exactly the kind of high variety information that increases the reliability of a complex information system and reduces the potential for system errors. Lastly, they conclude that the use of high variety spoken language is 'compatible with, and fully utilises, the manager's cognitive processes'.

Summary

The research evidence regarding the realities of management is both clear and consistent and it has been so over a period of 60 years. Each of the studies that has been reviewed here has built upon its predecessors and has contributed research evidence to create a clear understanding of the fundamental realities of the managerial experience.

This research evidence amounts to the fact that the practice of management can be characterised as a high stimulus, rapid response environment that consists of a never ending series of contacts with people. It is a demanding, pressurised, time constrained, hectic and energy sapping environment that is fragmented, with an emphasis upon both brevity and variety. A key feature is the recurrence of both the trivial and the consequential, with no obvious pattern. This requires rapid changes in both mood and approach. It is also an environment that is focussed upon the current and the tangible. Accordingly managers have been characterised as highly adaptive, information junkies and verbal communicators, who spend their time persuading, justifying and legitimising; past, present and future actions.

Thus in relation to the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners this collation of the research evidence regarding the realities of management practice provides the context against which all existing and future, potentially plausible theories can tested. Indeed it will eventually play a role in corroborating the discoveries of this research study.

With the establishment of these essential foundations, the literature review will now turn its attention to the first of the two established and well documented theories within this general field of interest. This is the diffusion of innovations.

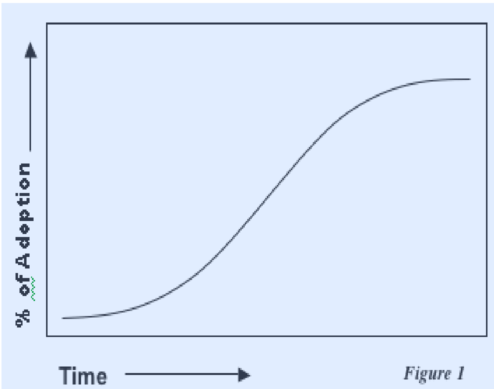
2.3 Diffusion of innovations

Rogers & Singhal (1996: 410 & 411) confirm that the study of the diffusion of innovations 'in its present day form can be traced' back to 'the theories and observations' of Tarde (1903) in his book 'The Laws of Imitation'. Gabriel Tarde was a French sociologist and legal scholar whose work included 'concepts such as opinion leadership, the S - curve of diffusion and the role of the socioeconomic status in interpersonal diffusion', although he did not refer to such concepts using this nomenclature. The 'intellectual leads' provided by Tarde (1903) were soon followed by anthropologists such as Clark Wissler who showed that the diffusion of the horse among the Plains Indians in America transformed a culture of 'peaceful coexistence, into a state of almost continuing warfare' between neighbouring tribes (Wissler, 1923). Hence, these references demonstrate that the roots of ‘diffusion theory’ go back to the very beginnings of business as the object of academic study.

However, it was Everett M. Rogers who, in 1962, produced the most comprehensive and encyclopaedic review of more than 5,000 research studies that form the basis of this body of knowledge. The fifth edition of his standard work was published in 2003 and Rogers researched, published journal articles and wrote extensively on the subject of the diffusion of innovations for more than 40 years. In 1990, the Institute for Scientific Information designated his book ‘Diffusion of innovations’ as a "Citation Classic" on the basis of the large number of citations that it received in articles published in social science journals. In addition, according to the Social Science Citation Index, ‘Diffusion of innovations’ is the second most cited book in the social sciences (Dearing & Singhal, 2006).

Central to Rogers’ personal contribution to the development of diffusion theory is his elaboration of the previously identified ‘S - curve’, which illustrates the rate at which any innovation is adopted.

Figure 1: The adopter S - curve

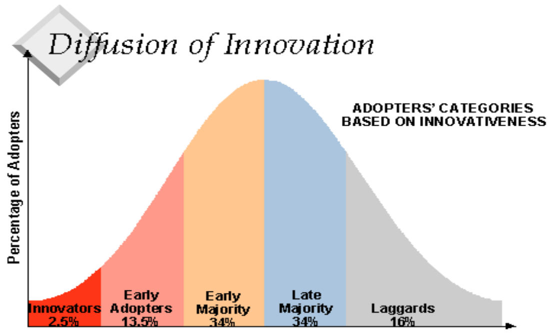


Source : http://homepage.mac.com/dtraversscott/Academics/BlogHistory/Images/Diffusion.gif

Accessed 30 July 2009

Rogers’ special contribution was to divide the curve into five vertical sub-sections and to label each of these according to its position in the overall chart. In effect each vertical sub-section represents a different point in the overall diffusion cycle. The result of this approach is that both a timeline and a sequence are produced. As a consequence, the graphical representation shows the speed at which an innovation is adopted by each of these five populations. A standard labelling process results in the categorisation of the various segments of the adopter population as 'innovators', 'early adopters', 'early majority', 'late majority' and 'laggards'.

Figure 2: The adopter categories



Source : http://cq-pan.cqu.edu.au/david-jones/Reading/Adoption/onweb/adopters.gif

Accessed 30 July 2009

Diffusion theory is often referred to and understood in relation to the adoption of technological innovations, frequently within a domestic setting (Schon, 1971: 114; Greenhalg et al, 2005: 102). In this regard, Moore (1998: 12 & 17) re - branded the standard Rogers' diffusion of innovation model as the 'technology adoption life cycle' and subsequently he modified the basic diffusion model by inserting a 'dissociation' between the 'early adopters' and the 'early majority'. This modified model was renamed as the 'revised technology adoption life cycle'. Subsequently Moore (1998) utilised his re - branded, modified and renamed version of the basic diffusion model to discuss the development of marketing strategies to sell 'high technology products to mainstream customers'. However, although the standard diffusion of innovations model is frequently understood in the context of high technology, consumer products, this is a narrow and selective interpretation of its original applicability. In fact Rogers (2003) adopts both a broad definition of an innovation and a broad description of its applicability. This specifically includes the diffusion of new ideas, thus :

> "An innovation is an idea, practice or object perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption".
>
> (Page 36)

Hence, as defined by Rogers, diffusion theory may be regarded as being relevant to the substantive enquiries into the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models. In addition, Rogers (2003) concludes that :

> "The main elements in the diffusion of new ideas are (1) an innovation (2) that is communicated through certain channels (3) over time (4) among members of a social system".
>
> (Page 36)

As with many theories it can be helpful to understand the context in which they originated and in this case it is agriculture within the USA. During the 1920s a hybrid corn was developed by agricultural scientists at Iowa State University. This hybrid corn was more drought resistant; more easily harvested with machinery and increased yields by around twenty percent. When, in 1928, the new hybrid corn seed was release to Iowa farmers its use was heavily promoted by both the Iowa Agricultural Extension Service and salesmen from commercial seed companies. In 1939 Professor Bryce Ryan joined Iowa State University and he chose as a research project the adoption of the hybrid corn seed by farmers in Iowa. In 1941 Neal C. Gross, a new graduate in rural sociology, joined the hybrid corn seed project as a research assistant. Ryan & Gross (1943) showed that in the first five years only 10 percent of farmers in Iowa had changed to the new hybrid corn seed; that in the next three years a further 30 percent changed over and that by 1941 only 2 of the 259 farmers who had participated in the study, had failed to adopt the new hybrid corn seed. It was Ryan & Gross who adopted the term 'diffusion' to describe this kind of process and Rogers (2003) considers that :

> "Ryan and Gross's (1943) study of the diffusion of hybrid seed corn in Iowa is the most influential study of all time, despite the 5,200-plus diffusion investigations conducted since this pioneering study".
>
> (Page 31)

In addition, Rogers (2003) reaches this conclusion :

> "Ryan and Gross launched fifteen of the eighteen most widely used intellectual innovations in the rural sociology diffusion research tradition. So Bryce Ryan and Neal Gross played key roles in forming the classical diffusion paradigm. The hybrid corn study has left an indelible stamp on the history of all diffusion research".
>
> (Page 35)

However, some of the important details, nuances and caveats regarding the findings of Ryan & Gross (1943) have become a little indistinct over the years. For example, although the new hybrid seed corn had distinct advantages over its predecessor it was clear that individual farmers moved slowly through a process that began with vague awareness; then passed through increasing knowledge, to small scale trial planting and finally to complete adoption for all of their corn production. In fact, across the study as a whole, the average time from an individual's first knowledge of the new seed to their decision to adopt the new seed for all of their corn was about nine years! In addition, the study showed that the early converts to the new product had tended to come from the larger farms, with the higher incomes and where the farmers had received more years of formal education (Rogers, 2003: 31 – 35).

Hence, even in the original study there was strong evidence against any notion of an orderly, smooth, timely, predictable and certain transition to a desired outcome that could be attributed to the diligent activities of an energetic and influential institution with a powerful vested interest. However, as we shall see, this kind of thinking can be found in much of the literature relating to the diffusion of ideas about management.

The Ryan & Gross (1943) findings also showed the importance of social networks as well as institutional channels of communication in the various stages of the decision making process regarding adoption. Thus, whilst typically a farmer first heard of the new hybrid seed corn product from a salesman; for all but the very earliest adopters, neighbouring farmers were the most frequently cited source of influence regarding an actual adoption decision. Indeed, farmer to farmer communication and behaviour was seen as being at the heart of the diffusion process :

> "Commercial channels, especially salesmen, were most important as original sources of knowledge, while neighbours were most important as influences leading to acceptance".
>
> (Page15)

Despite this clear and unequivocal finding, much of the literature regarding the apparent diffusion of 'fashionable' ideas about management fails to recognise the important influence of fellow practitioners.

Ryan & Gross (1943) also made this vitally important distinction :

> "The spread of knowledge and the spread of 'conviction' are, analytically at least, distinct processes".
>
> (Page 21)

Despite this finding, within the context of management, much of the subsequent theorising fails to adequately distinguish between 'knowledge' and 'conviction'; never mind a commitment to implementation.

Indeed, it is this vital distinction between 'knowledge' and 'conviction' that is at the root of some of the core issues concerning the completeness of diffusion theory. Thus, in order to demonstrate the completeness of diffusion theory it is first necessary to demonstrate that effective and viable channels exist for the diffusion of information. Then it is necessary to demonstrate that the recipients have been sufficiently persuaded by this information to implement the new thinking. The same issue also affects the completeness of fashion theory that will be considered in the next section of this thesis. Thus, in relation to fashion theory and the presumed influence of the 'management gurus', it is insufficient to demonstrate widespread 'name recognition'. What is necessary is to demonstrate the implementation of the advocated managerial practice by the recipient management practitioner.

Rogers' personal contribution to diffusion theory was to show that the S - shaped curve, initially produced by Ryan & Gross, closely followed that of a normal distribution. This allowed Rogers to divide the normal distribution curve into four parts by utilising the mean and the standard deviation. The area lying to the extreme left of the normal distribution curve was then sub-divided by utilising the mean and two standard deviations. Thus, the five categories of innovation adopters became innovators 2.5%, early adopters 13.5%, early majority 34%, late majority 34% and laggards 16%. In fact, the method of adopter categorisation utilised by Rogers was first published in a journal article, (Rogers, 1958) some 15 years after the original Ryan & Gross study.

However, it should be re-emphasised that the proportion of the normal distribution that is allocated to each adopter category is purely a statistic phenomenon. It has no grounding in the realties of any diffusion process, including that of both the behaviours and the personal characteristics of the individuals who participated in the diffusion study. Greenhalg et al, (2005: 101) note that 'categories such as "early adopter" are thus not fixed personality traits of individuals but are mathematically defined cut offs for the adopters of any particular innovation by a particular population'. Thus, implicit in diffusion theory is the proposition that exactly the same proportions of any adopting population can be segmented into these five categories regardless of either the precise nature of the innovation or the actual personality traits of the individuals making up the population. Indeed exactly the same proportion of any adopting population would be segmented into each of these five categories regardless of any other variable, such as age or gender.

Clarity regarding this essential feature of diffusion theory is not helped by Rogers' next step, which was to describe an 'ideal type' for each of the five adopter categories. Rogers (2003: 282) presents 'an overview of the main characteristics and values of each adopted category' and he follows this with 'more detailed generalisations'. From Rogers (2003: 282 – 292) the following 'pen portraits' can be gleaned for each of the five adopter categories :

> Innovators: cosmopolitan, affluent, technologically savvy, educated and open to risky ideas.
>
> Early Adopters: respected professionals, opinion leaders, key influencers of the 'majority', remove much of the fear and uncertainty for the later users.

Early majority: neither opinion leaders, nor ‘laggards’, this group will wait until the innovation has been tried and tested and until the benefits are clearly visible.

Late majority: risk averse, cautious and often sceptical, half of society will have adopted the innovation before this group embraces it.

Laggards: suspicious of new ideas, resistant to change this group is the most parochial, insular and conservative.

Greenhalg et al, (2005: 101) present this information in their review of diffusion theory on the basis that it illustrates ‘conventional wisdom about individual adopter categories’, but they also ‘caution against their simplistic application’.

However, there are those who dissent from diffusion theory on other grounds. Schon (1971: 82) highlights the fact that Rogers’ has created a ‘centre-periphery’ model and that the effectiveness of this is ‘first dependent upon the level of resources and energy at the centre’, then upon ‘the number of points at the periphery, the length of the radii or spokes through which diffusion takes place and the energy required to gain acceptance of a new innovation’.

To be fair Rogers (2003: 395 & 397) both acknowledges Schon’s concerns and recognises that the classical diffusion model ‘failed to capture the complexity of decentralised diffusion systems’. Whilst confirming that the agricultural extension service is ‘relatively centralised’ he also specifically recognises that ‘other diffusion systems are relatively decentralised’. However, the discussion of this fundamental issue occupies a little over three pages in a book that is nearly five hundred pages long. Accordingly, it is not at all clear that the ground conceded by Rogers deals with the full weight of the criticisms made by Schon. In addition, there is at least some room for concluding that even the modified and more decentralised model of diffusion is an over simplification of the highly complex processes that are at work. In addition, there are others who voice different concerns regarding classical diffusion theory.

In this regard the findings of Ohlmer, Olson & Brehmer (1998: 273) are particularly interesting because their research is concerned with ‘understanding farmers’ decision making processes’ and ‘improving managerial assistance’. Accordingly it provides a direct comparison with that of Ryan & Gross. In fact, Ohlmer, Olson & Brehmer (1998 :288) conclude that ‘instead of viewing their decision process as a linear sequence of steps or even words or pictures that evoke the idea of a linear process, our research found a matrix to be a better representation of how farmers make decisions’. Whilst this once again highlights the difference between the diffusion of knowledge and the acquisition of a conviction, it also demonstrates that decision making is a complex, rather than a simple process. From the wider context of strategic decision making within businesses, Mintzberg, Raisingham & Theoret (1976: 250) conclude that ‘only by groping through a recursive, discontinuous process involving many difficult steps and a host of dynamic factors over a considerable period of time is a final choice made’. In addition, Morris, Mills & Crawford (2000: 243) also highlight the fact that the Rogers analysis supposes ‘an orderly, predictable and linear progression from awareness through to adoption’, whereas in reality the process is ‘unpredictable, uncertain and very diverse’. Finally, Pfiffner (1960: 129) concludes that ‘the decision - making process is not linear but more circular’.

Thomas (2003: 779) is typical of those who share wider reservations, including that the ‘diffusion explanation can account only for those ideas that take root; it does not explain why a number of the ideas being “promoted” has grown so significantly or why some ideas fail to gain social legitimacy and spread’. Greenhalgh et al (2005: 58) also conclude that the S - shaped diffusion curve ‘does not itself provide an explanation of either how or why people adopt particular innovations at particular rates, nor, of course, does it predict whether efforts to influence adoption will meet with success’. Finally, Strang & Macy (2001: 148) express the view that models of diffusion ‘are well posed to explain rises in the number of adopters but poorly equipped to account for almost anything else’.

It is also possible to make a number of other important observations and comments regarding the limitations of the classical diffusion of innovations model. The first area of concern is that the model requires a centre of expertise in which an innovation can be created, developed and perfected before it is diffused. Subsequently, the diffusion process requires effective channels of communication to spread knowledge of the innovation to the recipient population. If these requirements are translated into the world of management innovations, there would need to be (i) a centralised, ‘think tank’ of management expertise; (ii) it would need to be capable of developing and perfecting ideas about management; and (iii) there would need to be a means of diffusing these innovative ideas to practitioners. It is also worth noting that the classical diffusion of innovations model specifically excludes both the notion of a partially developed idea being diffused and subsequently perfected and it also excludes the notion that management practitioners might be co - creators or even the sole creators of innovative practices

Unfortunately the evidence regarding each of these prerequisites is unhelpful to the case for the classical diffusion model. For example, Mol & Birkinshaw (2008) highlight what they regard as the fifty most significant innovations in management. In the process they both describe and document the history and development of each of these innovations. An analysis of their detailed listing shows that thirty-five of their fifty most significant management innovations were developed by practitioners. The analysis also shows that only four of the innovations were developed in academia and that only two were developed by consultancies. The remaining nine innovations were developed by some combination of practitioners, consultancies and universities.

Similarly, if innovative ideas about management are to be effectively diffused, the main potential channels of communication are likely to be business schools, journal articles and the publishers of business books (Alvarez, Mazza & Mur, 1999). Unfortunately there is a whole host of evidence which demonstrates that each of these potential communication channels is seriously deficient.

For example, Bailey & Ford (1996: 8) conclude that ‘business schools appeal to one another as scholarly communities through a plethora of academic journals that are utterly divorced from the challenges of everyday management’. A typically outspoken Mintzberg (2004: 396) concludes that academics ‘speak to each other’ and ‘write to each other’ in journals that are ‘often impenetrable to all but the most determined practitioners’. Nohria & Eccles (1997: 281) question the usefulness of research to managers and they conclude that ‘the unfortunate answer is that it seems to be hardly useful at all’. Svejenova & Alvarez (1999: 5) wonder how managers are expected to use the research findings ‘when it is not initially conceived and then communicated in a form that speaks to their problems and settings’. Rynes, Brown & Colbert (2002: 100) found that even within a specialist niche, such as HR, less than one percent of managers ‘usually read the academic literature’. Kvalshaugen (2001: II) concludes that ‘the diffusion of management knowledge from so - called management education is quite meagre’. Pfeffer & Fong (2002: 86) reviewed the impact of business school research upon management practitioners and concluded that ‘although academics are influenced by practitioners, little influence flows from academics to industry’. Finally, Forster (2007: 24) concludes that ‘the impact of the collective research outputs of business / management academics on senior private and public sector leaders is almost non-existent’.

Similarly, Engwall & Pahlberg (2001: 63) analysed the reading habits of managers and concluded that ‘their contacts with management publications are limited’ and that ‘their main source of information appears to be the daily business press’. Pfeffer & Sutton (2006: 33) note that ‘there are at least a hundred magazines and newspapers devoted to business issues’ and that in addition ‘there are at least 30,000 business books in print and approximately 3,500 new ones are published each year’. They conclude that ‘the sad fact is that any sane manager, consultant, or change agent who wades into the market for business knowledge is soon overwhelmed by vast amounts of clashing and misleading advice’ and that ‘there is simply too much information for any single person to consume’.

The second area of concern is that the whole of the normal distribution, bell - shaped, adopter curve is an ‘after - the - fact’ statistical representation that only exists in relation to those innovations that completely diffuse with total success. Indeed, the converse is equally true and it is axiomatic that no such curve exists for all of the innovations that fail to achieve complete acceptance by a population. In addition, the classical diffusion model is unable to either predict or explain why some poor innovations do diffuse, or why some good innovations either fail to diffuse or take an extra-ordinarily long time to do so.

In terms of a poor innovation that has extensively diffused it is possible to cite recent economic history and the development of ‘collateralised debt obligations’. From their inception in 1987, by the now defunct bank Drexel Burnham Lambert, collateralised debt obligations became the fastest growing sector of the asset - backed, synthetic securities market. It is estimated that their global market value reached $4 trillion, before, during the autumn of 2008, they took the world banking system to the verge of collapse!

Brown (2005) provides an example of an innovative idea that took a look an interminable age to diffuse. In the days of long sea voyages, scurvy killed more sailors that all other causes, including accidents and war. In 1601, Captain James Lancaster commanded four ships that sailed from England to India. On one of these ships he provided each of the crew with three teaspoons of lemon juice per day. By the half way point of the voyage, 110 of the 278 sailors on the other three ships had died of scurvy; whilst all of the crew who had been taking the lemon juice were healthy. However, it took until 1795, which is 194 years, for the Royal Navy to learn this lesson and for the merchant navy it took until 1865, which is 264 years!

Rogers himself provides an example of a good innovation that has simply failed to diffuse. The standard Qwerty keyboard was invented by Christopher Latham Sholes in 1873 with the objective of slowing down typists! The explanation for this is that, in the days of manual typewriters, if two adjacent keys were struck in quick succession, they would jam. Scholes re - arranged the keys so that the keys of the most commonly used letters were most awkwardly placed. Rogers (2003: 8) asserts that this makes the Qwerty keyboard ‘twice as long to learn as it should’ and ‘about twenty times harder’ to use than is necessary. In 1932, at time when typewriter design had developed so that key jamming it was no longer a problem, Professor August Dvorak of the University of Washington used time and motion study to develop a more efficient keyboard. The new key board was designed so that about 70% of typing could be undertaken with the middle row of keys. This balanced the amount of work done between the left and right hands and it assigned the amount of work to each finger in direct proportion to its strength and dexterity. Despite its overwhelming superiority and the ever rising incidence of repetitive strain injury, this technologically advantageous innovation has still not diffused.

Indeed Abrahamson (1991: 587) concludes that the processes that are at work in the diffusion of innovations have ‘repeatedly diffused technically inefficient innovations’ and have ‘caused technically efficient innovations to be rejected’.

A third area of concern is that both individuals and populations can and do provide a different response to different types of innovations (Greenhalg et al, 2004). Thus, a population may respond positively to one innovation, such as mobile phones, whilst being virulently opposed to another, such as nuclear power stations, or wind turbines. Equally an individual may be an ‘early adopter’ of organic food products, but a ‘laggard’ in relation to their use of a PC. On this basis, a clear implication of Rogers’ diffusion theory is that the same individual would be described as ‘cosmopolitan, affluent, technologically savvy, educated and open to risky ideas’ and ‘suspicious of new ideas, resistant to change, insular and conservative’. Unfortunately, many of these personal characteristics are mutually exclusive and accordingly classical diffusion theory cannot be a complete explanation.

The fourth area of concern is raised by, Abrahamson (1991: 586) who suggests that ‘the diffusion literature contains pro - innovation biases which suggest that innovations and the diffusion of innovations will benefit adopters’.

Summary

It is clear that, in its own right, classical diffusion theory makes an important contribution to scholarship.

However, a detailed evaluation has demonstrated that, perhaps unsurprisingly, it is not well suited to provide a detailed and comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

Hence, the inclusion of ‘diffusion theory’ in this literature review is intended both to illustrate one of the significant starting points of the author’s intellectual journey and to highlight some important potential misunderstandings that are common in this field of enquiry.

Included in these potential misunderstandings are; (i) that ‘diffusion theory’ is concerned only with the adoption of innovative products, when it specifically sets out to include ‘ideas, practices and objects’; (ii) that ideas about management are created and perfected in centralised ‘think tanks’, before their diffusion to practitioners; (iii) that the focus of attention should be the influence of sales people, to the exclusion of the influence exerted by fellow practitioners; (iv) that ‘knowledge’ and ‘conviction’ can be taken to be comparable indicators;

and (v) that effective channels of communication can be assumed to exist between knowledge ‘creators’ and knowledge ‘consumers’.

This literature review will now focus upon Abrahamson’s work in relation to managerial ‘fashion setting’. This will provide some additional contextual information and it will also help to dispel some further potential misunderstandings. In addition, it is another important starting point for the intellectual journey that has been undertaken.

However, ‘fashion theory’ has also been included within this literature review because it was developed in direct response to the perceived inability of Rogers’ classical diffusion model to explain why some ineffective ideas about management successfully diffused, whilst some effective ideas did not.

2.4 Managerial ‘fashion - setting’

Abrahamson (1991) sets out to provide a critique of the ‘diffusion of innovations’ and it is the first of three journal articles which lead ultimately to an ‘evolutionary theory of institutions’ (Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999).

Abrahamson (1991: 586) asserts that ‘the diffusion of innovation literature contains pro - innovation biases which suggest that innovations and the diffusion of innovations will benefit adopters’. In addition, the journal article states that its purpose is to ‘address or begin answering the questions: when and how do technically inefficient innovations diffuse? or when and how are technically efficient innovations rejected?’ Hence, Abrahamson specifically sets out to explore the limitations of the innovation – diffusion model.

Abrahamson (1991) cites the work of six authors (Downs & Mohr, 1976; Kimberley, 1981; Rogers, 1962, 1983; Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971; Van de Ven, 1986; Zaltman, Duncan & Holbeck, 1973) to assert that :

> “Reviewers of the innovation literature unanimously agree that it contains pro - innovation biases.”
>
> (Page 589)

However, there is an important aspect which Abrahamson does not explicitly discuss. This is that central to the concept of ‘technical efficiency’, or for that matter ‘technical inefficiency’, is the assumption; (i) that this is some kind of objective, intrinsic quality; (ii) that it is uniquely associated with and permanently attached to a particular innovation; and (iii) that this attachment is for all time and in all circumstances. It is at least possible that ‘technical efficiency’ could be a contextual matter. From this perspective, the ‘technical efficiency’ of an idea about management could be dependent upon (i) the precise nature of the adopting organisation; (ii) the prevailing culture, which could vary over time and (iii) the managerial skill with which any particular innovation was implemented.

Abrahamson (1996) is the second journal article in the trilogy and it seeks to explain the mechanisms that comprise the management 'fashion - setting' process. Here the role of 'fashion - setters' is attributed to organisations such as 'consulting firms, management gurus, business mass media publishers and business schools'. In addition, management fashions are described as :

> "Transitory collective beliefs that certain management techniques are at the forefront of management progress".
>
> (Page 254)

The journal article also proposes that swings in the popularity of any particular management technique should only be regarded as a 'management fashion' when :

> "They are the product of a management fashion - setting process involving particular management fashion - setting organisations and individuals who dedicate themselves to producing and disseminating management knowledge".
>
> (Page 256)

Thus, by this definition, the waxing and waning in both the fortune and the popularity of any particular management technique that is produced by any other mechanism is not an example of a management fashion.

In support of these views Abrahamson (1996: 257 - 258) provides primary evidence that relates to the utilisation of quality circles. The nature of the evidence is two bell shaped curves. One of these indicates the annual frequency with which articles on the subject of quality circles have appeared within the ABI Inform database of journal articles. The other charts, quite literally, the thickness of the annual volumes of the proceedings that have been produced by International Association of Quality Circles. In addition, the journal article refers to secondary evidence regarding the adoption of quality circles. This appears to show that 90% of Fortune 500 companies adopted quality circles during the early 1980s and that more than 80% of these organisations had abandoned their use by 1987.

Although this is interesting information, it falls a long way short of being compelling evidence for the kind of 'fashion - setting' processes that Abrahamson (1996) has described. Firstly, there is some difficulty regarding the primary evidence which, at its best, is based upon the number of journal articles on the subject of quality circles recorded within the ABI Inform database. Whilst the number of articles being written on a topic may be compelling evidence of academic theorising, or even research activity, it is not necessarily evidence of adoption and implementation by management practitioners. Secondly, even if the secondary evidence regarding the utilisation and rejection of quality circles by organisations is accepted, the article provides no evidence to show that the adoption and subsequent abandonment of this particular technique was due to the intervention of management ‘fashion - setters’. Without this evidence the definitions, provided within the article itself, effectively exclude this from being considered as evidence of ‘fashion - setting’. Thirdly, even if the socio - psychological theories are accurate in their general explanation of why some individuals might be susceptible to aesthetic fashions, this is not, of itself, evidence that management practitioners are influenced in these ways in relation to their use of management techniques. More specifically, for influence of this kind to be evidence of management ‘fashion - setting’, as defined by the article, it would need to be demonstrated that this influence was exerted by organisations and individuals such as consulting firms, management gurus, business mass media publishers and business schools. Even if management practitioners were being influenced in these kinds of general ways and for these kinds of generalised reasons, it is at least plausible that those exerting the influence could be bosses, peers, or even subordinates. If this was found to be the case, then once again the definitions provided within the paper itself, would effectively exclude these examples from being considered as evidence of ‘fashion - setting’.

In a later refinement to ‘fashion - setting’, Abrahamson & Fairchild (1999: 712) introduce the proposition that ‘fashion - niches’ exist within organisations. Whilst these are presumed to exist, no evidence is provided to demonstrate this. However, each niche is viewed as containing managerial challenges of such significance that there is the continuous need for new and improved management techniques. It is further proposed that in order for a new management fashion to be triggered, within any particular niche, it is first necessary; (i) that an existing fashion in that niche must collapse; (ii) that there must be a significant performance gap, that a latent management fashion in that niche can purportedly address; and (iii) that widespread discourse must have brought this gap to the collective attention of many management - fashion consumers.

However, the authors provide no clear definition of a ‘fashion - niche’ and neither do they provide evidence that, in organisational terms, this concept is either meaningful, or realistic. In addition, with the exception of the ‘employee – management fashion niche’ the authors also fail to identify any of the other ‘fashion - niches’, which by inference, would exist within an organisation.

Similarly, Abrahamson & Fairchild (1999: 716) attribute job enrichment, quality circles, total quality management and business process re-engineering to the ‘employee – management fashion - niche’. However, in the absence of any definitions, or guidance to the contrary; a case could clearly be made that at least three of the techniques would more properly belong to a ‘production - quality control fashion niche’. In addition, it is also possible to argue that it is difficult to envisage any managerial challenge that could not be attributed to an ‘employee - management fashion niche’.

In fact, Abrahamson & Fairchild (1999: 711 - 727) asks six formal research questions. In order to answer these questions the authors interrogate the ABI Inform database under different subject headings. In addition, the abstracts of journal articles discovered under the subject heading search are subjected to computer aided textual analysis using the General Inquirer CATA software programme. The authors also utilise survey based, secondary evidence provided by a single publication in relation to a single subject heading. Finally, the authors provide additional secondary evidence from a different single publication in relation to different subject heading.

Some the key deficiencies with this approach are; (i) that citation analysis is used as a proxy for detailed, primary information regarding cycles of usage; and (ii) that the ‘managerial fashions’ that are considered are both limited in their range and very specific in their subject matter. The overall effect is the appearance of far reaching, general conclusions being reached about the fundamental nature of management from an evidence base that seems limited, via a process that appears to argue from the very specific to the perfectly general.

Clark & Salaman (1998: 138 - 139) discuss the role of ‘management gurus’ and they conclude that ‘management gurus are fashion setters’ and that ‘the swings in fashion they inspire are an extremely serious matter for management scholars’. Whilst these authors provide no real definition of a ‘guru’; some examples of the individuals to whom the authors refer includes; (i) the ‘academics’ Kenneth Blanchard, Rosabeth Moss Kanter and Michael Porter; (ii) the ‘consultants’ Peter Drucker, Tom Peters and Robert Waterman; and (iii) the ‘hero manager’ John Harvey - Jones. Clark & Salman (1998: 146) also provide a number of possible explanations for the perceived impact of management gurus upon managers. However, they also recognise that their potential explanations ‘are open to a number of criticisms’ and that :

> “With the forms of explanation considered so far, gurus are defined as the dominant, initiating partners, exploiting the naiveté, vulnerability of their clients, selling them glib promises, fads, empty slogans, confusing them through their rhetoric, dazzling them with their performances. Managers, on the other hand, are largely conceived as passive, docile consumers of gurus’ ideas and recommendations, inherently vulnerable to gurus’ blandishments, anxiously searching for reassurance and support, looking desperately for new ideas”.
>
> (Page 146)

In relation to the self evident existence of ‘management gurus’, Huczynski (1993: 1) ‘argues that for a management idea to secure fame, fortune and immortality for its writer, it has to meet five prerequisites'. These are that (i) it has to be timely; (ii) it has to be brought to the attention of its potential audience; (iii) it has to address organisational requirements in a way that meets the individual needs and concerns of managers; (iv) it has to be perceived by the potential users as possessing the essential ingredients that make it relevant to their needs; and (v) it needs to be capable of being presented in a way that is verbally engaging.

Clark (2003: 2) also makes the technical criticism that, as proposed by Abrahamson's analysis, the membership of the management fashion - setting community is too restricted and that a more inclusive definition needs to be considered. He concludes that a much broader range of individuals and organisations needs to be included. This includes 'book editors, publishers, ghost - writers, conference organisers and video production companies'.

In a further contribution, Clark & Greatbatch (2004: 397 & 408) conclude that 'best selling management books are manufactured co - productions that result from an intricate editorial process in which the original ideas are moulded in order for them to have a positive impact on the intended audience'. In addition, the 'best selling management books are manufactured contrivances that emerge from a creative process in which the form of the presentation takes precedence over their actual use value'. In addition, Clark & Greatbatch (2004: 397) provide evidence of a corporate consultancy that apparently arranged for up to 50,000 copies of a publication, written by employees, to be purchased through selected bookstores. The specific objective of this was to manipulate the sales figures and thereby raise the profile of book. Furthermore they provide evidence that the authors of one genuine business blockbuster, now apparently admit that they 'faked the data' on which the book was based.

On the basis of this, Clark & Greatbatch (2004) assert that in relation to best selling management books :

> "Their popularity with readers cannot be attributed to 'real' sales. The writer of the book and the named author on the cover are not necessarily the same individual. Finally, the data or observations that underpin the ideas being presented cannot be assumed to exist".
>
> (Page 399)

Hence, the whole notion of a fashion - setting industry, populated by all persuasive management gurus and consultants is undermined if the basis of their scholarship and the authenticity of their influence can be undermined in this way.

Furthermore, by an examination of the conclusions of Clark (2001: 1659 & 1660) it is possible to discern at least seven examples of the 'general deficiencies that are endemic to this area of research' :

1. The continuing conflation of the popularity of ideas with their impact.
2. The assumption that there is a relationship between the pattern in the volume of ‘discourse’ on a management technique and trends in the adoption and rejection of these ideas.
3. The fact that measures of popularity are employed as proxies for impact. This arises because citation analysis is used as the method for determining the life cycle of ideas.
4. The focus of the literature upon the investigation of fashion setters with the consequence that there is a tendency to view the relationship between this group and their mostly managerial ‘audience’ as one-sided.
5. The implicit assumption in much of this research that fashion setters are the dominant party and that managerial ‘audiences’ are passive and compliant recipients.
6. The picture that emerges is one in which managers are portrayed as being the sole arbiters of taste, when in reality publication is a collaborative venture.
7. The dominant picture of management fashion setters as lone creative geniuses who gain unique insights into modern organisational life.

(Page 1659 – 1660)

Although Clark has been perhaps the most persistent contributor of journal articles concerning the reservations, limitations and shortcomings of Abrahamson’s core thesis, there are others who appear to share the general view that, for a whole variety of reasons, Abrahamson’s fashion - setting theory is not the complete storey.

Scarborough & Swan (2001) suggest that an irresolvable contradiction lies at the heart of the management fashion - setting metaphor :

> “It is important to note that unlike aesthetic fashions which are almost self-consciously ephemeral, management fashions actually deny their own nature. Far from being cosmetic or transient in nature (and popular because of this), management fashions will only diffuse if they claim to be fundamental in their application and timeless in their scope”.
>
> (Page 9)

Worren (1996: 613) cites evidence that contrary to the implications of Abrahamson’s article, personnel practices were ‘surprisingly stable and not particularly faddish’. This view is also supported by Mintzberg (2009: 117), who after observing and interviewing in 29 organisations in 5 different countries concludes that ‘fashion was not much in evidence’. Furthermore, Darwin, Johnson & McAuley (2002: 14), citing Eccles, Nohria & Berkley (1992), conclude both that it is possible to ‘trace the origins of many currently fashionable ideas in work stretching back to Mary Parker Follett in the 1920s' and that 'there is a remarkable amount of old wine in new bottles'.

From a different perspective Thomas' (2003: 795 - 796) concern is that 'not all discourse is produced with the intention of selling it' and that 'the division of this field of study into 'producers' and 'consumers' is an oversimplification'.

Equally, Mazza, Alvarez & Comas : The Creation of European Management Practice : Report 15 (2001: 41 - 42) note that 'most current approaches conceive of managers as passive and rather powerless consumers of the knowledge'. Heller (2002: 260 & 266) contrasts the picture of managers that is provided by fashion theory, with that which is portrayed in both the academic and the popular literature on leadership. In the latter genre managers are portrayed as 'sagacious, forceful and extremely skilful at analysing highly complex situations'. He suggests that in the light of this contrast 'the traditional exploitation thesis of managers by consultant gurus needs to be reassessed'.

The Creation of European Management Practice: Final Report (2001: 31) expresses the concern that investigations into 'the succession of different management fashions' are usually 'based upon an examination of management literature rather than on actual management practice'. This reinforces the point previously made regarding the general dependence of this genre of research studies upon citation evidence, rather than upon primary evidence of implementation. Benders & van Veen (2001: 50) conclude that 'to managers, the issue is not in the first place whether an idea is new when judged against the abstract notion of a body of management knowledge, but whether they think they can use it in their organisations'.

In addition, at the heart of Abrahamson's powerful metaphor is the association of managerial fashion with aesthetic fashion. However, un - stated, and perhaps even un - recognised, there is the implicit assumption that aesthetic fashion is always driven by 'fashion - setters' who have a vested, commercial interest in doing so and that the same will therefore be true of 'managerial fashion'. Unfortunately, as the example of the Wolverine Company and its Hush Puppies product shows, there is clear evidence which suggests that this is not always the case.

In this regard, Gladwell (2000: 3 - 5) describes the circumstances of the Wolverine Company in relation to its Hush Puppies shoes. In 1993 sales of the shoes were down to 30,000 pairs, the brand was regarded as being beyond recovery and the Company was thinking of discontinuing the product. However, unbeknown to Wolverine a handful of teenagers living in the East Village area of Soho, New York had started wearing Hush Puppies, precisely because no one else was wearing them. By the autumn of 1995 the company was receiving requests for their shoes from haute couture fashion designers and in 1996, at a time when sales of the shoes had risen to more than 1.5 million pairs, Hush Puppies received the prize of best accessory at the Council of Fashion Designers awards.

Owen Baxter, a Hush Puppy executive, remembers being told that Hush Puppies had suddenly become fashionable in the clubs and bars of Manhattan and that the fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi was himself was wearing the shoes. Baxter's comment was that "I think it's fair to say that at the time we had no idea who Isaac Mizrahi was". His amazement grew when he learned that the demand for Hush Puppies was so great and the availability so poor, that a secondary market had emerged. Baxter recalls that "we were being told that there were resale shops in The Village, in Soho, where shoes were being sold. People were going to the Ma and Pa stores, the little stores that still carried them, and buying them up".

It was clear that whatever had turned the least desirable shoes in the land into the most desirable, it had nothing to do with the Wolverine Company. In addition, it wasn't just a New York phenomenon. At the height of its resurgence, Joel Fitzgerald, a Los Angeles designer, put a twenty - five foot inflatable version of the Basset hound symbol of Hush Puppies on the roof of his Hollywood shop. He also bought the shop next door and turned it into a Hush Puppy boutique. Fitzgerald recalled that the whole phenomenon was "total word of mouth".

As this illustration demonstrates, there is no simple, one to one, correlation between the activities of those who might consider themselves to be professional 'fashion - setters' and the spread of an aesthetic fashion. Indeed, as this example suggests a more appropriate metaphor might be that of a virus, contagion, geometric progression and an epidemic (Granovetter: 1978; Granovetter & Soong: 1983). Equally, another alternative metaphor might be that of 'swarm intelligence'. Here the characteristic behavior is the ability of a community such as ants, fish or birds (but not excluding human beings!) to act in a coordinated way without the presence of either a coordinator or an external controller (Beni & Wang: 1989). In addition, another equally plausible explanation might be that all theories of management are 'circumstance – contingent' (Christensen & Raynor (2003). In fact there is no reason why these different explanations should be mutually exclusive?

However, at the heart of both Abrahamson's model, and even Clark's modified version, is the notion of powerful and persuasive oratory by the 'management gurus' and a rather naive, passive, gullible response from an easily persuadable audience of practitioners.

Similarly, the Abrahamson model assigns a pivotal role in 'fashion - setting' to management consultancies. However, Kieser (2002) draws attention to the 'widespread assumption that knowledge that is of relevance to management practice travels rather easily from management science to consultants, who process it in order to increase its applicability, and then pass it on in the form of transferable practices to business organisations'. He concludes that :

> "This idealised picture is not realistic since it presupposes that for there to be a productive dialogue between management science, consulting, and business practice there has to be some degree of commonality between the three systems. It will be argued that they are three separate systems".
>
> (Page 206)

The Creation of European Management Practice (2001:38) research programme also shares in these concerns regarding consultants. It's findings suggest that 'consultants quickly learned from practice and subsequently disseminated (and developed) the insights gained'. In addition, O'Shea & Madigan (1997: 13) suggest that consulting 'is an unusual industry because it builds up its knowledge base at the expense of its clients' and that 'consulting companies make a lot of money collecting experience from their clients, which they turn around and sell in other forms, sometimes not very well disguised, to other clients'.

Indeed, The Creation of European Management Practice : Final Report (2001) and the O'Shea & Madigan (1997) findings are consistent with the Mol & Birkinshaw (2008) data which showed that the majority of management innovations were developed by practitioners, rather than academics or consultants.

In addition, Kieser (2002: 214) suggests some reasons, other than fashion - setting, why individuals and organisations might be interested in utilising management consultants. These include reassuring stakeholders that 'best practices' are being utilised, helping to overcome organisational 'resistance to change', increasing the 'power' and influence of some individuals and groups, improving the prospect of certain projects and plans being 'accepted', acting as 'scapegoats' for unpopular decisions, providing 'impartial' endorsement of strategic thinking, acting as a confidential 'sounding board' to individuals and offering 'management philosophies' that top management finds useful. There are also two other obvious reasons for using consultants, which are (i) the provision of expertise that the organisation either doesn't have or which would be expensive to maintain; and (ii) the provision of resources to deal with short term variations in workload.

Summary

It is clear that, in its own right, 'fashion theory' makes a significant contribution to scholarship.

However, as with 'diffusion theory', a detailed evaluation has demonstrated that, equally unsurprisingly, it is not well suited to provide a detailed and comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

Hence, the inclusion of ‘fashion theory’ in this literature review is intended to both illustrate another of the significant starting points of this intellectual journey and to highlight some additional potential misunderstandings that are common in this field of enquiry.

Included in these potential misunderstandings are; (i) that trends in aesthetic fashion can always be attributed to the activities of ‘fashion setters’; (ii) that it is self evident that managerial practices are subject to fashionable trends; (iii) that it is axiomatic that ‘citation analysis’ can be used as a reliable proxy for primary evidence of managerial practices; (iv) that management practitioners can be reasonably characterised as the rather passive, docile and gullible consumers of guru blandishments; and (v) that it is self evident that management consultancies are primarily concerned with the diffusion of sound theory, rather than the dissemination of good practice.

Thus, although both Rogers’ ‘diffusion of innovations theory’ and Abrahamson’s ‘fashion - setting theory’ have provided important contextual information neither was likely to be able to provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

Accordingly, it is clear that the search for a more comprehensive and more complete theoretical foundation will require the evaluation of a much wider and much more broadly based range of scholarship. The starting point for this will be to explore the generic learning processes of adults. This will provide some more broadly based insights that will shed light upon the processes of appropriation.

2.5 Learning by adults

In the previous two sections of this thesis it has been established that, perhaps unsurprisingly, it would be difficult to conclude that either ‘diffusion theory’ or ‘fashion theory’ are well suited to provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

However, the task now is to widen the scope of the literature review to encompass other, more broadly based scholarship. The initial objective of this is to obtain information and insights from other disciplines regarding the generic learning processes of adults, as opposed to children. An additional requirement is that such insights will need to be both relevant to and applicable to the particular circumstances of management practitioners. Furthermore they will need to be able to shed light upon the appropriation of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management. Hence, the overarching purpose in reviewing this extended scholarship is to identify those insights that have the potential to contribute to a new synthesis.

Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner (2007: 83 & 277) confirm both that ‘there is no single theory that explains all of human learning’ and that ‘there is no single theory of adult learning’. In addition, they confirm that ‘there is little consensus on how many learning theories there are or how they should be grouped for discussion’. They conclude that ‘how the knowledge base in this area is divided and labelled depends upon the writer’.

However, Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner (2007: 275 & 294) opt for discussing the five traditional orientations of behaviourist, humanist, cognitivist, social cognitive and constructivist. In this regard they suggest that for the behaviourist the purpose of learning is ‘to produce behavioural change’; for the humanist it is ‘to become more self-actualised’; for the cognitivist it is ‘to develop capacity’; for the social cognitivist it is ‘to learn new roles’; and for the constructivist it is ‘to construct knowledge’. In addition, they assign to each of these traditional orientations a number of ‘learning theorists’. Thus Watson (1925), Thorndike (1932), Pavlov (1927), Skinner (1938) and Hull (1943) are regarded as behaviourist; Maslow (1970) and Rogers (1969) are regarded as humanist; the Gestalists Koffka (1935), Kohler (1929), Lewin (1948) and Piaget (1966) are regarded as cognitivist; Bandura (1977) and Rotter (1954) are regarded as social cognitivist; and Dewey (1938), Lave (1988) and Vygotsky (1978) are regarded as constructivist. However, in terms of this research study, it is important to remember that the challenge is to create, from the insights of such established theorists, a new synthesis that is relevant to the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

In this regard, Hogan & Warrenfeltz (2003: 76) discuss, in some detail, two of the five traditional orientations in terms that are particularly relevant to the discipline of management. The first is the Gestalt, cognitivist tradition, which proposes that individuals ‘construct mental models of the world that they then use both to interpret reality and to guide their behavioural responses’. From this perspective learning equates to the process of ‘constructing new, or updating and enhancing old mental models’. Implicit in this tradition is the notion that mental models can be inappropriate, incomplete or just plain wrong and that the purpose of learning is to examine, challenge, refine, amend and sharpen these models. The second tradition is that of behaviourism which approaches learning ‘as a change in behaviour, after an experience’. Thus, inherent in behaviourism is the notion of a ‘well-honed behavioural capability’, which in effect equates learning to the process of acquiring a skill. Whilst these two traditions may appear to be contradictory and even mutually exclusive, in fact they are describing a phenomenon with which we are all familiar. This is that an individual may have a profound understanding of engineering, but be incapable of driving a car and equally an individual may be a highly accomplished athlete with little or no awareness of Shakespeare.

The influence of both the Gestalt and the behaviourist traditions can be seen in relation to managerial learning. The behaviourist tradition of learning tends to see managerial education as an ever more codified series of skills and competences. On the other hand the Gestalt tradition tends to see management education as a series of mental models that are useful for interpreting individual and organisational behaviours.

Accordingly, since the focus of this research project is the appropriation of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models; rather than the acquisition of tools and techniques, it is inevitable that insights from the behaviourist tradition will be less relevant to any new synthesis. However, this is not to suggest that the acquisition of tools and techniques is any less valuable for management practitioners than the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models. In addition, there are also a number of more particular ideas about learning that, although interesting in their own right, do not feature in the review of scholarship that follows. This includes, but is not limited to, ideas such as andragogy (Knowles, 1975), learning styles (Kolb, 1984; Honey & Mumford, 1992), experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Jarvis, 1983; Usher, Bryant & Johnston, 1997), self directed learning (Tough, 1967), lifelong learning (OECD, 1996) and continuing professional development (Williams, 2001).

However, within this broad base of scholarship the literature review will now consider what might stimulate, prompt, trigger, or initiate a significant learning episode for any adult?

2.5.1 Learning triggers

Support for the general thesis of the likely existence of a trigger mechanism that might prompt adult learning is provided by Dewey (1933: 12). He proposes that ‘reflective thinking’, as distinct from other operations to which the term ‘thinking’ may be applied, involves firstly ‘a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity and mental difficulty, in which thinking originates’, and secondly ‘an act of searching, hunting and inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt and settle and dispose of the perplexity’. Thus :

> “The origin of thinking is some perplexity, confusion, or doubt. Thinking is not a case of spontaneous combustion; it does not occur just on ‘general principles’. There is something that occasions and evokes it”.
>
> (Page 15)

Similarly, Carl Rogers (1969: 157), provides details of ‘a number of principles’ that can be ‘abstracted from current experience and research’ :

> "Significant learning takes place when the subject matter is perceived by the student as having relevance for his own purposes. A somewhat more formal way of stating this is that a person learns significantly only those things which he perceives as being involved in the maintenance or enhancement of his own self".
>
> (Page 158)

Some authors regard Rogers as 'America's most influential counsellor and psychotherapist' (Kirschenbaum, 2004: 116 & 123). He is probably best known for the development of 'self theory', although it is also worth noting that this is grounded in the much earlier work of individuals such as Descartes and Freud. In addition, when Rogers (1969, 157) uses the terms 'self' or 'self concept' it is meant to imply 'an organised, consistent set of perceptions and beliefs about oneself', rather than say 'self interest'. Thus, the context in which Rogers uses the term 'self' is that of it being the central ingredient in human personality, developed through previous social experiences and maintained by current perceptions.

In addition, Mezirow (1977: 153, 157 & 158) proposes that 'to the degree that our culture permits, we tend to move through adulthood along a maturity gradient which involves a sequential restructuring of one's frame of reference for making and understanding meanings' He then proposes a potential trigger which is that 'when a meaning - perspective can no longer comfortably deal with anomalies in a new situation, a transformation can occur' and that 'usually a dilemma must generate pressure and anxiety to effect a change in perspective, so that people feel that the rug has been pulled out from under them'.

Of course it would also seem be perfectly possible for the pressure and anxiety for change to come from within an individual, from the cultural forces within an institution and from the wider social environment. Mezirow (1977: 163) also asserts that a transformation in an individual's meaning - perspective 'cannot be resolved by simply acquiring more information, enhancing problem - solving skills or adding to an individual's competencies'. However, although Mezirow (1977: 160) asserts that 'neither information, nor additional competencies can bring about a new meaning - perspective', he also acknowledges that they can be an important 'after - the - fact' element and that 'within a new perspective, people will still require educational assistance in acquiring needed skills and specific competencies they come to see as relevant'.

Schutz (1964) also describes adult learning in similar, if somewhat less dramatic, terms :

> "If we encounter in our experience something previously unknown and which therefore stands out of the ordinary order of our knowledge, we begin a process of inquiry. We first define the new fact; we try to catch its meaning; we then transform step by step our general scheme of interpretation of the world in

> such a way that the strange fact and its meaning become compatible and consistent with all the other facts of our experience and their meanings".
>
> (Page 105)

In addition, Hofstadter (2001: 522) reaches the similar conclusion that 'if the current perception of a situation leads one into a state of cognitive dissonance, then one goes back and searches for a new way to perceive it'. Similarly, Barr, Stimpert & Huff (1992: 17) conclude that 'mental models that can no longer accommodate or explain occurrences in the environment must be altered and new understandings of the environment must be developed'. They also conclude that this 'involves unlearning, the deletion of concepts or assumed associations' and the 'addition of new concepts and associations'. Equally, Jarvis (2006: 9) regards this phenomenon as a 'disjuncture', which he describes as being when 'our biographical repertoire is no longer sufficient to cope automatically with our situation so that our unthinking harmony with our world is disturbed to some degree or other'.

Finally, Handy (2002) contends that since, in the long term, incremental change is not sustainable, it is discontinuous change that is, or should be, a key trigger for learning :

> "In a world of incremental change it is sensible to ape your elders in order to take over where they leave off, in both knowledge and responsibility. But under conditions of discontinuity it is no longer obvious that their ways should continue to be your ways".
>
> (Page 8)

However, a corollary of these collective perspectives is that in times of stability and predictability there is no need for an adult to learn, as they can draw all of the information that they require from their previous experiences. A related corollary of this scholarship is that 'perplexity, confusion and doubt'; 'cognitive dissonance'; the creation of a 'disjuncture' and experiences of 'discontinuity' are all necessary preconditions for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

2.5.2 Scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema

From the previous section it has been established that a key trigger for learning by adults is an individual's inability to draw upon previous experiences to guide both their understanding of their environment and their behaviour. An implication of this is that adult human beings have ways of processing, storing and subsequently drawing upon previous experience. It is this scholarship that is the focus of the next section of the thesis.

Bartlett (1967: 301 & 302) asserts that a key part in the development of homo sapiens has been their ability to avoid being constantly swayed by their 'immediate circumstances' into an unavoidable series of stimulus and response reactions. The avoidance of this compulsion has provided the species with the ability to develop a range of options and possibilities, other than those that are simply determined either by a 'chain of conditioned reflexes', or by the 'sequences of a relatively fixed habit'. He reasons, that for mankind to advance beyond low threshold responses, it has been necessary for the 'schemes' of the original experiences to be resolved into their constituent elements and for mankind to subsequently learn how to utilise the component parts in new 'schemes' of an individual's own making. Hence, Bartlett regards the ability to deconstruct a 'scheme' and to reconstruct it as the 'pre - eminent function' of human consciousness. Bartlett (1967: 313) also concludes that, when humanity is seeking to recall from memory a particular piece of information, the 'overlap of schematic organisation' and the 'crossing of interests' mean that items are likely to be drawn from more than one 'scheme'.

Similarly, Koffka (1935: 536) considers that the process of learning incorporates all the former occasions during which an individual has carried out a specific activity, together with the current experience. From this perspective learning is a cumulative experience. This view makes no value judgement regarding the nature of the experiences themselves and accordingly these have the potential to be either positive or negative. Similarly 'repetition of an activity may lead to either good or bad habits' and equally the repetitions may lead to either effective or ineffective ways of undertaking a particular activity. Koffka also postulates that activities can and do take place for reasons other than learning; that the performance of an activity does not of itself indicate that learning is taking place; and that learning can occur in a different time frame to that of the activity. He also defines a change, in an object with memory, that subsequently cannot be completely removed as a 'trace' and he proposes that a key aspect of learning is the ability to consolidate traces. Thus, whilst a wide range of different experiences, leave additional traces and whilst there is also little doubt that this breadth of experiences constitutes mental development; the variety, does not of itself, result in learning. Ultimately Koffka (1935) provides this 'explanatory definition' of learning :

> "Learning, as the modification of an accomplishment in a certain direction, consists in *creating* trace systems of a *particular kind,* in *consolidating* them, and in making them more and more *available* both in repeated and new situations."
>
> (Page 544)

Abelson (1976) proposes that 'scripts' represent the familiar, everyday events of our lives and Schank & Abelson (1997) describe these follows :

> "Scripts handle stylised everyday situations. They are not subject to much change, nor do they provide the apparatus for handling totally novel situations. Thus, a script is a predetermined, stereotyped sequence of actions that defines a well-known situation".

(Page 41)

Schank and Abelson (1997: 67) recognise that 'by subscribing to a script - based theory of understanding, they are making some strong claims about the nature of the understanding process'. Indeed, a key implication is that 'in order to understand the activities that are going on in any given situation, a person must have been in that situation' themselves, either as a participant or an observer. In addition, they also recognise that 'the actions of others will only make sense when these are consistent with a stored pattern of actions and that any deviation from the standard pattern that is described by the script will be handled with some difficulty'. They acknowledge their intention for 'scripts' to 'account for much of the specific knowledge that people have' and in addition, they assert that :

> "Most understanding is script-based".
>
> (Page 67)

In confirmation of this Schank & Abelson (1997: 67 - 68) describe understanding as a process 'by which people match what they see and hear to pre-stored groupings of actions that they have already experienced'. They also confirm that they 'view human understanding as heavily script - based'. In addition, they conclude that 'a human understander comes equipped with thousands of scripts' which they use 'almost without thinking'.

Finally, Minsky (1975: 212) conceptualises a 'frame' as 'a network of nodes and relations' and he also proposes that 'collections of related "frames" are linked together' into 'frame systems'. These enable 'chunks' of data to be readily processed and it is through the utilisation of 'frames' and 'frame systems' that Minsky seeks to explain both the processing 'power and the speed of mental activity' in humans.

Thus, by utilising 'schemes', 'traces', 'frames' and 'scripts', the overwhelming majority of situations confronted by adults can be handled without the need to resort to overt cognition. Schutz (1964) describes this as 'thinking as usual', which he describes as :

> "Trustworthy *recipes* for interpreting the social world and for handling things and men in order to obtain the best results in every situation with a minimum of effort by avoiding undesirable consequences".
>
> (Page 95)

Whilst Louis (1980) supports this general thesis, she also describes a mechanism that has the potential to prompt an individual learning episode :

> "Scripts provide the individual with predictions of event sequences and outcomes. Implicitly, reasons for outcomes, that is, prospective explanations,

> are supplied. As long as the predicted outcomes occur, thinking is not necessary. However, when predicted outcomes do not occur, the individual's cognitive consistency is threatened".
>
> (Page 240)

Thus, for Louis it is a lack of congruence between an individuals script based expectations and a current experience that has the potential to cause the individual to think and thereby to seek a new understanding.

Accordingly, it is clear from the scholarship relating to scripts, schemes, frames, traces, 'trustworthy recipes' and 'meaning perspectives' that the recall, deconstruction and reconstruction of memories is at the heart of learning by adults. This suggests that an understanding of human memory systems would also be helpful.

However, it is also worth drawing attention to the fact that whilst both 'diffusion theory' and 'fashion theory' assume that appropriation takes place on a significant scale, the scholarship regarding learning by adults does not. Indeed, these insights suggest that adults have little, or even no reason to appropriate any ideas, theories, concepts and models unless and until their existing scripts, schemes, frames, traces, 'meaning perspectives', and 'trustworthy recipes' are unable to act as a guide to what is going on and how an individual should behave.

2.5.3 Memory systems

The scholarship regarding scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema has confirmed the important role that previous experiences play in guiding adult human beings in both their understanding of their environment and their behaviour. This suggests that an understanding of human memory systems would be helpful and in this regard Kiesler & Sproull (1982: 552) outline the key cognitive processes as being 'perceiving, encoding, storing, retrieving and inferring'.

Short term memory is considered to hold relatively small amounts of information (almost certainly less than ten words, digits or letters etc) for short periods of time (perhaps up to 20 seconds). In contrast, long term memory can hold information for a lifetime and the brain has virtually unlimited storage capacity. In fact Kandel (2001: 1037) suggests that both implicit and explicit memory 'are encoded as changes in synaptic strength that correlate with the behavioural phases of short and long term memory' and that 'long term synaptic changes involve activation of gene expression, new protein synthesis, and the formation of new connections'. On the basis of the minimalist assumption that each synapse can store only one 'bit' of information, the maximum capacity of the human brain has been estimated as 100TByte (Landauer, 1986: 492). Experiments, conducted during the mid 1980s, also suggested that human beings store information in their long term memory at a rate of between 1 and 2 bits per second (Landauer, 1986: 480 & 484). This would suggest that the total amount of data stored in the long term memory of the human brain, over a 70 year lifetime, is in the order of 125 MByte. Hence, if everything was stored and nothing was deleted, the maximum storage capacity of the human brain would appear to be a whole order of magnitude greater than that which would be required.

In fact, Baddeley (1986) suggests that the original conception of two clear, separate and distinctive memory systems, the short term and the long term, may be too simplistic. In this regard it seems clear that short term memory is heavily involved in processes such as reading, writing and performing computations. It also seems clear that the performance of some complex tasks, such as driving a car, would require the processing of such a variety and volume of information that it is unlikely that it could be performed within the known limits and confines of the short term memory system.

In addition, Craik & Tulving (1975) report ten experiments that were designed to explore a framework for the levels of processing that had been originally proposed by Craik & Lockhart (1972). The experiments concluded that semantically processed words involved 'elaboration rehearsal' and 'deep processing' and that it was this that resulted in the accurate recall of information held in long term memory. By comparison, visual and auditory information received only 'shallow processing' and this resulted in less accurate recall. Thus, it seems clear that the retrieval, or recall of information from long term memory makes use of the encoding indexes created when information is stored. It also seems clear that the more a memory has been encoded, elaborated, organised, structured and consolidated, the easier it will be to retrieve. In particular, it seems clear that the more levels of encoding the information passes through and the more the information is elaborated (i.e. described in detail) at each level, the more likely it is to be retained and recalled. They conclude that :

> "Subjects remember not what was 'out there' but what they *did* during encoding".
>
> (Page 292)

Tulving (1985: 385 & 387) concluded that the three major long term systems of the memory were (i) the procedural that 'enables organisms to retain learned connections between stimuli and responses'; (ii) the semantic that is 'characterised by the additional capability of internally representing states of the world that are not perceptually present'; and (iii) the episodic that 'affords the additional capability of acquisition and retention of knowledge about personally experienced events and their temporal relations in subjective time and the ability to mentally 'travel back' in time'.

Finally Tulving (2000: 730) asserts that the ‘distinction between explicit and implicit memory is that between explicit and implicit retrieval’ and that ‘there is no difference between explicit and implicit encoding’.

Thus, from the perspective of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models it seems clear that the elaboration and encoding of experiences and the creation and subsequent maintenance of a sophisticated indexing system are the essential prerequisites to the kind of ‘deep processing’ that will be necessary for individuals to subsequently have ready access to their lifelong experiences. A corollary of this could well be the need for periods of assimilation and reflection?

However, it is important to recognise that even after many decades of work; the scientific world currently has an incomplete understanding of how the human brain works. Accordingly, much of the work in this entire area has the status of current best thinking.

2.5.4 Memory system adaptations

In the kind of high stimulus, time constrained, fragmented world of brevity, variety and high intensity verbal communication that is inhabited by management practitioners the data processing and retrieval requirements of the human memory systems would appear to be very considerable. Indeed, even though the total data storage capacity of the human brain is more that sufficient to deal with these requirements it seems clear that additional system requirements would be needed to deal with these kind of very demanding and very complex human situations.

In this regard Schacter (2001: 187) discusses the fact that the phenomenon of transience (i.e. ‘forgetting over time’) has an ‘adaptive side’ that is not only useful, but necessary to remove from the memory information that is no longer required. Thus, most individuals have no reason to remember the post code of a house where they lived many years ago. Equally most individuals have no reason to remember the registration numbers of every car they have ever owned and so most people don’t. Hence, an aspect of ‘transience’ appears to be that, as the time between each instance of retrieval increases, it becomes harder to recall the information. In effect, the brain ‘gambles’ that the un - retrieved information is no longer relevant or useful. Most of the time, this is a highly advantageous adaptation. Occasionally, as occurs when we meet someone we have seen for many years and we can’t remember their name, this adaptive ‘gamble’ works against us!

In addition, Bjork & Bjork (1998: 283 - 286) suggest that whilst ‘in practice there is no limit on the amount of information that can be stored in long-term memory; there is a limit on retrieval capacity – that is, on the total number of items of information in the memory that are retrievable at any one point in time'. They also suggest that 'retrieving an item from memory makes that item more retrievable in the future' and a corollary of this would appear to be that it 'also makes some other item(s) less retrievable'. In addition, they suggest that 'the items that have been retrieved frequently in the recent past will tend to be those items most relevant to our current interests, problems, goals and station in life'. However, whilst 'the efficient retrieval of currently relevant information is facilitated by the loss of access to out-of-date information' they suggest that such information is 'not lost or erased from memory in some absolute sense'. Rather, 'without cues and aids of one kind or another we become unable to find the target item in our memory' and that accordingly the retrieval of 'normally inaccessible information' is 'aided by the reinstatement of situational or environmental cues'. Thus, if necessary and appropriate such information is 're - learnable at an accelerated rate'.

Accordingly, in the kind of high stimulus, time constrained, fragmented world of brevity, variety and high intensity verbal communication that is inhabited by management practitioners the human brain would appear to provide natural adaptations that would help to ensure that the most useful and most frequently required information is the most accessible. In addition, there would appear to be a natural redundancy mechanism that would help to ensure that the least useful and most infrequently required information is the least accessible.

In addition, Schacter (2001: 189) discusses the role that 'blocking' plays in deliberately and usefully inhibiting the retrieval of information that is stored in the long term memory. Without 'blocking' a simple cue, such as a word like 'table', would trigger the recall of every instance, across the whole of a life, where a table had been a feature. Indeed this would be true regardless of however peripheral the table had been in the substantive memory trace. This would produce many millions of 'hits' of the type that an internet search engine would produce! Associated with this kind of unsophisticated retrieval would be the need to subsequently sort the mass of data into some kind of prioritised list. Thus, once again the 'blocking' mechanism of human brain would appear to be an adaptation that would help to ensure that the most useful information is the most accessible.

Schacter (2001: 190) also suggests that 'absent-minded errors' occur because insufficient attention was paid to the kind of rich, attentive and elaborate encoding that is necessary to ensure, effective, subsequent retrieval. He concludes that 'an elaboration dependent system allows us to enjoy the considerable benefits of operating on automatic pilot, without having memory cluttered by unnecessary information about routine activities'. Schacter (2001) summaries the position as follows :

> "Assume as I've argued, that memory is adapted to retain information that is most likely to be needed in the environment in which it operates. We seldom need to remember all the precise sensory and contextual details of our

> everyday experience. Would an adapted system routinely record all such details as a default option, or would it carefully record such details only when circumstances warn that they may later be needed? Our memories operate on the latter principle, and most of the time we are better off for it”.
>
> (Page 191)

However, a corollary of this proposition is that the recall ability of the human brain is dependent upon the diligence and sophistication with which experiences are encoded, elaborated, organised, structured and consolidated into the human memory system.

Schacter then discusses the instances of ‘misattribution’ that occur, when in laboratory based memory recall experiments, individuals incorrectly claim to have heard a word or to have seen a picture, when in fact they have only heard a semantically similar word or only seen a physically similar picture. Schacter (2001: 192) asserts that such misattribution occurs ‘because participants in these experiments respond on the basis of memory for the general sense or gist of what they saw or heard’. He concludes that ‘the ability to remember the gist of what happened is also one of memory’s strengths’ because it permits individuals to ‘benefit from an experience even when we do not recall all of its particulars’. Schacter (2001: 192) also highlights that a memory system that is based upon ‘gist information’ is ‘fundamental to such abilities as categorisation and comprehension’. Schacter then uses the example of an individual’s ability to name a particular breed of bird to illustrate that in order ‘to develop a coherent category’ for birds it is both necessary to ‘notice and retain the recurring features that unite all birds and to ignore all the idiosyncratic details that differentiate among them’.

In addition, McClelland (1995: 84) refers to ‘indicative remembering’, which he describes as being ‘generalisations based upon the accumulated effects of prior experience, rather than the effects of storing anything like the specific item in memory’. He also asserts that such generalisation is ‘central to our ability to act intelligently’. Schacter (2001: 193) describes this as a ‘theoretical model in which generalisation results from retaining the gist of prior experiences’.

Finally, by reference to studies conducted with individuals with ‘a type of autistic disorder’, Schacter (2001: 193) illustrates the effect that of a ‘literal style of processing information’ would have. Whilst noting that such individuals had an ‘exceptional memory for dates, names, or visual patterns’, he also notes that autism is associated with ‘poor social skills’ and ‘impaired communication abilities’. In addition, he reports the conclusions of some word recognition experiments conducted with both autistic and non - autistic individuals. These showed that the autistic individuals ‘retained individual memories of the words they had studied’, but ‘not the semantic gist’. Accordingly, they were less likely ‘to generalise from the words on the study list’. He concludes that a gist based memory system frees adult human beings from being ‘burdened by a rote record of trivial facts’, whilst remaining sensitive to ‘patterns and regularities in the environment’.

Thus, from the perspective of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models it would appear that the human memory system has adaptations that would be particularly helpful in this kind of high stimulus, time constrained, fragmented world of brevity, variety and high intensity verbal communication. This scholarship has also highlighted the benefits that are provided by 'gist' based categorisation, indicative remembering and the non - literal processing of information. This would appear to have implications for the generic processes of appropriation.

2.5.5 Tacit knowledge

The scholarship regarding human memory systems has suggested that 'distinction between explicit and implicit memory is that between explicit and implicit retrieval' and that 'there is no difference between explicit and implicit encoding' (Tulving, 2000: 730). However, this appears to leave open the question of whether there is tacit learning and tacit knowledge.

Polanyi (1962, 1967 & 1976) is widely credited with providing the first comprehensive discussion of tacit knowledge and he elegantly describes this in the following terms :

> "Far from being embarrassed by our incapacity to state all the grounds on which empirical knowledge rests, we could insist on recognition of our powers to know more than we can tell".
>
> (1976: 336)

Unfortunately, whilst there appears to be widespread agreement regarding the proposition that human beings can know more than they can easily articulate, there is less agreement regarding the precise nature of the phenomenon. There are those for whom tacit knowledge is a skills based phenomenon, such as riding a bicycle, or driving a car, or turning wood. However, there are others who apply the term to more cerebral forms of knowledge. Hence, Ravetz (1971: 102) suggests that the skills of 'craft knowledge' can become so embedded in the individual who is using them that they cannot communicate them. Thus, 'to the extent that the personal knowledge of a tool is deep and subtle, any set of explicit precepts will fall short of conveying it'. Alternatively, Berry (1987: 145) suggests that knowledge can be acquired explicitly, but become tacit through time and that 'as the same knowledge is used over and over again in a procedure we lose our access to it and thus lose the ability to report it verbally'. However, there are also those who regard the learning process itself as being implicit. Thus, Berry & Dienes (1993: 14) conclude that a 'key characteristic of implicit learning is that it tends to be associated with incidental learning conditions'. Similarly, Spender (1996: 67 – 68) describes tacit knowledge as 'a form of knowledge with which we are all intimately familiar, the kind of knowledge we pick up by "osmosis" when we join a new organisation or take up a new activity'. Finally, whilst much of the current thinking appears to see tacit and explicit knowledge as two different entities, Polanyi's original assumption was that all knowledge had a tacit dimension. Accordingly tacit knowledge was originally understood as the cultural, emotional and cognitive background to all understanding, of which humans were only peripherally aware.

In addition, from the perspective of the creation of expert systems within the field of medicine Johnson (1983: 79) refers to a 'paradox of expertise'. Although individuals acquire ever more knowledge that enables them to carry out either a cognitive or a motor a task with ever increasing efficiency; she laments that the knowledge that 'we wish to teach to others, often turns out to be knowledge that individuals are least able to talk about'. However, after reviewing both Mandler (1975) and Jenkins (1981); Johnson (1983: 79 & 80) concludes that once an individual is sufficiently accomplished to undertake a task without thinking, the associated learning is 'usually not available to conscious awareness'; and that even if a practitioner is aware of the 'totality of their experience this knowledge would be likely to be contextually stimulated' and therefore it would only be 'called forth according to the demands of specific tasks'.

Stenmark (2000: 10) also concludes that 'explicit knowledge' is that which can be 'captured and codified into manuals, procedures, and rules that are easy to disseminate'; whilst 'tacit knowledge' is that which 'cannot be easily articulated and thus only exists in people's hands and minds, and manifests itself through their actions'. Similarly, Choo (1998: 111) suggests that 'tacit' knowledge' is 'hard to verbalise because it is expressed through action - based skills that cannot be reduced to rules and recipes' and that 'it is learned through extended periods of experiencing and doing a task, during which the individual develops a feel for and a capacity to make intuitive judgements about the successful execution of the activity'. Connell, Klein & Powell (2003: 141) describe explicit knowledge as consisting 'of concepts, information and insights that are specifiable, and that can be formalised into rules and procedures' and tacit knowledge as involving 'less specifiable insights and skills 'embedded' in individuals or in organisational contexts'. Finally, Nonaka (2007: 165) concludes that 'tacit knowledge has an important cognitive dimension. It consists of mental models, beliefs, and perspectives so ingrained that we take them for granted and therefore cannot easily articulate them'.

In addition, Berry & Dienes (1993: 127) consider the evidence gathered in relation to neuropsychological patients suffering from a whole variety of conditions and they conclude that 'most of the neuropsychological evidence can be interpreted as showing that knowledge can be below a subjective threshold of awareness'; and that 'in some cases, there was also suggestive evidence for knowledge being below an objective threshold'.

Finally, from the perspective of their research within the medical profession Patel, Arocha & Kaufman (1999) conclude that a medical practitioner turns to explicit knowledge when their normal tacit assessments are unable to provide an appropriate clinical diagnosis, thus :

> “We consider the art of medicine to be part of everyday patient care, reflecting the use of tacit knowledge and reflexive reasoning. The science of medicine – and deliberative, reflective causal reasoning – is required when anomalies are generated and need to be explained”.
>
> (Page 96)

Hence, from the perspective of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models there seems little reason to doubt that individuals can both acquire and subsequently utilise tacit knowledge. However this leaves open the question of how it might be possible to consciously access tacit knowledge and this will be examined in the section that follows.

2.5.6 Metaphor and analogy

From the previous section we have seen that there is little reason to doubt that individuals can both acquire and subsequently utilise knowledge tacitly, but that the means by which such tacit knowledge might be accessed was unclear.

In this regard Nisbet (1969: 5) suggests that ‘much of what Michael Polanyi has called, in his recent volume, ‘tacit knowledge’ is expressible – in so far as it is expressible at all – in metaphor’. Similarly, Munby (1986: 198) proposes that ‘metaphorical language is employed to give tacit knowledge voice’ and Srivastva & Barrett (1988: 60) suggest that ‘metaphors can communicate meaning when no explicit language is available, especially in regard to complex ambiguous experience’.

In addition, Nonaka (2007: 166 & 167) discusses the role that ‘figurative language and symbolism’ can play in converting tacit, inexpressible knowledge into explicit knowledge. She concludes that ‘one kind of figurative language that is especially important is metaphor’. However, she also clarifies that by metaphor she doesn’t ‘just mean a grammatical structure or allegorical expression’; but ‘a distinctive method of perception’. In fact, she asserts that a metaphor ‘is a way for individuals grounded in different contexts and with different experiences to understand something intuitively through the use of imagination and symbols without the need for analysis or generalisation’. Equally, Nonaka (2007: 168) asserts that whilst a ‘metaphor is mostly driven by intuition and links images that at first glance seem remote from each other, analogy is a more structured process of reconciling contradictions and making distinctions’. Finally, Nonaka (1994: 21) suggests that because ‘analogy allows the functional operation of new concepts or systems to be explored by reference to things that are already understood', it 'enables us to know the future through the present'. It also 'assumes an intermediate role in bridging the gap between image and logic'.

Choo (1998: 117) also concludes that 'although not completely expressible in words or symbols, tacit knowledge may be alluded to or revealed through rich modes of discourse that include the use of analogies, metaphors, or models, and through the communal sharing of stories'. In addition, Ortony (1975: 45 & 46) notes that human beings are required to communicate via 'discrete symbols', whilst 'as conscious perceivers what we experience is continuous'. This 'deficiency is filled by metaphor'.

However, it is Lakoff & Johnson who provide the seminal work in relation to metaphor, which they also see as a fundamental mechanism of the mind, rather than just a linguistic category :

> "The most important claim that we have made so far is that metaphor is not just a matter of language, that is, of mere words. We shall argue that, on the contrary, human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical".
>
> Lakoff & Johnson (1980: 6)

and

> "The metaphor is not just a matter of language, but of thought and reason. The language is a reflection of the mapping".
>
> Lakoff (1986: 217)

In addition, Lakoff & Johnson (1980: 146, 158, 193 & 231) conclude (i) that 'since our conception of the physical world is partly metaphorical, metaphor plays a very significant role in determining what is real for us'; (ii) that 'we draw inferences, set goals, make commitments, and execute plans, all on the basis of how we in part structure our experience, consciously and unconsciously, by means of metaphor'; (iii) that metaphor 'unites reason and imagination' and (iv) that 'metaphorical imagination is a crucial skill in creating rapport and in communicating the nature of unshared experience'.

Lakoff & Johnson (1999) includes a scholarly review of work undertaken by Narayanan (1997) in relation to computational models of neural networks and in his most recent work Lakoff (2008) is fairly emphatic about these matters :

> "In the neural theory, conceptual metaphor arises in childhood when experiences regularly occur together, activating different brain regions. Activation repeatedly spreads along neural pathways, progressively strengthening synapses in pathways between those brain regions until new circuitry is formed linking them. By this means the new circuitry physically constitutes the metaphor, carrying out a neural mapping between frame circuitry in the regions of the brain and permitting new inferences".
>
> (Page 74)

Finally, Hofstadter (2001: 499 - 500) sees analogy as ‘the core of cognition’ and seeks to convey ‘the importance and centrality of analogy - making in cognition’. Indeed, he suggests ‘that every concept we have is essentially nothing but a tightly packed bundle of analogies’ and that when we think we ‘leap from one analogy bundle to another’. Finally he asserts that :

> “The triggering of prior mental categories by some kind of input – whether sensory or more abstract – is I insist, an act of analogy making”.
>
> (Page 503)

Thus from the perspective of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners it seems clear the metaphors and analogies have the potential to play an important role both in providing access to tacit knowledge and in connecting new information to existing memory structures.

Summary

As a result of widening the scope of the literature review to encompass other, more broadly based scholarship concerning learning by adults it is clear that ‘perplexity, confusion and doubt’; anomalies in ‘meaning - perspectives’; ‘cognitive dissonance’ and the creation of a ‘disjuncture’ are all potential triggers for learning by adults. This seems to imply that appropriation is a much rarer occurrence than some of the extant literature has suggested. It is also clear that whilst information or additional competencies can be important ‘after - the - fact’ elements they cannot, of themselves; bring about a new ‘meaning - perspective’. In addition, it is clear both that scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema provide a schematic store of life experiences and that ‘trustworthy recipes’ enable adults to handle many situations without the need for overt thinking. Finally, it is clear that the ability to deconstruct an experience and to reconstruct it so that it is relevant to a different situation; is a key skill in adult human beings. This would appear to have implications for the decision making process that are utilised by managers.

The literature concerning memory systems has also suggested that the elaboration, encoding and consolidation of experiences are key factors both in the initial storage and subsequently in the effective retrieval of memories. However, there are differences of scholarly opinion regarding whether tacit knowledge is acquired tacitly, is acquired explicitly but becomes tacit over time, or whether it is solely the retrieval process that is tacit. In addition, the literature regarding metaphor and analogy has suggested that these are not just figures of speech or grammatical structures, but methods of perceiving, thinking and connecting new information to existing memory structures.

The literature has also suggested that human memory is an 'adaptive system' which is selective in the level of detail that it both stores and retrieves. In addition, we have seen that 'gist' based information is critical to the task of non - literal categorisation and that it frees human beings from being over - burdened by massive quantities of trivial information.

However, a corollary of these discoveries is that a human adult should only need to acquire new learning when the 'meaning perspectives' provided by their memory store of scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema are unable to help an individual to deal with their current situation.

However, in terms of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models what is unclear is the part that these general principles and propositions, regarding any adult human being, might play in relation to the particular circumstances of a management practitioner.

2.6 Sense – making, decision – making and intuition

The scholarship relating to learning by adults has suggested that adults schematically store their experiences in the form of scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema. The accumulation of these memories provide both 'meaning - perspectives' and 'trustworthy recipes' through which adults make sense of their social environment and know what to do, without the need to resort to overt cognition. From the scholarship relating to the realities of management practice we have seen that management can be characterised as fragmented, demanding, pressurised, time constrained, hectic and energy sapping. However, since the decision making processes of managers is a particular area of interest the objective now is to combine these insights with the scholarship that relates to both the sense - making and the decision - making roles of managers.

2.6.1 Managerial sense - making

Weick (1995: 6) argues that sense making is about 'comprehending, redressing surprise, constructing meaning, interacting in pursuit of mutual understanding, and patterning'; whilst Louis (1980: 241) describes sense making in terms of 'attributing meaning to surprise'. Similarly, Frost & Morgan (1983: 207) suggest that, when people make sense of things, they 'read into things the meanings they wish to see; they vest objects, utterances, actions and so forth with subjective meaning which helps make their world intelligible to themselves'.

In what is effectively a review of his lifelong contribution to scholarship; Czarniawska (2005: 267 & 269) suggests that Weick has been at the forefront of a movement which has sought to apply insights gained from the relatively new discipline of ‘systems theory’ to the old subject of organisations. In addition, whilst the majority of scholars appear to regard ‘uncertainty as a negative state that must be eradicated for organising to take place’, Weick takes a different point of view. Indeed he regards the process of ‘organising’ as being the core rationale for the existence of ‘organisations’. He also regards this as a continuous process, the purpose of which is to cope with ‘ambiguity, ambivalence and equivocality’. In fact, Czarniawska (2005, 269) suggests that ‘Weick cherishes ambiguity and gives it a central place in evolutionary processes’. Thus, from this perspective the organisation is a system that acquires from its external environment equivocal information, (that is information with multiple meanings of equal validity), attempts to make sense of it and then utilises what has been learnt to advantageously face the future.

It is clear that Weick’s application of ‘systems theory’ to organisations incorporates the thinking of Ashby (1956) and his principle of ‘requisite variety’. Daft & Wiginton (1979: 182) explain this as meaning that ‘the control mechanism which is employed to control a complex system must have at least as much variety as the system that it is intended to control’. Thus, the more complicated the data that an organisation is attempting to process, the more complex the organisation’s structures will tend to become. Hence, Weick focuses upon the process of organising, rather than the structure of organisations and he equates organising with the processing of complex information. He also applies Darwin’s concept of evolution to organisations and in addition, he asserts that the ultimate goal of all organisations is to ensure their survival. In order to achieve this, in an ever changing environment, organisations need to process complex information more effectively than their rivals.

Thus, Weick (1979: 12) is ‘about organising and about the appreciating of organising’ and during the introduction to this subject matter he recounts ten episodes that illustrate this. As a result of a process that he describes as ‘embellishing, reworking and contemplating’ each example, he identifies some of the elements that are ‘associated with organising’. Amongst these elements is the suggestion that :

> “Most efforts at sensemaking involve interpretation of previous happenings and of writing plausible histories that link these happenings with current outcomes”.
> (Page 13)

Weick (1987: 115 & 116) examines the application of systems theory and the principle of requisite variety to ‘high reliability organisations’. This includes situations where error free performance is required, but where learning by trial and error is effectively precluded. The examples that he considers includes air traffic control, the control of nuclear power generation plants, NASA mission control and the flight crews of commercial airliners. In this context he suggests that a ‘team of divergent individuals has more requisite variety than a team of homogeneous individuals’. In addition, he concludes that ‘the ways in which people receive information’ affects the reliability of the system and ‘information richness is highest when people work face – to - face’. The ‘information richness’ also ‘declines steadily as people move from face – to - face interaction to interaction by telephone, written personal communication (letters and memos), written formal communiqués (bulletins, documents), and numeric formal communiqués (computer printouts)’. In support of this thesis Weick (1987) discusses the fatal decision to launch the Challenger space shuttle in exceptionally cold conditions and the technical communication regarding this that was held between NASA and their contractor Morton Thiokol. Whilst noting that these discussion were held by a ‘conference telephone call’, he makes this observation :

> “With only voice cues, NASA did not have visual data of facial expressions and body cues which might have given them more vivid information about the intensity of Thiokol’s concerns”.
>
> (Page 115)

Weick’s observations regarding ‘information rich’, face – to - face communication and its impact upon requisite variety and hence system reliability are particularly interesting. Indeed, Daft & Wiginton (1979: 181 & 182) note that by comparison to ‘formal’, or ‘artificial’ languages such as arithmetic or algebra, natural languages ‘contain more words than any person can hope or need to assimilate’. In addition, these words can be ‘combined in countless combinations to communicate concepts’ and furthermore, ‘most words have multiple meanings’. Whilst this produces the kind of ‘high variety’ that is helpful to high reliability within complex systems; it is less helpful where the need is to ‘communicate a limited range of concepts with somewhat greater accuracy’. Thus ‘among people with common interests and experiences’ there are ‘highly specialised languages’ that ‘provide concepts and related symbols that are precise, unequivocal and devoid of excess meaning’. This could easily be an explanation for the kind of ‘jargon’ that surrounds many specialisms?

Furthermore, Weick (1995: 54) provides some details of an incident relating to a detachment of Hungarian soldiers lost in a snowstorm in the Alps during WW2. In fact the story, which was originally told by the Hungarian Nobel Laureate Albert Szent-Gyorti, was preserved in a poem by Miroslav Holub. This was translated from Czech by Jarmila and Ian Miller and published in the Times Literary Supplement on 4th February 1997. A section of this poem is reproduced below :

> The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps
> sent a reconnaissance unit out into the icy wasteland.
> It began to snow
> immediately, snowed for two days and the unit
> did not return. The lieutenant suffered : he had despatched

> his own people to death.
>
> But the third day the unit came back.
> Where had they been? How had they made their way?
> Yes, they said, we considered ourselves
> lost and waited for the end. And then one of us
> found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down.
> We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm and with the map
> we discovered our bearings.
> And here we are.
>
> The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map
> and had a good look at it. It was not a map of the Alps
> but of the Pyrenees.

Weick (1995: 55) concludes that ‘the soldiers were able to produce a good outcome from a bad map because they were active, they had a purpose (to get back to camp), and they had an image of where they were and where they were going. They kept moving, they kept noticing cues, and they kept updating their sense of where they were. As a result, ‘an imperfect map proved to be good enough’. However, in a typical Weick way, he also makes the following comment :

> “This incident raises the intriguing possibility that when you are lost, any old map will do”.
>
> (Page 54)

This counter intuitive observation is worth considering in more detail. The story as told by Holub suggests that the finding of the map had the effect of calming down the soldiers. This gives the reader an insight into how they were feeling about their predicament and it seems clear that, not unreasonably, they were anxious, concerned and perhaps even a little fearful. It also seems clear that the mere fact that one of them had found an ‘old map’ was sufficient to give them some kind of hope that their predicament was potentially survivable. It is also worth speculating that when, after two days, the snow stopped falling and the soldiers emerged from the shelter of their camp, the landscape would have been transformed by a substantial covering of snow. Indeed, many of the features in the landscape must have been at least partially and perhaps even totally obscured. Even with the ‘correct’ map, reconciling the features shown on the map with the partially obscured, snow clad features of the mountainside would have been a significant challenge. Hence, it is also possible to imagine the level of intense scrutiny that it was necessary to afford both the ‘wrong’ map and the landscape, as they attempted to work out both where they were and a safe route back to their base. It is also possible to envisage that the necessary acts of observation and interpretation became a collective, rather than a solitary activity. Finally, it is possible to envisage that as a result of this collective process of observation and interpretation, a whole series of conversations and discussions took place and a whole variety of opinions were expressed regarding what the soldiers should do.

Thus, from the perspective of the soldiers it could be suggested that the 'wrong' map served three key purposes; (i) it helped to give them hope, courage and the expectation that their situation was survivable; (ii) it caused them to notice things about their environment that in other circumstances they may not have noticed; and (iii) it prompted all kinds of important conversations and discussions regarding what they should do. In fact, it could be argued that the 'wrong' map served them at least as well as the 'correct' map would have done? Indeed, it could be argued that in relation to at least two of the purposes, the 'wrong' map was more effective than the 'correct' map would have been!

This prompts the interesting and intriguing possibility that; (i) providing it gives an individual hope, courage and the expectation that their situation is survivable; (ii) providing it causes them to notice things about their environment that otherwise they would not have noticed; and (iii) providing it prompts important conversations regarding what they should be doing; the 'wrong' theory would serve a management practitioner at least as well as the 'correct' theory. Indeed it may even suggest that the 'wrong' theory would serve them better!

Weick, Sutcliffe & Obstfeld (2005: 409) also suggest that 'explicit efforts at sensemaking tend to occur when the current state of the world is perceived to be different from the expected state' and that in such circumstances there is the sense that 'the flow of action has become unintelligible in some way'. In addition, they assert that 'a central theme in both organising and sensemaking is that people organise to make sense of equivocal inputs and enact this sense back into the world to make the world more orderly'. In fact, Weick, Sutcliffe & Obstfeld (2005: 410 - 413) illustrate the principles of sensemaking that they are seeking to establish by reference to the stage by stage responses of a nurse who has noticed the deteriorating condition of a baby in her care. They summarise their illustration in the following terms :

> "This sequence highlights several distinguishing features of sensemaking, including its genesis in disruptive ambiguity, its beginnings in acts of noticing and bracketing, its mixture of retrospect and prospect, its reliance on presumptions to guide action, its embedding in interdependence, and its culmination in articulation that shades into acting thinkingly'.
>
> (Page 413)

In addition, Peroune (2007: 244) also lends support to the notion that sense - making is 'social', rather 'solitary' by concluding that 'peer relationships provide the context within which sense - making can take place'.

Inevitably there are those who regard the Darwinian 'evolutionist' underpinning of 'system theory' as a problem. Indeed, Czarniawska (2005: 267) reflects this when she notes that the application of systems thinking has required that organisations be conceptualised 'as separate units divided from their environments by boundaries and related to them by adaptation'. Czarniawska (2005: 268) also suggests that this conceptualisation presents problems, such as; (i) 'the environment is not a pre-existing set of problems to which an organism, or an organisation, must find solutions; the organisms or organisations create the problems in the first place'; (ii) 'the environment of organisms consists to a great extent of other organisms, and the environment of organisations consists to an even greater extent of other organisations'; (iii) 'the notion of adaptation is misleading when applied to indicate a one-way relationship between an organism and its environment'; and (iv) that 'whilst it can be claimed that organisms have boundaries separating them from their environments, it is much more difficult to apply the notion of pre-existing boundaries to organisations, when mergers, acquisitions, trans-national corporations, and supply networks etc make such an idea appear highly tenuous'.

Whilst these observations are both interesting and insightful this research project has, in other contexts, accepted the value of systems thinking. In addition, the reservations expressed here mainly affect the issue of the boundary between an organisation and its external environment. The focus of this research project is the individual rather than the organisation and the sense - making that is of particular interest is that of the individual within an institutional setting, rather than that of the institution within its external environment.

2.6.2 Managerial decision – making

Goldstein (2008: 466) suggests that 'much of the early theorising' about decision – making was based upon the concept of 'economic utility theory'. This 'is based on the assumption that people are basically rational. This implies that if an individual has the relevant information, they will make the decision that will provide the outcomes that 'are in the person's best interest'. However, this approach assumes that (i) the default position of all decision – makers is rationality; (ii) that the decision – maker has available to them all the relevant information; and (iii) that the available information is reliable and accurate. In addition, the concept of 'utility' relies upon decision – making processes such as 'simulation' through which the decision – maker works out and predicts the probable outcome of the various options. In reality, the outcomes can turn out to be very different to those that had been predicted and thus the process of mental simulation is not as reliable as may have been assumed. A further complication is that even if the decision – maker could accurately predict the practical outcomes this would not help them to predict peoples' reactions to them. Another key limitation occurs when an individual focuses their attention upon just one aspect of a situation and ignores other aspects that have the potential to be equally important. These kinds of 'focussing illusions' are yet another reason why decision – making is a complex matter. Yet another illustration is the 'framing effect' through which decisions are influenced by how the situation or problem is stated and whether, for example, this highlights the negative or the positive features of the circumstances. Finally, decisions can be influenced not only by the merits, or otherwise of the current circumstances, but by the need for the decision – maker to provide a retrospective rationale and 'justification' for their decision (Goldstein, 2008: 466 – 480).

However, we have seen that management can be characterised as fragmented, demanding, pressurised, time constrained, hectic and energy sapping and this also has a potential impact upon managerial decision - making. Wright (1974: 555) examined the evidential basis used by decision makers when operating under time pressures. He concluded that when 'faced with a decision of challenging complexity, an individual will endeavour to restructure that task into a simpler one'. A key part of this process is to 'exclude from consideration data about less relevant dimensions', even though under less demanding circumstances these would have been sufficiently important to be considered. He also found that under pronounced time pressure individuals gave undue attention to the negative data, the down side risk, that was associated with the decision. In addition, Friend (1982: 623 & 632) investigated 'problem solving' and other tasks requiring 'novel responses' and concluded that 'increases in psychological stresses, like subjectively high work load and time urgency, uniformly impair performance'. It is important to emphasise that the key determinant is the belief of the participant that the workload is high and that time is short. This is regardless of whether, by any objective assessment, this can be demonstrated to be the reality. Freedman & Edwards (1988: 132) also conclude that for either 'complex intellectual tasks or artistic activities even a small amount of time pressure will interfere with a good performance'.

Given the established research findings regarding the reality of the managerial existence there would appear to be at least two possibilities. The first is that the hectic pace of managerial life, the high workload and the constant sense of urgency, results in managerial decision making that is systematically poor. An alternative is that management practitioners, in operational roles, make decisions in a rather different way to those who are participating in decision making tests as a part of laboratory based, research projects.

In his study of what managers think about and how they think, Isenberg (1984: 81, 82 & 84) confirms that the common view of managers as going through sequential 'stages of analysis' before deciding what to do is largely illusory. He concludes that most managers do not closely follow the 'classical, rational model of first clarifying goals, assessing the situation, formulating options, estimating likelihood's of success, making decisions, and only then taking action to implement the decision'. In fact, Isenberg asserts that managers 'frequently bypass rigorous, analytical planning altogether' and that 'when they do use analysis for a prolonged time, it is always in conjunction with intuition'. In addition, he concludes that 'in making their day-by-day and minute-by-minute tactical manoeuvres, senior executives tend to rely on several general thought processes such as using intuition; managing a network of interrelated problems;

dealing with ambiguity, inconsistency, novelty, and surprise; and integrating action into the process of thinking'.

In addition, Klein (1993) reports on his extensive observational field work in relation to the decision making processes of 'fire ground commanders' in America. He concludes that in field situations 'experts' tend not to generate and evaluate several courses of action concurrently to determine the best option. Rather, based upon an expert classification of the perceived problem, they generate a single highly probable response option and then evaluate the appropriateness of this to the prevailing circumstances. If the evaluation is positive, they act upon it and if it is not, it is either modified or an alternative is generated. If necessary the cycle is repeated until an appropriate course of action has been identified. Hence, the major factor that distinguishes experienced decision makers from their less experienced colleagues is their ability to make accurate situational assessments, rather than their reasoning competence per se. Thus, experts in a field can look at a situation and quickly interpret it using a highly organised database of relevant experience. The accurate identification of the essential nature and character of an operational situation results in the parallel retrieval of one or more appropriate courses of action. Because of situational and organisational constraints, decision makers usually use a 'satisficing' (sic) rather than an 'optimising' strategy. That is, they select a good enough option, though not necessarily the best, choice. While at first glance this might seem lazy or even hazardous, the fact is that in most ill - defined, complex and multifaceted operational situations, there is no single correct answer. Many paths will lead to the same goal or to parallel and equally satisfactory goals. Each of these will involve different tradeoffs in time, risk, or resources. Klein (1993: 140) calls this process 'recognition - primed' decision making and he describes this as 'how experienced people can make rapid decisions'.

In addition, Klein (1998) discusses the managerial approach to decision - making in the following terms :

> "Managers prefer hedge clipping to tree felling in their decisions. Since they often have to reconcile conflicting goals and operate under high uncertainty concerning both present situations and future consequences, managers prefer to proceed incrementally, adjusting their actions and adapting their goals as they get to understand the environment better through exploratory action".
> (Page 129)

Louis and Sutton (1991: 70 & 71) propose that for adult human beings 'automatic cognitive processing is the norm' and that individuals and groups develop cognitive structures and 'habits of mind' to guide this activity. Indeed they assert that 'automatic processing is adequate, even superior, in business-as-usual situations. Novel and discrepant conditions provoke active thinking and in addition, individuals and groups can wilfully invoke conscious engagement'. Finally, they conclude that 'cognitive errors and problems' do not occur because people have 'engaged in automatic processing' and have 'relied upon their cognitive structures'. 'Rather, errors occur and problems arise because people fail to recognise conditions that should prompt them to switch from automatic processing to active thinking'.

Dijksterhuis (2004: 587 & 588) also examines the effectiveness of both conscious and unconscious thought in decision - making. He asserts that in order to make sound decisions an individual 'needs enough process capacity to deal with large amounts of information and skills sufficiently sophisticated to integrate information in a meaningful way'. He then draws attention to the fact that the processing capacity of the unconscious mind is an order of magnitude greater than that of the conscious mind and he suggests that 'the unconscious continues to think about pressing matters in the absence of any conscious attention'. Finally, Dijksterhuis (2004: 586 & 596) concludes that 'throughout the experiments, unconscious thinkers made better decisions' and he suggests that 'the relative inferiority of conscious thought' was as a result of the 'low processing capacity of consciousness'.

However, it is possible that the role of 'recognition - primed' decision making is limited to the more operational situations and circumstances that are faced by managers and that the more strategic decisions follow a different pattern. Indeed, following their field study of 25 strategic decision making processes Mintzberg, Raisingham & Theoret (1976) draw attention to their 'unstructured' nature, which they describe as :

"A groping, cyclical process"

(Page 265)

Finally, in their study of how farmers make decisions, Ohlmer, Olsen & Brehmer (1998: 286) describe a five stage process that describes and summarises many of the insights that have been obtained so far. The five stages are (i) they 'continually update their problem perceptions, ideas of options, plans and expectations when new information is obtained'; (ii) they 'often use a qualitative approach to forming expectations and estimating consequences expressed in directions from the current condition'; (iii) 'in many situations' they ' prefer a quick and simple decision approach over a detailed elaborate approach'; (iv) they 'prefer to collect information and avoid risks through small tests and incremental implementation'; and (v) 'during implementation', they 'continually check for clues to form their evaluation of long-run actions in a feed forward and compensation approach, rather than a post-implementation evaluation'.

2.6.3 Intuition

We have seen from the scholarship regarding decision - making that experienced adults are able to short circuit a completely rigorous analytical decision - making process. In addition, Isenberg (1984: 82) asserts that even when adults utilise analysis 'it is always in conjunction with intuition'. However, Isenberg (1984: 85) also notes that 'people have a poor grasp of what intuition is'; that 'some see it as the opposite of rationality'; that 'others use it as an excuse for capriciousness' and that 'some view it as the exclusive property of a particular side of the brain'. Accordingly the objective of this next section of the thesis is to review the scholarship relating to intuition.

Isenberg (1984: 85) concludes that senior managers use intuition in five ways; (i) 'they intuitively sense when a problem exists'; (ii) they 'rely on intuition to perform well-learned behaviour patterns rapidly'; (iii) they 'synthesise isolated bits of data and experience into an integrated picture'; (iv) they use it 'as a check on the results of a more rational analysis'; and (v) they use it 'to bypass in depth analysis and move rapidly to come up with a plausible solution'. In addition, Schon (1983: 239 & 242) recognises that managers are 'often confronted with unique situations to which they must respond under conditions of stress and limited time which leave no room for extended calculation or analysis'. He notes that on such occasions the managers tend to speak of 'intuition' and that because 'awareness of intuitive thinking usually grows out of articulating it to others, managers often have little access to their own reflection-in-action'.

Equally, Klein & Weick (2000: 18 & 19) describe intuition as an individual relying on their 'experience without having to analyse everything' and they illustrate this by reference to 'studies of skilled chess players'. These 'show that the first option they think of is usually a good one, and often the best'. They conclude that :

> "If we don't have experience, intuition won't get us anywhere"
> (Page 18)

They also suggest that experience gives an individual the ability to 'size up situations quickly'; to 'recognise typical ways of reacting to problems' and to 'mentally "game out" an option to see if it will work'. Experience also enables an individual to 'focus on the most relevant data elements' and to 'form expectancies'. Finally, intuition enables an individual to 'detect anomalies and problems' and to 'figure out plausible explanations for unusual events'.

Hofstadter (2001: 501) also makes the analogy between intuition and playing chess. He asserts that 'experienced chess players "chunk" the setup of pieces on the board nearly instantaneously into small dynamic groupings defined by their strategic meanings' and that 'thanks to this automatic, intuitive "chunking", they can make good moves nearly instantaneously'. In addition, he discusses 'why babies are unable to remember what has happened to them'. He concludes that they are 'like beginners looking at a complex scene on a board, not having the faintest idea how to organise it into higher-level structures'.

In contrast, Berry & Dienes (1993) link ‘implicit learning’ with intuition :

> “Another key characteristic of implicit learning is that it gives rise to a phenomenal sense of intuition. That is, people do not feel that they actively work out the answer”.
>
> (Page 15)

and Reber (1989) also concludes that intuition is linked to ‘implicit learning’ :

> “The point is that intuition is a perfectly normal and common mental state / process that is the end product of an implicit learning experience”.
>
> (Page 232)

Finally, Hodgkinson, Langan-Fox & Sadler-Smith (2008: 2 & 7) distinguish between ‘insight’ and intuition. Insight ‘involves incubation, a long gestation period following an impasse in problem solving’ and ‘intuition’, which in contrast ‘occurs almost instantaneously, is affectively charged but does not have any accompanying verbalisation or conscious awareness of the problem solving process’. They also assert that whilst ‘implicit learning and implicit knowledge contribute to the knowledge structures upon which individuals draw when making their intuitive judgements’; ‘they are not equivalent to intuitions’. They also assert that ‘the ability to intuit in particular domains is acquired through experience and learning and relies upon pattern recognition processes’. In support of this view they cite Simon (1997) who estimated that ‘chess grand masters hold up to 50,000 patterns in their long term memory’, which are ‘typically acquired over 10 years or more of experience and practice’ (Ericsson & Charness, 1994).

From the previous consideration of the scholarship regarding both memory systems and tacit learning it has been suggested that adults can both acquire and subsequently utilise knowledge tacitly and that the key ‘distinction between explicit and implicit memory is that between explicit and implicit retrieval’ (Tulving, 2000). From this consideration of the scholarship regarding intuition it has been suggested that experience permits an adult to ‘chunk’ data into groupings defined by their strategic meanings and to form higher level memory structures that permit patterns to be detected in highly complex situations. It has also been suggested that the ability to do this permits viable approaches to situations to be reviewed almost instantaneously.

Summary

As a result of examining this scholarship it seems clear that sense - making is about ‘attributing meaning’ to and ‘redressing surprise’ and that ‘organising’ is the continuous process of coping with ‘ambiguity, ambivalence and equivocality’.

In addition, the literature suggests that in operational situations, experts, as opposed to novices, utilise ‘recognition primed decision – making’. This involves firstly diagnosis, then the retrieval of response options and finally the rapid evaluation of these. There appears to be a strong resonance between ‘recognition primed decision – making’ and ‘intuition’. There is also a strong resonance between ‘recognition primed decision – making’ and the literature relating to ‘trustworthy recipes’. However, strategic, corporate decision – making appears to involve a different process that has been described as ‘groping and cyclical’.

It also seems clear both that time pressures impair performance when undertaking intellectual tasks and that time pressured decision – making results in simplified decision – making that over emphasises the negative aspects of the data.

This literature has also suggested that the ability to both ‘chunk’ and synthesise isolated bits of complex data into ‘dynamic groupings’ within the ‘higher level structures’ of the human memory system, according to their ‘strategic meanings’, is a key prerequisite to identifying, nearly instantaneously, ‘good moves’. There is a strong resonance between this literature and that that regarding the ‘elaboration, encoding and consolidation’ of experiences into the human memory system.

It also seems clear that Ashby’s principle of ‘requisite variety’ may explain the preference of managers for face to face verbal communication.

Hence, this literature suggests that an adult human being should be able to handle a significant proportion of situations by drawing upon their memory store of experiences. In addition, it suggests that the processing of experiences into an individual’s memory store is a critical success factor.

Finally we have seen from the Weick, Szent-Gyorti, Holub and Miller story that when lost in the Alps the wrong map can be as useful as the correct one! A corollary of this would appear to be that the ‘wrong’ theory would serve a management practitioner at least as well as the ‘correct’ theory. Indeed it may even suggest that the ‘wrong’ theory would serve them better!

However, in terms of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models what is unclear, once again, is the part that these general principles and propositions might play in the particular circumstances of management practitioners.

2.7 Management as a profession

The scholarship relating to learning by adults has suggested that adults schematically store their experiences of life in their long term memory in the form of scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema. The accumulation of these memories provides both ‘meaning - perspectives’ and ‘trustworthy recipes’ through which adults make sense of their social environment and know what to do, without the need to resort to overt cognition. In addition, the scholarship relating to sense – making, decision – making and intuition has suggested that sense – making involves ‘attributing meaning to surprise’; that in operational settings, experienced decision – makers rely upon expert diagnosis, the retrieval of appropriate response options and the rapid evaluation of these. This process has a strong resonance with ‘intuition’. This scholarship has also shown that time pressures have a negative affect upon decision – making and that corporate, strategic decision – making appears to utilise a different process that has been described as ‘groping and cyclical’. The objective now is to consider the extent to which management can be researched, taught and enacted via processes that, in their essential nature, might be regarded as being ‘scientific’ and the extent to which, when their experience ‘runs out’, practitioners might turn to a ‘scientific’ basis for management.

Moore (1970: 15 & 16) suggests that ‘professionals apply very general principles, *standardised* knowledge, to concrete problems’ and that ‘if every professional problem were in all respects unique, solutions would be at best accidental, and therefore have nothing to do with expert knowledge’. Similarly, Schein (1973: 43) suggests that there are three components to professional knowledge; (i) ‘an underlying discipline or basic science component upon which the practice rests or from which it is developed’; (ii) ‘an applied science or ‘engineering’ component from which many of the day-to-day diagnostic procedures and problems are derived’; and (iii) ‘a skills and attitudinal component that concerns the actual performance of services to the client, using the underlying basic and applied knowledge’.

However, implicit in the original research question, with its explicit reference to academic theory and models about management, is the notion of management as a profession and the implied proposition that the subject of management can be researched, taught and subsequently applied as a science. A corollary of this is that, in moments of hesitation, confusion and doubt, a management practitioner might be expected to refer to the ‘scientific’ base of their discipline. Accordingly these inferences warrant exploration.

In the sense that it cannot be examined in a laboratory under conditions, in which (i) some of the key variables can be controlled, (ii) strict procedures can be followed; and (iii) the results can be replicated in any laboratory, anywhere in the world; it is clear that the subject of management can not be regarded as a 'pure' science, such as physics or chemistry. Since an 'applied science', such as engineering, is founded upon the application of 'pure science' it should be equally clear that management can not be regarded as a conventional 'applied' science. Unlike a 'pure' science it is necessary for the study of management to be undertaken in 'real time', within human systems, with constantly changing variables, where practical interventions need to be made and where causal relationships will be difficult, if not impossible, to detect. In addition, unlike an 'applied' science there will always be some degree of doubt and uncertainty regarding the outcome of any application. In this respect management has much in common with occupations such as education, social work and psychotherapy. Hence, there is a notion of a hierarchy of theoretical model building in which the more straightforward, with the lowest levels of abstraction and the most certain and predictable of outcomes is at the base; whilst those which are the most complex, with the highest levels of abstraction and the greatest uncertainty of outcomes is at the top (Boulding, 1956). Indeed, in Bouldings 'skeleton of science', as extended by Wilby (2006), the so called 'clockworks' of physics, astronomy and engineering are at level two, whilst the human systems of biology and psychology are at level seven and the socio-cultural systems of families, tribes, clubs and organisations are at level eight. These are only surpassed in their complexity by the transcendental systems of philosophy, religion and God?!

In relation to these matters, Mintzberg (2004) is typically trenchant :

> "Management is not a science. Science is about the development of systematic knowledge through research. That is hardly the purpose of management. Management is not even an applied science, for that is still a science. Management certainly applies science: managers have to use all the knowledge they can get, from the sciences and elsewhere. But management is more art, based on insight, vision and intuition".
>
> (Page 10)

However, it should be equally clear that in principle there should be no obvious reason why the academic processes of data collection, data analysis, theory construction and generalisation that are utilised by the social sciences, such as sociology, psychology and anthropology, should not be applied to the study of management. Indeed these academic disciplines have long been accepted as being appropriate for the task of producing a rigorous, generalised understanding of that which has been either observed or reported about business and management. However, it is the next step in the process that may be problematic. For example, whilst with anthropology the professional requirement may well be to ensure that the academic theorising has no impact upon the social and anthropological behaviours of the tribe that was studied; with management and business organisations the exact opposite is true. Indeed, a fundamental proposition that underpins the existence of both business schools and formal academic qualifications in management, such as the MBA, is that the academic processes that are utilised to construct theories about management can be utilised, with equal success, to transfer these insights to a different group of practitioners. In addition, there is a related proposition to the effect that once transferred; the practitioners will be capable of applying such insights to secure outcomes that are both predictable and beneficial. Bailey & Ford (1996) are amongst those who challenge this proposition :

> "There is no doubt that the scientific approach is appropriate for the *study* of management. But it is less viable as an approach to *teaching* business studies. The practice of management is best taught as a craft, rich in lessons derived from experience and orientated toward taking and responding to action".
>
> (Page 9)

These underlying fundamental tensions between management theory and management practice have been a feature of academic discourse for a long time. They can be found in the thinking of Kurt Lewin in the early 1940s. This was instrumental to the formulation of 'action research' and it continues to this day in the guise of the debate that is conducted via the short hand notation of 'rigour versus relevance' (Schon, 1983; Svejenova & Alvarez, 1999; Mintzberg, 2004; Van Aken, 2005; Kieser & Leiner, 2009; Fincham & Clark, 2009; Hodgkinson & Rousseau, 2009), or the 'relevance gap' (Weick, 2001; Starkey & Madan, 2001; Aram & Salipante, 2003; Rousseau, 2006; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006).

This ongoing discussion, regarding the 'great divide', separates those who conclude that academic knowledge both is, and perhaps even should be, part of a fundamentally different system to practice; from those who feel that the ultimate test of any academic knowledge is that it should be 'relevant' to practitioners.

2.7.1 Management research

Kieser (2002: 207) asserts that 'the scientific community alone determines which kind of information belongs to science and which does not' and that 'it also establishes which set of statements qualify as theory'. He also asserts that 'the methods with which the scientist achieve results, the hypotheses, theories and data that they deal with are fabricated by themselves'. In addition, Keiser (2002: 2008) asserts that the 'basic element of knowledge production in science, the scientific publication, addresses scientists, not practitioners'; that the 'evaluation of scientific output is considered to be exclusively the task of peers' and that 'non-scientists are not considered to have the qualifications to evaluate scientific publications'. He also asserts that 'recognition is given to the scientist who adds to 'true knowledge' and who identifies ‘false knowledge’ and that ‘the self-referential character of science becomes obvious in the form of citations’. Finally, Kieser (2002: 220) asserts that that ‘managers do not think in the same ways as scientist do’; that managers ‘do not make decisions in the way proponents of a normative management science think they should’ and that that ‘even scientists who saw themselves in the positivist tradition of social science had to admit that the application of the results of science was not quite as easy as in say engineering’. According to this analysis the ‘divide’ would appear to be a significant one!

In addition, Nohria & Eccles (1997: 281 & 283) contribute to this debate by considering ‘just how useful to managers are the fruits of this formal research by business school professors’? They conclude that ‘the unfortunate answer is that it seems to be hardly useful at all’. They also suggest that the increasing academic status of business schools and their professors ‘has come at the expense of the relevance of their research to managers’.

Schon (1983) describes this issue as the ‘rigour vs. relevance’ dilemma in which both practitioners and researchers face a choice :

> “In the varied topography of professional practice, there is a hard, high ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing ’messes’ incapable of technical solution. The difficulty is that the problems of the high ground, however great their technical interest, are often relatively unimportant to clients or to the larger society, while in the swamp are the problems of greatest human concern. Shall the practitioner stay on the high ground where he can practice rigorously, as he understands rigor, but where he is constrained to deal with problems of relatively little social importance? Or shall he descend into the swamp where he can engage the most important and challenging problems if he is willing to forsake technical rigor?”
>
> (Page 42)

Whilst a detailed exploration of the proposed causes and cures of rigour versus relevance are not germane to these considerations; there are three additional points that are worth making. Firstly, by reviewing 120 journal articles, Baldridge, Floyd & Markoczy (2004: 1072) demonstrate that although there was a ‘positive correlation’ between ‘practical relevance’ and ‘academic quality’, the magnitude of the overlap was ‘fairly small’. Accordingly they ask ‘why some articles that are considered highly relevant’ are ‘received so poorly in the academic community’ and ‘why others considered high quality by academicians are perceived to be irrelevant’. Hence, the discussion regarding rigour and relevance is evidence based, rather than simply a matter of perceptions. Secondly, as the May 2009 edition of the Journal of Management Studies shows, this is a current, rather than an historic debate. Thirdly, academic opinion on this matter is divided. Kieser & Leiner (2009) conclude that the rigour – relevance gap is ‘unbrideable’; whilst Hodgkinson & Rousseau (2009) conclude that the bridging of the rigour – relevance gap is ‘already happening’.

On the subject of ‘relevance’, Mintzberg (2004) is typically outspoken :

> “We should no more sympathise with the simplistic calls for relevance than with the snobbish calls for rigour. This notion of being handed ‘relevance’ on some sort of silver platter, with no obligation to think, probe, work, has been the cause of enormous amounts of managerial malpractice”.
>
> (Page 400)

However, Donaldson & Hilmer (1998: 18) assert that ‘there is a body of knowledge that practitioners need to master’. They also recognise that this is body of knowledge is (i) ‘evolving’; (ii) ‘less precise than, say physics’; and (iii) ‘less extensive than, say, medicine’. They conclude that ‘the generalisable elements of the common body of knowledge about management need to be turned into specific prescriptions for each particular organisation’ and they also conclude that each ‘manager lives in a case study – his or her own organisation’. This latter comment raises the possibility, at least in some senses, of the manager as both practitioner and researcher.

This is a view that is supported by Schon (1983: 308 & 309) who suggests that it is necessary to ‘recast the relationship between research and practice’ in ‘situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and conflict’. He also asserts that in these situations ‘research is an activity of practitioners’ and that ‘it is triggered by features of the practice situation, undertaken on the spot, and immediately linked to action’. He concludes that ‘there is no question of an “exchange” between research and practice’ and neither, in the conventional sense, is there ‘the implementation of research results’; because ‘the exchange between research and practice is immediate’ and also because the ‘theory-testing experiments of the practitioner at the same time transform the practice situation’. This analysis resonates with the insights of ‘action research’.

Kurt Lewin (1948: 34) is credited with being the main pioneer of an approach to reconciling the tensions between theory and practice that has been given the name ‘action research’. In fact, as Argyris, Putnam & Smith (1987: 8) point out, Lewin ‘never wrote a systematic statement of his views on action research’ and as Peters & Robinson (1984: 114) point out he ‘wrote only two papers – a mere 22 pages directly address the topic’. Dickens & Watkins (1999: 128, & 132) also note that Lewin ‘was unable to fully conceive his theory of action research before his death in 1947’ and they suggest that because of this ‘he left the field open for other similarly-minded researchers to elaborate upon, and at times reinterpret his definition’. However, they confirm that ‘action research consists of a team of practitioners, and possibly theorists, who cycle through a spiral of steps including planning, action, and evaluating the results of action, continually monitoring the activity in order to adjust as needed’. Finally, Coughlan & Brannick (2003: 32) conclude that it was clear to Lewin that ‘working at changing human systems often involved variables that could not be controlled by traditional research methods’ and that this led to ‘the powerful notion that human systems could only be understood and changed if one involved the members of the system in the inquiry system itself’.

2.7.2 Management education

Thus, we have seen that, at least in a traditional sense, it may be difficult for management to be regarded as either a ‘pure’ or an ‘applied’ science. We have also seen the research challenges that exist in an organisational environment where all of the variables are changing in ‘real time’. In the light of this it is now necessary to consider whether, at least in the ‘conventional’ sense, management can be taught.

Hogan & Warrenfeltz (2003: 76) suggest that, from a general perspective, ‘education is the end product of learning’ and that ‘a person who is well educated has not only learnt a lot (which can be evaluated quantitatively), but also has learned ‘the right things’ (which is more a matter of taste)’. In addition, Engestrom (2001: 137) discusses classroom based learning and acknowledges that in its most simplistic form this is about individuals learning the answers that society regards as being correct. He also highlights the ‘self evident presupposition that the knowledge or skill to be acquired is itself relatively stable and reasonably well defined’. He observes that :

> “The problem is that much of the most intriguing kinds of learning in work organisations violates this presupposition. People and organisations are all the time learning something that is not stable, not even defined or understood ahead of time. In important transformations of our personal lives and organisational practices, we must learn new forms of activity which are not yet there. They are literally learned as they are being created”.
>
> (Page 137 – 138)

Unfortunately, in relation to the specific work of business schools the majority of evidence regarding the effectiveness of teaching in management is largely negative. Pfeffer & Fong (2002: 84) conclude that ‘a large body of evidence suggests that the curriculum taught in business schools has only a small relationship to what is important for succeeding in business’. In addition, Huczynski (1993: 2 - 3) notes that ‘certain ideas, such as those of Herzberg *et al* (1959), continue to be popular even after other writers have demonstrated flaws in the research methods and have challenged them’. Daft & Wiginton (1979: 179) conclude that business schools ‘are not able to educate generalists capable of dealing with the unstructured problems faced by most managers’. A typically trenchant, Mintzberg (2004: 6) asserts that ‘considered as education for management, conventional MBA programs train the wrong people in the wrong ways with the wrong consequences’.

Similarly, Pearce (2004) draws a uncomfortable distinction between the world of academic scholarship that exists within the University of California and the ‘folk wisdom’ that is provided to management practitioners attending Executive MBA programmes. Referring to her substantive management role as Dean of the University she observes that :

> “But as I think about what was useful, and which mistakes I was able to avoid, I became aware that very little of this useful knowledge about my most important challenges came from our scholarly world.”
>
> (Page 176)

In addition, in relation to the particular events of the recent ‘credit crunch’, Currie, Knights & Starkey (2010: S1) draw attention to the fact that ‘it is an inconvenient truth that many of those implicated in the disasters that have beset Wall Street and the world’s other financial centres are MBA graduates’. As a result of this they conclude that ‘the business school is complicit in the current financial crisis’. In addition, they also highlight the fact that The Economist, which they regard as being ‘hardly an organ of Marxist critique’, has asserted that it ‘has been a year of sackcloth and ashes for the world’s business schools’ (The Economist, 2009). Unfortunately the judgement of The Economist is much harsher than these authors suggest. In fact the publication points out that ‘most people at the heart of the crisis’, in Lehman Brothers, Merrill Lynch and HBOS, ‘had MBA after their name’. In addition, The Economist asserts that Enron ‘was stuffed full of’ Harvard Business School (HBS) alumni. In a damming critique it concludes that ‘you cannot claim that your mission is “to educate leaders who make a difference in the world”, as HBS does, and then wash your hands of your alumni when the difference they make is malign’. Finally, The Economist notes that ‘many professors have accepted at least some of the blame for the global catastrophe’ and that, ‘one of the most common stances – often heard outside and sometimes within the schools themselves – is that management education needs to start again from scratch’. The Economist’s view of this perspective is particularly trenchant :

> “On this view, these institutions are little more than con-tricks at the moment, built on the illusion that you can turn management into a science and dedicated to the unedifying goal of teaching greedy people how to satisfy their appetites”.

If the evidence, regarding the teaching of management in business schools, is so negative, the obvious question to ask is why so many managers are seeking qualifications such as an MBA? Based upon her exploratory study of 35 MBA graduates, Hay (2006: 293 - 295) concludes that the value of an MBA lies in; (i) ‘the development of alternative ways of thinking and doing’; (ii) ‘exposure to different industries, organisations and international cultures’; and (iii) an ‘enhanced sense of self’, which includes ‘increased self-confidence, self-esteem and personal credibility’. She also concludes that exposure to academic material ‘facilitated understanding' and prompted 'new ways of seeing'. Similarly, the survey of 2,229 members of the Chartered Management Institute that was conducted Wilton, Woodman & Essex (2007) found that, from the perspective of an individual manager, the key benefits arising from management qualifications were; (i) that they were 'portable' and could be taken with the individual; (ii) that they 'improved' the individuals chances of employment; and (iii) that they provided objective 'evidence' of an individual's abilities.

Finally, Bailey & Ford (1996: 11) conclude that 'management educators must recognise the differences between the scientific approach and practice' and they suggest that 'teaching management as a craft rooted in action is a viable alternative to traditional curricula'. This resonates with the concept of a 'community of practice'.

The term 'community of practice' goes back to a research undertaken by Lave & Wenger (1991) which involved the study of five apprenticeship situations involving midwives, tailors, naval quartermasters, meat cutters and a group of recovering alcoholics. This was subsequently extended by Wenger (1998) who studied a group of insurance claim assessors and by Orr (1996) who studied a group of photo-copier repair technicians.

Wenger (2008) defines a community of practice as 'a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly'. Thus, because it 'has an identity defined by the shared domain of interest', a community of practice is 'not merely a club of friends or a network of connections between people'. Equally, 'in pursuing their interest in their domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other and share information', whilst building 'relationships that enable them to learn from each other'. Finally, it is 'not merely a community of interest, people who like certain kinds of movies, for instance', because 'members of a community of practice are practitioners'. Whilst the term 'community of practice' was coined in relation to journeymen and apprentices; once the term was established, Lave & Wenger started to 'see these communities everywhere, even when no formal apprenticeship system existed'.

Hence, Lave & Wenger (1991: 47 & 49) assert that 'conventional explanations view learning as a process by which a learner internalises knowledge'; whilst 'learning as increasing participation in communities of practice concerns the whole person acting in the world'. Similarly, Wenger (1998: 3 & 8) challenges the notion that 'learning is an individual process, that has a beginning and an end, that it is best separated from the rest of our activities, and that it is the result of teaching' He compares this with his personal experience which is that 'learning is an integrated part of our everyday life'. Placing the focus for learning upon participation in a community of practice has some broad implications for what it takes to understand and support learning. Wenger (1998: 7 – 8) suggests; (i) that 'for individuals; it means that learning is an issue of engaging in and contributing to the practices of their communities'; (ii) that 'for communities; it means that learning is an issue of refining their practice and ensuring new generations of members'; and (iii) that 'for organisations'; it means that learning is an issue of sustaining the interconnected communities of practice through which an organisation knows what it knows and thus becomes effective and valuable as an organisation'.

However, Smith (2003) concludes that for a community of practice to function 'it needs to generate a shared repertoire of ideas, commitments and memories' and that it also needs to develop resources such as 'tools, documents, routines, vocabulary and symbols that in some way carry the accumulated knowledge of the community'. Initially individuals join such communities 'at the periphery' and as they become 'more competent they move more to the centre of the particular community'. Accordingly learning is 'not seen as the acquisition of knowledge by individuals so much as a process of social participation'.

In addition, the notion that knowledge is acquired through an individual's participation in a community of fellow practitioners may also be consistent with the findings of some pertinent knowledge transfer literature. Levin & Cross (2004: 1487) suggest that individuals are more likely to listen to, absorb, and act upon the information acquired via knowledge providers with whom they have developed 'competence-based trust'. Similarly, Jacobson, Butterill & Goering (2005: 310) suggest that the criteria considered by clients when choosing a consultant are 'credibility, expertise, trust and rapport'. Clearly the lowest risk way of practitioners identifying individuals with these characteristics and personal qualities is to find them from within the communities in which they have practiced.

Finally, Mintzberg & Gosling (2002: 2) conclude that 'management is a practice, comprising a great deal of art and craft as well as some science' and that accordingly 'managers cannot be created in a classroom'. Finally Mintzberg (2004) concludes that :

> "It is time to face a fact: After almost a century of trying, by any reasonable assessment management has become neither a science nor a profession. It remains deeply embedded in the practices of everyday living. We should be celebrating that fact, not deprecating it.
>
> (Page 11)

Summary

As a result of considering this scholarship it is clear that management is neither a 'science', nor an 'applied science' and that as such it is difficult for management to be considered, at least in the traditional way, a profession. In addition, it is clear that whilst management can be researched as a social science, there is an unresolved debate regarding whether it is axiomatic that the rigour of this approach leads to a loss of practical relevance. However, there are those who consider that involving practitioners in ‘action research’ is a means of resolving this dilemma.

It is also clear that there is an unresolved debate regarding whether management can be effectively taught via business schools and academic qualifications such as an MBA. In this regard there are those who consider that a more viable approach is for managers to learn about their ‘craft’ through their active involvement in a ‘community of practice’. In addition, there is evidence that the principle benefits, received by managers from their participation in an MBA programme, are not associated with the academic content of the syllabus.

Thus, in relation to the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners it is clear that there are a number of unresolved debates regarding the relevance of research based, academic theory to the practice of management. Accordingly it is also unclear whether, when their experience ‘runs out’, it is reasonable to expect management practitioners to ‘turn to’ the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management. It is also unclear regarding the extent to which, in reality, they may attempt to do so.

2.8 The role of concepts and conceptual thinking

From the consideration of the scholarship relating to management research it has been concluded that in principle there is no reason why the academic processes of data collection, data analysis, theory construction and generalisation that are utilised by the social sciences, such as sociology, psychology and anthropology, should not be applied to the study of management.

However, the objective of academic research is the creation of sound theory and it is also clear that there is an unresolved debate regarding whether management can be effectively taught via business schools and academic qualifications such as an MBA, or whether the essence of management is that it is ‘craft’ that should be acquired via an individuals active involvement in a ‘community of practice’.

Although the investigation of this scholarship has provided clarity regarding some of the issues that might be associated with the appropriation of academic theory and models; the terms of reference for this research study also includes a requirement for consideration to be given to the appropriation of ideas and concepts. This is the final area of scholarship that this literature review will consider.

From a general perspective Daft & Wiginton (1979) discuss the role of conceptual thinking in human cognition in the following terms :

> "The human mind summarises and abstracts information, detects relationships, and organises pieces of information into coherent wholes. This process is partly accomplished using high variety language to convey complex ideas. It is the concepts, not the specific words or symbols that describe them, which are apparently retained in the mind".
>
> (Page 184)

However, it would seem that the appropriation of ideas and concepts by management practitioners and the role that such ideas and concepts might play in helping managers to discharge their responsibilities is an under - explored area of scholarship. Accordingly, it has been necessary to search for appropriate insights within the scholarship that is associated with other disciplines.

In this regard, the discipline that proved to be the most interesting and helpful was that of nursing. This discipline appeared to have a well developed understanding of the role that concepts and conceptual thinking could play in the creation of theory. It also appeared to have a more generalised understanding of a relationship between concepts, conceptual thinking and nursing practice. In addition, like management, nursing began as an almost exclusively practical discipline and also like management; it has been during the latter part of the 20th century that the discipline has been studied, on any significant scale, at graduate and post graduate level. In fact it was 1969 before Manchester University became the first university in the UK to award degrees in nursing. However, in contrast to this, in 1963, the Committee on Higher Education concluded that the training of nurses was 'not part higher education', as they defined it! In addition, it took a number of other inquiries, and until 1993, for all of the colleges of nursing and midwifery to transfer to training programmes that included a Diploma in Higher Education (Green, 1995: 295, 302 & 307). Accordingly this literature review now focuses upon the scholarship regarding the role that has been assigned to concepts and conceptual thinking within the discipline of nursing.

2.8.1 The role of concepts and conceptual thinking in nursing

Orem (2001: 139) describes how 'a general theory of nursing occurs over time' and how this is based upon the analysis of 'particular instances of nursing' that 'yield insights about the recurring features of nursing practice and the relationships between and among them'. She then observes that :

> “Insights are formulated as concepts, and expressed concepts are then validated in concrete practice situations or through analysis of nursing case material”.
>
> (Page 139)

In addition, Orem continues by referring to the role of the Nursing Development Conference Group in the USA in undertaking these tasks. However, it is Gordon (1998) who provides the detailed history of this Group and it is interesting to note that it was composed of ‘staff nurses, clinical specialists, directors of nursing, deans, faculty, theorists and researchers’. It would seem that although there were nationally accepted ‘standards of nursing practice’ there was no comprehensive classification of nursing diagnoses and that this was the main task that was assigned to the Nursing Development Conference Group. Gordon describes the first meeting of the Group in the following terms :

> “For nursing this was a historic event. Never before had those who published models of ‘what nursing is’ met together. Their deliberations were also a historical episode in nursing theory construction. Despite their diverse viewpoints they had to seek agreement on what broad conceptual categories were inherent in the clinical problems (diagnoses) practicing nurses had identified”.
>
> (Page 4)

Hence, the overarching process appeared to be that of the extraction of insights from clinical problems and the expression of these in ‘broad conceptual categories’ as a prelude to the construction of theory.

Similarly, McFarlane (1977) discusses the ‘wide variety of concepts’ that the nurses of the Nursing Development Conference Group had identified. She records that these included ‘helping, assisting, caring, the nature of man, wellness, health, protection, oxygenation, homeostasis, homeodynamics, adaptation, body image, hopelessness and territoriality’. From a strictly lay perspective it is interesting to note that the list of apparently relevant ‘concepts’ extends from the deeply philosophical, to the intensely practical. Indeed, it may be interesting to ponder what might be included in a similar list of ‘concepts’ that were relevant to the discipline of management?

In addition, Leddy (1998: 138) asserts that ‘for a discipline to have growth of knowledge, the concepts – highly abstract and general words describing mental images of phenomena – that are important for the discipline must be identified and there must be a shared acceptance of conceptual definitions’. Similarly, Hardy (1973: 10) suggests that ‘concepts are labels, categories or selected properties of objects to be studied; they are the bricks from which theories are constructed’. In addition, Rogers (1970: 93 & 103) asserts both that ‘nursing’s conceptual model derives from a synthesis of ideas which then form a unified and meaningful system' and that 'nursing's conceptual system provides a frame of reference in which to lodge observations'.

Thus, from the perspective of the discipline of nursing, it is clear that concepts can be regarded as both a generalised abstraction of practice and as an essential prerequisite of and a building block towards, the creation of sound theory.

In addition, it is interesting that from the context of organisation theory and management, McAuley, Duberley & Johnson (2007) also acknowledge a relationship between concepts and the building of theories, thus :

> "Although the concepts and definitions are the basic materials that all theories use, of great importance is how theories also entail our trying to explain *why* what we think we have observed has happened".
>
> (Page 7)

and

> "All theories link abstract concepts together in order to explain the occurrence, variation in or non-occurrence of some phenomenon".
>
> (Page 7)

Summary

The scholarship associated with the discipline of nursing has highlighted a systematic and collaborative process that was used to identify a number of concepts that were abstracted from practice and which were subsequently used as building blocks to underpin the development of theory.

However, in relation to the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models there appeared to be little scholarship from the discipline of business and management which specifically described a role for either concepts or conceptual thinking in the development of theory. There appeared to be even less that assigned a significant role for either concepts or conceptual thinking in relation to managerial practice.

2.9 Conclusions

Rogers' 'diffusion of innovations theory' and Abrahamson's 'fashion - setting theory' have provided important contextual information and they have served to dispel some potential misunderstandings that are common in this field of enquiry. In addition, they are indicative both of the starting place for the more detailed and more specific enquiries that followed and of the intellectual journey that has been a key feature of this research study.

However, perhaps unsurprisingly, neither was able to provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models and accordingly the scope of the literature review was widened to encompass other, more broadly based scholarship.

Although this broader exploration has provided important and potentially profound insights regarding the processes that might be at work, it is unclear regarding the extent to which these general propositions, derived in relation to any adult human being, might be applicable to the particular circumstances of a management practitioner. In addition, it is also unclear regarding the implication of these understandings for the role that the more formal, more academic ideas about management might play in helping practitioners to both address their personal challenges and to discharge their organisational responsibilities.

Accordingly, in terms of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners there was a clear need to undertake primary research with the objective of discovering the precise nature of the mechanisms that might be at work.

Amongst the issues that were raised by the literature review was that of the extent to which the 'generality' of management practitioners might be expected to handle situations and circumstances by utilising either 'trustworthy recipes' (Schutz, 1964: 95) or 'recognition – primed' decision making (Klein, 1998: 140). The literature also provided little, if any, information that confirmed whether, the 'generality' of management practitioners, could be expected to turn to theory when their experience was unable to guide their decision making. In addition, there was little, if any, clear evidence regarding the degree to which the decision making of the 'generality' of management practitioners was actually influenced by the scholarship of the 20th century's most eminent theoreticians. Similarly, there was little, if any, direct evidence to suggest that it was reasonable for the 'generality' of management practitioners to be characterised as the 'passive and rather powerless consumers of knowledge' (Mazza, Alvarez & Comas, 2001: 41 – 42). Equally, there was similar uncertainty in relation to the part that might be played in ensuring the successful diffusion of selective ideas, either by an organisation's internal communication channels or by the direct sponsorship of certain ideas by a powerful senior executive. It was similarly unclear regarding the extent to which, for the 'generality' of management practitioners, it might be necessary for moments of 'doubt, hesitation and perplexity' (Dewey, 1933: 12) to precede the acquisition of a new 'meaning perspective' (Mezirow, 1977: 160). Furthermore, there was little, if any, information regarding the extent to which, for the 'generality' of management practitioners, new theoretical information could be an important ‘after – the – fact’ element (Mezirow, 1977: 160).

Accordingly, as is illustrated by these examples, the literature review exerted a direct influence upon the detailed information that was sought during the data collection phase of the research study. Of course, the literature review also played an equally important role both in delineating the research gap that was described in Section 1.6 and in determining the overall aim and the specific objectives that were stated in Section 1.4 of the thesis.

However, the literature review also highlighted the perceived methodological weakness that results from using citation analysis as a proxy for primary data regarding managerial practice. Since, this research study has sought to directly address this issue, it is clear that the literature review has also exerted a considerable influence over the methodology and the methods. Indeed, as a result of a necessary and wholly appropriate commitment to ensuring both congruence and consistency, it could be argued that the extant literature also influenced the overarching research philosophy.

Section 6.4 of the thesis highlights the linkages between the discoveries that were eventually made by this research study and the literature that has been reviewed in this chapter. The next chapter of the thesis provides detailed information regarding the development of an appropriate methodology and methods.

Chapter 3

Methodology & methods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the thesis will seek to confirm both the details of the methodology that has been adopted and the methods that have been utilised. In addition, it will seek to provide an explanation for the choices that have been made. For the purposes of this research the distinction that has been adopted for the difference between methodology and methods is that provided by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003: 2). Hence, the term 'methodology' was taken to refer to 'the theory of how research should be undertaken'; whilst the term 'method' was taken to refer to the 'tools and techniques used to obtain and analyse data'.

Hence, the methodology section will discuss and explain the overall research philosophy that has been adopted and the decisions to utilise qualitative data and inductive reasoning. The methods section will discuss and explain the decisions regarding sampling, the use of semi - structured interviews, the use of the critical incident technique, the use of case study analysis, the use of content analysis and the use of intertextual analysis. In addition, this section will also discuss the related issues of validity and reliability versus trustworthiness and authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); the ethical issues that relate to the conduct of the research; and some of the key limitations that arise from the methodology and methods that have been utilised (Paltridge & Starfield, 2007).

However, the chapter also seeks to respond to the fact that 'in qualitative research the researcher's role is fundamentally reconsidered' and that, in this genre, the researcher is no longer regarded as being 'objective and detached' (Paltridge & Starfield, 2007: 129). In response to this issue the author has sought to provide a level of transparency and accountability that 'clarifies the bias' (Creswell, 2003: 196) and to adopt a style of writing 'which lets the audience see the puppets' strings as they watch the puppet show' (Watson, 1994: S78).

3.2 Methodology

This section of the thesis will seek to explain the rationale for the overall design of the research study, including the overarching research philosophy and the utilisation of both qualitative data and inductive reasoning.

3.2.1 Research philosophy

When considering the methodological foundations for research Watson (1994) seeks to discourage researchers from :

> "The all too common tendency to leap straight into questions of method without clarifying first the methodological (philosophical, that is) presuppositions on which those methods are to be based".
>
> (Page S82)

As a post graduate researcher it might be convenient if each of the potential methodological alternatives could be considered in a completely detached and strictly objective way. However, as a mature student with more than 30 years of business experience it would be unrealistic to propose that the philosophical foundations for this research study could be determined in this way. Accordingly it was concluded that a more honourable and viable approach would be to adopt a position that is both respectful of and congruent with the author's experience. Fortunately this position is consistent with the argument put forward by Darwin, Johnson & McAuley (2002: 329) 'that management research cannot be carried out in an intellectual space that is autonomous from the researcher's own biography'.

As a Chartered Mechanical Engineer, educated in the tradition of Newton, Boyle, Charles, and Faraday and professionally developed by the Institution of Watt, Stephenson, Brunel and Whittle, it might be anticipated that the author would have a natural affinity with 'scientific determinism' and 'technical rationality'. In fact, the author's experience of management has involved a professional journey which includes acknowledging that the most significant factors can actually be those of perception. Indeed this journey has been such that the author would wish to identify with the observation made by Darwin, Johnson & McAuley (2002: 117) that 'an objective and disinterested foundation for science cannot exist'. Thus, a philosophical starting point has been a wish to acknowledge the significance of discourse, dialogue, language, perception and meaning as well as data, facts, evidence and objectivity. Thus, a key part of the position that has been taken resonates with the observation, made by Darwin, Johnson & McAuley (2002: 191), that 'arguably, language is the most important tool that a manager has'.

Of course a related issue is the extent to which a mature individual with this kind of educational background and longevity of business experience might be predisposed towards, or even biased towards, certain kinds of discoveries. What is clear is that engineering is a theoretically based applied science and that if anything the author was predisposed towards finding that management practitioners make active references to the theoretical underpinnings of their discipline. As events will show this proved not to be the case!

The matter of an overarching research philosophy is discussed by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003) in the following terms :

> “Three views about the research process dominate the literature: positivism, interpretivism and realism. They have different, if not mutually exclusive, views about the way in which knowledge is developed and judged as being acceptable”.
>
> (Page 83)

In expanding upon these matters Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003: 480 - 487) suggest that (i) positivism produces ‘law-like generalisations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientist’; (ii) interpretivism requires that the researcher seeks ‘to understand the subjective reality and meanings of participants’; and (iii) realism seeks ‘to understand the existence of an external and objective reality that influences people’s social interpretations and behaviours but which may not be perceptible to them’.

Thus, from a scholarly, rather than a biographical perspective, Section 2.2 of this thesis has shown that management is a language orientated discipline. In addition, Section 2.4 has highlighted the issues that can arise when secondary evidence, such as citation analysis, is used as a proxy for primary research involving direct interaction with managers. Furthermore, Section 1.6 of the thesis has explained that an ambition of this research project was to give managers ‘a voice’.

Since this research project places an appropriate emphasis upon language, discourse and dialogue it would be feasible for the research to be conducted from an ‘interpretist’ perspective. However, the ‘specific objectives’ for this research study refer to some key ‘objective realities’. These include the ‘resources’ that managers draw upon and the ‘processes’ that they utilise when making decisions. Thus, at the heart of this research study is discourse, dialogue, language, perception and meaning; together with some independent, objectively knowable, realities.

In this regard, Ritchie & Lewis (2003) describe realism thus :

> “Realism claims that there is an external reality which exists independently of people’s beliefs or understanding about it. In other words there is a distinction between the way the world is and the meaning and interpretation of that world held by individuals”.
>
> (Page 11)

Thus, in essence, ‘realism’ acknowledges the significance of perception and interpretation; whilst maintaining that an objectively knowable, mind independent, reality does exist.

Accordingly, for reasons of scholarship, alignment with objectives, personal congruence and utility, a research philosophy of ‘realism’ has been adopted.

3.2.2 Qualitative data

From the literature review, we have already seen the application of Ashby’s principle of ‘requisite variety’ (Ashby: 1956) as a means of explaining the strong preference of managers for face to face, verbal communication. Now Daft & Wiginton (1979: 188) apply the principle of ‘requisite variety’ to research methodology. Their journal article notes that managers have a preference for ‘high variety forms of communication’ and suggests that their preference for this is because ‘high variety language can transmit insightful information about highly complex organisational systems’. In addition, Daft & Wiginton (1979) assert that :

> “Likewise, greater use of quantitative models in organisational research has yielded only limited insight because low variety language can only describe and communicate about simple, tangible, generally linear relationships. In addition, high variety language is coextensive with human cognition processes because these processes thrive on abstractions, summaries, and conceptual models rather than on discrete symbols, such as numbers”.
>
> (Page 188)

Daft & Wiginton (1979: 188 & 189) also conclude that ‘numeric data are suitable to describe organisational phenomena that are simple and quantifiable, such as the number of people or hierarchical levels’. In addition, they conclude that ‘appropriate research techniques’ need to ‘acknowledge complexity and ambiguity’ and accordingly they suggest that ‘softer, qualitative techniques are often better suited to the study of complex human organisations’. Finally Daft & Wiginton (1979) make the following proposition :

> “We propose that languages of high variety are useful tools for developing models of organisations because they have sufficient scope and richness of meaning to describe organisational processes”.
>
> (Page 187)

Hence, from this perspective any enquiry into the appropriation of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management would seem likely to require the kind of ‘high variety language’ that is provided by qualitative, rather than quantitative research.

From a different perspective, Leedy & Ormrod (2004: 101 - 103) also provide some helpful guidance regarding the features and distinguishing characteristics of ‘qualitative’ research in which ‘qualitative researchers’ (i) ‘seek a better understanding of complex situations’; (ii) ‘collect extensive amounts of verbal data from a small number of participants, organise those data into some form that gives them coherence, and use verbal descriptions to portray the situations they have studied'; (iii) 'select a few participants who can best shed light on the phenomenon under investigation'; and (iv) 'construct interpretive narratives from their data and try to capture the complexity of the phenomenon under study'. They conclude that qualitative research is appropriate where the purpose of the research is to 'describe and explain', to 'explore and interpret' and to 'build theory'.

Furthermore, Cresswell (1998: 14 & 15) characterises qualitative research as being where a researcher 'builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants', 'focuses on the meaning of participants and describes a process that is expressive and persuasive in language'. In addition, Denzin & Lincoln (1994: 2) describe qualitative research as involving the 'studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials' which 'routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' lives'. Equally, Jones, Torres & Armino (2006: 65) conclude that qualitative research 'is purposefully drawn with an emphasis on information – rich cases that elicit an in - depth understanding of a particular phenomenon'. Similarly, Elder & Miller (1995: 279 & 280) conclude that 'a qualitative approach seeks to frame an issue and treat it as a complex whole' and that it aims 'to maximise the richness of information pertinent to the issue being studied'.

Finally, Kirk & Miller (1986) assert that :

> "Qualitative research is an empirical, socially located phenomenon, defined by its own history, not simply a residual grab-bag comprising all things that are not quantitative' ".
>
> (Page 10)

In this general regard it should be noted that some key parameters of this research study were that it would investigate a socially located phenomenon; that it would seek a better understanding of some difficult managerial situations and that it would attempt to build a complex and holistic picture. In addition, it would seek to describe some of the participants' most problematic professional moments; whilst focussing upon the detailed views of the participants and seeking clarification of the meaning that the participants attributed to their experiences. Furthermore the study would seek to maximise the richness of information that was pertinent to the issues being studied. Finally, it seemed inevitable that it would need to focus upon contributions from a relatively small number of participants who were in a position to provide an in depth understanding of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models. All of these are characteristics of qualitative rather than quantitative research. However, it is also clear that the case made for the value of high 'requisite variety' language when dealing with highly complex organisational systems was a significant influence.

Ultimately, it was concluded that, for these reasons, the objectives of the research would be best achieved through qualitative rather than quantitative research.

3.2.3 Inductive reasoning

Ritchie & Lewis (2003: 14) suggest that whilst 'inductive processes involve using evidence as the genesis of a conclusion'; 'deductive processes use evidence in support of a conclusion'.

Hence, the essential difference between these two approaches is that deductive research tends to rely upon demonstrating the viability of an initial theoretical hypothesis; whilst with inductive research the theoretical propositions tend to emerge, via a number of iterations, from the subsequent analysis of the collected data.

In addition, Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003: 89) provide guidance regarding the main differences between a deductive and an inductive approach to research and in relation to the latter they observe that, amongst other things, induction emphasises (i) 'gaining an understanding of the meanings that humans attach to events'; (ii) 'a close understanding of the research context'; and (iii) 'a collection of qualitative data'.

Similarly Leedy & Ormrod (2004: 101, 102 & 103) also suggest that qualitative researchers (i) 'often start with general research questions rather than specific hypotheses'; (ii) 'use their observations to build theory from the ground up'; and (iii) that they 'make considerable use of inductive reasoning'.

Equally, Mintzberg (2004) describes induction as follows :

> "Induction is about coming up with ideas or concepts or theories from investigation in the first place. It requires probing, sometimes systematically, sometimes not, to generate description rich enough to stimulate the creative mind.
>
> (Page 400)

Since it had been determined that the research project would utilise qualitative data and since a key objective would be to understand the meaning that the management practitioners attributed to events, it was concluded that the research study should be pursued via inductive reasoning.

3.3 Methods

This section of the thesis will seek to explain the rationale for the tools and techniques used to obtain and analyse data, including sampling, semi - structured interviews, the critical incident technique, case study analysis, content analysis and intertextual analysis.

3.3.1 Sampling

The general position regarding qualitative research is that it utilises 'purposeful', rather than 'probability' sampling. This means that sampling is conducted on the basis of access to information - rich cases that hold the greatest potential for generating insight about the phenomenon of interest. Patton (2002) expresses this as follows :

> "The logic and power of 'purposeful sampling' derive from the emphasis on in-depth understanding. This leads to selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term *purposeful* sampling".
>
> (Page 46)

In this regard, a critical aspect of 'purposeful' sampling concerns the issue of 'generalisation' and Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2007) discuss this in the following terms :

> "If generalisation is not the goal, then he / she should only outline a theory in terms of the particular participant(s), setting, context, location, time, event, incident, activity, experience, and / or processes, as well as with respect to the specific researcher (assuming that the researcher is serving as the instrument)".
>
> (Page 115)

In addition, Patton (2002: 230 - 242) identifies fifteen different strategies for purposefully selecting information - rich cases and he also identifies the core rationale that would lie behind each of these options. In relation to this research study the initial batch of interviews were conducted with managers within their employing organisations. Thus, using both personal and institutional networks, access was sought to a number of organisations across all sections of the economy and to a variety of senior managers within each organisation. Although personal and institutional networks were used to recruit the initial batch of interviewees there were codified criteria for both the organisations and the individuals that were being sought. Accordingly this process conforms to the Patton (2002) definition of 'criterion sampling'. In relation to the subsequent batch of interviewees, these were sought because although, from an organisational perspective they were managers with a similar profile, they were also individuals who, by undertaking a part time MBA, were in the midst of a significant educational experience. This also conforms to the Patton (2002) definition of ‘criterion sampling’. The details of this are discussed in Section 3.3.2.

However, it should be noted that the core rationale for obtaining a subsequent batch of interviews, with individuals who were practicing managers in the midst of a significant educational experience, was that potentially this was the situation in which any process of appropriation might be at its most obvious and most detectable. In this regard, Denzin & Lincoln (2000) provide good authority for this kind of approach by asserting that the researcher must :

> “Seek out groups, settings and individuals where and for whom the processes being studied are most likely to occur”.
>
> (Page 370)

In the absence of the kind of confidence level based, sample size calculation that guides quantitative research, Creswell (2002: 197) offers some guidelines for the minimum sample sizes for studies undertaken in the qualitative tradition. For a case study this is ‘three to five cases’ and it is to ‘interview 15 to 20 people during a grounded theory study’.‘

However, Patton (2002: 71) suggests that ‘purposeful’ sampling should cease when ‘saturation occurs’. He describes this as being when ‘the researcher begins to hear (or observe, or read) the same or similar kinds of information related to the categories of analysis’. Similarly, Lincoln & Guba (1985: 202) refer to this as ‘redundancy’ which they describe as being when ‘when no new information is forthcoming from new sampled units’.

From a different perspective Sandelowski (1995: 180) cautions against sample sizes that are so large that they effectively prevent the ‘detailed analyses of data’.

Elder & Miller (1995) suggest that :

> “The rule of thumb for qualitative researchers is that when no more new data or ideas are being generated, enough time has been spent in the collection phase”.
>
> (Page 281)

Finally, in relation to the use of the critical incident technique Flanagan (1954: 343) confirms that there is no simple answer to the size of sample that is necessary to ensure validity and reliability. However, he also concludes that the important issue is the not the number of interviews that are conducted, but the number of incidents about which information is obtained. Ultimately 39 interviews were conducted and information was gained in relation to 160 critical incidents. Whilst this conforms to the guidance provided by Creswell (2002); in practice interviewing continued until ‘saturation’ (Patton, 2002) and ‘redundancy’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) had been achieved.

3.3.2 Sampling criteria

The study of managers, managerial jobs, managerial work, managerial behaviours and managerial attitudes, has some particular difficulties, not least of which is the term ‘manager’. Thus, a significant issue for this research was to provide an organisationally relevant codification for the identification of a ‘manager’.

Clearly, a ‘manager’ could be identified on the basis of any individual holding a post that an employing organisation chose to describe in such terms. However, this would be to assume that employers were clear regarding the essential nature of managerial work (i.e. the work that only these post holders undertake and the unique responsibilities that they bear). It also presupposes that the nature of this work is distinctive (i.e. it is uniquely different to that of non - managers). It further presupposes that it is possible to codify such distinctiveness. Even if this were to be an accurate reflection of the reality, it would further require that all employers share a common understanding regarding these matters and that collectively they apply this common understanding with the same degree of rigour. However, in reality mangers have very considerable discretion regarding the work that they choose to personally undertake. Hence, at the very least, there is the potential for there to be a marked difference between the work that individually and collectively managers are choosing to undertake and that which in organisational terms they ‘need’ to be or ‘ought’ to be undertaking. In this context the terms ‘need’ and ‘ought’ are meant to imply both the critical nature of these organisational tasks and activities and the sense that this group of individuals is uniquely placed to undertake them. Ultimately these kinds of considerations were viewed as an unviable means of defining a manager and as has already been discussed, in Chapter 1 a more linguistic based approach has been adopted. However, guidance was provided to the participating organisations regarding the kind of individuals that the research project was seeking to interview.

Even though the initial batch of interviewees were to be interviewed in their organisational setting it was decided that the clear focus of this research project would be that of individual management practitioners, rather than that of the organisations and the institutions in a collective sense. This is not to deny (i) that individuals within organisations are subjected to pressures from their peers that encourage common perceptions; or (ii) that institutional pressures exist to conform to standardised norms; or (iii) that simply by agreeing to be on the payroll individuals enter into a largely unequal power relationship through which that individual forfeits some of their autonomy. However, it is to imply that even within these constraints the individual manager is free to ‘think their own thoughts’ (even if they are unable to either express, or act upon them in the fullest sense). It is also to make clear that even within such institutional confines it is the individual that this research project is seeking to focus upon.

In this regard, Wenger (1999) makes the following helpful observation :

> "Although workers may be contractually employed by a large institution, in day-to-day practice they work with – and, in a sense, for – a much smaller set of people and communities".
>
> (Page 6)

However, it was also axiomatic that a key part of the initial phase of the research was the need to take account of both the institutional and the personal, since both of these had the potential to be influential in contributing towards the personal paradigm of the individual practitioners. This position required consideration of the characteristics for potentially appropriate organisations. Ultimately it was concluded that contact should be sought with managers working within established, rather than emergent, organisations with a minimum size of around 200 people and with personal responsibility for a team of at least 10 people. The rationale for both criteria was primarily that organisational size and personal 'span and control' were considered to be reasonable indicators of complexity and that complexity itself was a likely precondition for managerial issues to be brought into sharp relief. An organisational size of 200 people also happens to conform to the then Department of Trade & Industry's definition of a 'large' organisation. In addition, the requirements for appropriate interviewees were further codified by referring to them as 'senior managers'. Once again the underlying issue was a concern that the participating individuals should have at least a degree of exposure to complexity and accordingly guidance regarding the term 'senior' was provided to the various organisations that facilitated access to their management practitioners. Hence, the concept of seniority was characterised in organisational terms as being represented by the individual (i) contributing to the creation of a strategic plan, rather than simply following one; (ii) having a measure of corporate responsibility, rather than simply departmental ones; (iii) experiencing a degree of complexity and ambiguity, rather than only simplicity and certainty and (iv) being required to proactively identify and implement solutions, rather than simply recognise and report problems.

In addition, it was clear from the literature regarding the diffusion of innovations that a key potential channel for the diffusion of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management would be academic institutions. Hence, an implication of this was that at least some of the contributing managers would need to have had experience of either formal management education, or work based management training. In this regard it should be noted that 23 of the 24 individuals forming the initial dataset were either graduates, or professional qualified to an equivalent level; that 6 had a Masters qualification in management; that 5 had a management qualification at either Diploma, or

Certificate level; that 10 had participated in comprehensive ‘in house’ management development training programmes with a number of current and former employers and that 4 had attended short courses at a variety of established business schools.

Otherwise, in order to facilitate the recruitment of ‘information - rich’ cases, the overall recruitment process sought to be as broad and inclusive as possible. Participating organisations were identified and recruited via both individual and institutional networks and the requirements of the research project and the necessary logistical arrangements for the intended interviews were both discussed and contracted at an exploratory meeting held between the author and the nominated contact individual from each organisation. A ‘pen portrait’ of each of the five participating organisations is included as Appendix 8.

In addition, a subsequent batch of interviews was undertaken with similarly experienced, similarly senior management practitioners, who were also part time MBA students at the University of Worcester. Although similar in most regards, a number of these interviewees worked in smaller organisations with a much less comprehensive and much less structured approach to management development, education and training.

Hence the focus of this research study is the ‘individual’, rather than the ‘organisation’. However, the emphasis for the initial data set is the individual within their organisation context and the emphasis for the subsequent data set is the individual in the midst of a significant educational experience.

Accordingly it is important to re - emphasise that the rationale behind the decision to interview part - time MBA students as part of these inquiries was not to compare and contrast the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models between one dataset consisting of experienced practitioners and another dataset of highly educated practitioners. As has already been pointed out the overwhelming majority of the individuals forming the initial dataset were either educated or trained in management. Indeed, a significant number had a post graduate qualification in management. In addition, whilst it could be argued that the dataset of part - time MBA students was formed from slightly less experienced practitioners, of slightly less seniority than the initial cohort of ‘organisation’ based interviewees, they were of similar experience and similar seniority to these interviewees at the time in their careers when this kind of appropriation was deemed by some to have occurred. Furthermore it is important to appreciate that the important characteristic of the subsequent data set was not that it was comprised of information from individuals who were undertaking an MBA per se. Indeed the distinguishing characteristic was that they were management practitioners who were in the midst of a significant educational experience that included their exposure to a significant quantity of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management. It seemed possible that the inclusion of this data set might enhance the prospects of discovering appropriation in action.

The MBA interviewees were also interviewed under the same critical incident methodology that sought to establish the approach that each had adopted in relation to their key managerial challenges. As with the initial dataset the methodology then inquired into the source of the approach that had been adopted. Hence a key research issue was that where individuals in the original dataset had referred to an isolated instance, where appropriation may have occurred, this was so historic that further inquiries into the precise nature of this were impossible. Thus, the purpose of creating an additional dataset of practitioners who were currently engaged in part - time study for an MBA was that this provided the realistic prospect of examining the process of appropriation either whilst it was in progress, or soon after it had occurred. Equally if no trace of an appropriation process could be found by reference to these individuals, whilst they were in the midst of such a significant educational experience and at a point in their careers when they are most likely to do so, then it seemed likely that it would be safe to conclude that practitioners did not appropriate the more formal more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management.

3.3.3 Semi - structured interviews

Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003: 250) conclude that it is appropriate to conduct a qualitative interview in circumstances where the researcher was seeking ‘to understand the reasons for the decisions that your research participants have taken, or to understand the reasons for their attitudes and opinions’. They also note that interviews provide ‘the opportunity to probe answers, where you want your interviewees to explain, or build on, their responses’ and that the opportunity to clarify the meaning of the particular words that an interviewee my use to express their ideas ‘will add significance and depth to the data obtained’. In addition, they suggest that interviewing ‘may lead the discussion into areas’ that the researcher had not considered but which are ‘significant for your understanding’. Finally, the conclude that interviewing ‘affords the interviewee an opportunity to hear herself or himself thinking aloud about things she or he may not have previously thought about’.

Similarly Elder & Miller (1995) suggest that :

> “Stories and cognitive processes are often best understood through interviews”
> (Page 281)

In addition, Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003: 246, 247 & 247) confirm that semi - structured interviews are non - standardised and that accordingly ‘the researcher will have a list of themes and questions to be covered, although these may vary from interview to interview'. The variations may depend upon 'the flow of the conversation' or 'the nature of events within a particular organisation'. Finally, they conclude that 'semi - structured interviews may be used in order to understand the relationships between variables'.

There were two obvious alternatives to the use of a semi - structured interviewing technique. An 'unstructured' approach to interviewing would have provided less focussed data in relation to a research project where there were pertinent, clearly defined lines of enquiry that were relevant to the research questions. However, a 'structured' approach to interviewing would have provided little, if any, scope to pursue an interesting and potentially significant line of enquiry that might have emerged during an interview. Accordingly a semi - structured approach to interviewing was adopted.

For the initial batch of interviews, where access was facilitated by the representatives of five different organisations, it proved possible for these to be conducted on a face to face basis and on the grounds of 'requisite variety' this was the preferred basis. However, for the subsequent batch of interviewees this was considered to be an impractical approach. From the perspective of these interviewees they were individuals with demanding jobs, family responsibilities and a demanding schedule of studies associated with the completion of their part - time MBA courses. From the researchers perspective it seemed unlikely that several interviews in different locations could be scheduled during the same day and thus the logistics seemed both problematic and prohibitive. Accordingly it was concluded that this second batch of interviews would probably need to be conducted by telephone. Although this approach would afford slightly less 'requisite variety' than the ideal of further 'face to face' interviews', it was regarded as appropriate to temper the striving for absolute rigour with both pragmatism and realism. However, before making a final commitment to this approach the scholarship regarding the potential viability of telephone interviewing was reviewed.

In this regard it became clear (i) that all data collection techniques have associated advantages and disadvantages (Gomm, 2004); (ii) that telephone interviewing is accepted as a viable research methodology alongside that of face to face interviewing (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003); (iii) that logistical difficulties and cost considerations favour telephone interviewing (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003); (iv) that a growing number of research projects feature semi - structured interviews that are conducted by telephone (Burke & Miller, 2001; Holbrook, Green & Krosnick, 2003); (v) that examples include a research project utilising a multistage research design employing comprehensive telephone interviews with 63 managers, each lasting between one and two hours (Mitchell & Zmud, 1999); (vi) that comparative studies show no significant difference in the quality of the resulting data (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004; Fenig, Levav, Kohn & Yelin, 1993); and (vii) that a practical guidance note of 'hints and tips' for successful telephone interviews has been published (Burke & Miller, 2001).

In addition, the principal concern regarding telephone interviewing was that there should be a sufficiently well developed subscriber network so as to avoid sampling bias. Obviously this generalised concern did not apply in this particular instance.

Accordingly, it was concluded that the research study should be pursued via semi - structured interviews that, wherever possible, would be conducted on a face to face basis and that where this was likely to be a barrier to obtaining agreement, a semi - structured telephone interview would be an acceptable alternative.

3.3.4 The critical incident technique

The origin of the critical incident technique (CIT) is in work that was undertaken for the United States Army Airforce both before and during WW2. The purpose of this work was to understand the specific behaviours that led to either the success or the failure of a flying mission. Subsequently the information was used to assist with the selection and training of flight crew. In order to achieve this objective a practical and efficient method of intensively interviewing flight crew was developed. This sought to both pinpoint the salient operational facts and identify the key behaviours. After the war the originator continued to develop the technique to solve other practical problems and in 1954 Flanagan published his seminal journal article regarding the technique.

Thus, it is clear that at its inception the critical incident technique was utilised in relation to observable behaviours that were judged by expert assessors. In addition, the outcome of the behaviours was of critical importance because the objective was to both select and train individuals who had the core competencies necessary to ensure the success of flight missions. Hence, in its fundamental origins CIT is 'positivist'. However, Flanagan (1954) also contains this key observation :

> "From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that the critical incident technique is essentially a procedure for gathering certain important facts concerning behaviour in defined situations. It should be emphasised that the critical incident technique does not consist of a single rigid set of rules governing data collection but rather should be thought of as a flexible set of principles which must be modified and adapted to meet the specific situation at hand".
>
> (Page 335)

Furthermore, in the more than 50 years since Flanagan first published his seminal work, many researchers, from many research traditions, have accepted his invitation to be ‘flexible’ in their usage of CIT!

Indeed there are recent instances where the critical incident technique has been used as a research methodology in the context of (i) library services and user experiences (Fisher & Oulton, 1999); (ii) nursing practice and clinical outcomes (Keatinge, 2002; Kemppainen, 2000; Norman, Redfern, Tomalin & Oliver, 1992); (iii) the intellectual influences upon consulting psychology practice (O’Roark, 2007); (iv) customer service behaviours in Korea (Kim & McLean, 2007); (v) inter - functional collaborative behaviour (Ellinger, Keller & Hansen, 2006); (vi) nuclear power plant operations (O’Connor, O’Dea, Flin & Belton, 2008); (vii) project leadership in multi - project settings (Kaulio, 2008); (viii) retail stores and their customer perceptions (Backstrom & Johansson, 2006); (ix) cruise passengers and their ‘moments of truth’ experiences (Petrick, Tonner & Quinn, 2006); (x) retail banking and service recovery (Lewis & Spyrakopouios, 2001); (xi) knowledge identification in management accounting (Lander & Reinstein, 1987); and (xii) evaluating and improving teaching performance (Sautter & Hanna, 1995).

In addition, a version of the critical incident technique has been widely adopted as a recruitment tool, where it is used to structure the questions that are used during job selection interviews (Latham, Saari, Pursell & Campion, 1980).

This illustrates the extent to which, over the last 50 years, the usage of the critical incident technique has far gone beyond that which was originally envisaged. Indeed, Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson & Maglio (2005); in a paper that specifically sets out to review the development of the critical incident technique in the 50 years since its inception; cite the following key developments :

1. The emphasis has changed from being grounded in behaviour, to encompassing psychological states and experiences.
2. The emphasis has changed from expert direct observation, to retrospective self-reporting.
3. A major departure in the way in which data is analysed.
4. A major change in the way in which the credibility or trustworthiness of the findings is established.

From a wider perspective, Bradbury - Jones & Tranter (2008) consider whether CIT is a methodology (i.e. a research design) or a method (i.e. a research tool, such as a questionnaire, or interview). They conclude that :

"CIT is *de facto* neither a methodology nor a method".

(Page 404)

In addition, they cite references that demonstrate that it is common for CIT to be integrated into a broad range of genuine methodologies such as grounded theory, phenomenology and ethnography etc.

However, a key aspect of the decision to adopt a critical incident approach was a desire to ensure that the examination of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners should be grounded in the actual experiences of the interviewees, rather than some philosophical or intellectual abstraction of these. Accordingly, it was concluded that there should be no philosophical objection to the critical incident technique being utilised as a model for the basic structure of the interviews. In addition, Hodgkinson, Langan-Fox & Sadler-Smith (2008), in a very recent journal article which seeks to address the 'scant scholarly attention' that has been afforded to the role of intuition in decision - making, suggest that :

> "The CIT, for instance, could be used to compare and contrast specific decision episodes in which participants had variously used intuition to good effect or otherwise".
>
> (Page 18)

Although this research study examines decision episodes from a wider perspective than solely the use of intuition, in effect the article provides confirmation of the appropriateness of the CIT in this context.

3.3.5 The interview template

Within each interview, individuals were invited to identify their most significant, current, managerial challenges and to describe the approach that they were taking to address these. In this context the term 'approach' was given the widest possible meaning and interpretation, including ideas, theories, concepts, models, tools, techniques, processes and practices etc. Subsequent questioning sought to determine both the source for and the rationale for the approach that had been adopted. Once again the concept of a source was given the widest possible meaning and interpretation, including experience, intuition, common sense, peers, bosses, new recruits, organisational visits, formal academic study, work - based training, journals, magazines, books and the internet. The individuals were then invited to identify the most significant, managerial challenges of their career to date and to describe the approach that they had taken to addressing each of these. An identical line of enquiry was adopted in relation to these challenges. Accordingly the answers given by the interviewees provided an opportunity for at least some measure of cross referencing for consistency and congruence. In addition, individuals were specifically invited to identify challenges where they had been unable to readily identify an appropriate approach and in relation to these they were encouraged to identify, in some detail, the means and mechanisms that they subsequently utilised to search for these. The purpose of this was to identify a number of generic 'pathways' that were commonly utilised by practitioners.

The interviewees were provided with prior notice of the questions that requested the considered selection of the two or three most challenging situations that each individual had experienced both currently and previously. Participant feedback solicited during two trial interviews confirmed that interviewees regarded advanced notice of these two questions as being particularly important.

It was ultimately decided that the template for the semi - structured interviews would be as follows :

a) An exploration of each individual's two or three most significant, current managerial challenges.
b) An exploration of the two or three most challenging managerial situations that each individual had experienced in their career to date.
c) An exploration of the approach that the individual was taking in relation to each of these challenges.
d) An exploration of the source for each of the approaches that had been adopted.
e) An invitation to reveal any selection and evaluation criteria.
f) An invitation to reveal any success or abandonment criteria.
g) An exploration of the rationale for the chosen indicators.
h) An invitation to reveal any challenges where an appropriate approach could not be readily identified.
i) An invitation to reveal the means and mechanisms used to search for an appropriate approach.
j) An exploration of the individual's reflective habits and practices.
k) An invitation to reveal the resources and materials that the individual regularly drew upon to sustain themselves in the light of their ever changing managerial challenges.
l) A direct invitation to identify the role that the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played in helping them to discharge their responsibilities.

m) An invitation to reveal the two or three occasions in their lives as a whole when they had learnt the most.

This overall structure was selected because it was consistent with the research objectives, which included enquiring into the extent to which the generality of practitioners appropriated the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management; whether they did so in an overt, or covert way; and the role that, once appropriated, they played in helping managers to discharge their responsibilities. In addition, the structure for the interviews was adopted because it was consistent with the stated research methodology; because it was practical and because it was likely to facilitate the kind of 'thick descriptions' (Geertz: 1973: 6) that were both necessary and appropriate.

Ultimately the first batch of semi - structured, face to face, recorded interviews with 24 senior managers from five different organisations were held during the first quarter of 2007. The second batch of semi - structured, telephone, recorded interviews with 15 senior managers, who were also studying on a part - time basis for an MBA, were conducted during the first quarter of 2009. In total, the 39 interviews, which had a collective duration of 34 hours 53 minutes, provided information in relation to 160 incidents. In addition, the verbatim transcripts of these interviews totalled 355,000 words.

3.3.6 Data analysis

As we have already seen, both earlier in this section and in the literature review, Ashby's principle of 'requisite variety' suggests that high variety, natural language, rather than mathematical and statistical language, may be more appropriate for many types of organisational research. Whilst Daft & Wiginton (1979) clearly support the general case for qualitative techniques they also make this specific point :

> "There is an array of research techniques which are based on high variety language and thus contain requisite variety for organisational analysis. For example, case studies use natural language for both data collection and analysis. Case studies rely on human perceptions, do not treat system elements in a precise, unequivocal manner, and tend to summarise and deal with general patterns rather than precisely defined elements".
>
> (Page 187)

Equally, Robson (2002: 178) defines a case study as 'a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence'. In addition, Yin (2003 :13) describes a case study as 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident'.

Furthermore, Yin (2003) makes this observation :

> "In other words, you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study".
>
> (Page 13)

Thus, a case study research strategy was adopted primarily because it was consistent with an inductive approach, the use of qualitative data and with the desire to examine a contemporary phenomenon within its context whilst utilising multiple sources of evidence.

In addition, the 355,000 word transcripts of the interviews were handled broadly in accordance with the processes and procedures outlined by Eisenhardt. Indeed, Eisenhardt (1989: 532) provides a detailed explanation of a data handling process for an inductive, theory building, case study in a journal article that seeks to provide 'a roadmap for building theories from case study research'. However, Eisenhardt (1989: 532) specifically acknowledges that the processes and procedures that are detailed 'synthesizes previous work on qualitative methods (e.g. Miles & Huberman, 1984), the design of case study research (e.g. Yin, 1981) and grounded theory building (e.g. Glaser & Strauss, 1967)'.

In effect the process that is outlined both builds upon and operationalises the earlier conceptual work of Miles & Huberman, Yin and Glaser & Strauss. The resulting data handling process can be viewed as consisting of the following ten steps :

1. Identification of some initial constructs.
2. Keeping of field notes – reflective journal.
3. Within case analysis.
4. Cross case analysis.
5. Identification of tentative themes, concepts and relationships.
6. Sharpening of the emergent constructs.
7. Iterative, cross case citing of evidence for each emergent construct.
8. Enfolding existing literature.
9. Testing for closure.
10. Evaluation using established criteria.

In practice each of the interview transcripts was subjected to an intense inspection process and as a result of this sections of the dialogue were highlighted and extracted into a separate compilation for a more detailed examination. Each extract within this subsequent compilation was then examined for the strength of its evidential contribution in relation to a template that was itself evolutionary. Over a period of some months, each extract was reviewed, on a cyclical and iterative basis, for the weight of evidence that it provided, or otherwise, in relation to 10 key categories. In each case the categories were closely linked to the range of answers that were given in response to questions of the semi - structured interviews. However, this is not to suggest that the range and nature of the actual answers had been anticipated in advance. Ultimately 888 interview extracts were attributed to the categories detailed below.

1. Evidence for recognition based decision-taking.
2. Evidence for emergent decision-building rather than evaluative decision - making.
3. Evidence for extensive personal reflection in unstructured ways.
4. Evidence for the influence of personal 'values' in managerial decisions.
5. Evidence of 'hedge trimming' provided by continuous monitoring and evaluation.
6. Evidence for the utilisation of both hard and soft indicators of success criteria.
7. Evidence for management being a 'craft' learnt via participation in a community of practice.
8. Evidence for the occasional, frequently time delayed, confirmatory role of ideas, theories, concepts and models.
9. Evidence of the indirect, subconscious and even subliminal influence of ideas, theories, concepts and models.
10. Evidence for transformational adult learning being prompted by 'rites of passage' and changes in 'meaning - perspective'.

As an example of the detailed process, a sample section from an interview transcript is shown below.

[Q5] OK. In each of those … um … cases then, so you've got the three challenges and the three kind of broad approaches, one in relation to each of them, could you identify for me where that approach has come from. What decided you to go about it in that way?

[O2I4] The change management one I think, (pause) I'm naturally what you would call, may be what you'd call a change agent. So you know, I just, I just see things that, I have an eye for spotting things that need changing or, or holes in things, or stuff that needs to move on. Um … My approach to working with the heads team and driving forward some of the quite significant changes that need, and have been made in community, I think I've been steered quite a lot by my Director on that, in terms of what my approach might be. Um… (pause) just drawn on experiences, you know, from other situations. Um … certainly, certainly from my original NED position, you know, and how I worked with the heads team there and what worked and what didn't work and I guess what was good about going in, into community was I could have that fresh start, so I could almost set off from the beginning, how I wanted to work and how I wanted that to be, and how I wanted to position myself, and I guess I was

> really careful about how I positioned myself in that group. Um … And I think that's worked for the better all round really. Um … So I guess it's just, well what was, what felt, just what I do and who I am, you know, what naturally comes my way, but that, a lot of that is based on previous experience of where I've done things before or approaches that have worked or not worked and some direction from, from my Director. Um … (pause) not really, because I do action learning sets and things like that, I'm trying to think about where I would have been influenced on my approach. Nothing's sticking out, I'm sure there have been other things that have influenced me in my approach but ….

In this particular instance the first extract was identified as representing direct evidence in support of recognition based decision - taking and implied evidence in support of personal reflection in unstructured ways. The second extract was identified as representing direct evidence of recognition based decision - taking, of direct evidence for management being a 'craft' learnt via participation in a community of practice and implied evidence in support of personal reflection in unstructured ways.

Ultimately the output from this whole process of analysis and evaluation was collated into ten tables, each of which contained all of the identified and referenced extracts that that had been evaluated as representing credible evidence in support of that particular category. It was these tabulations, drawn from the collated contributions that had been extracted from each of interview transcripts, regardless of the interviewees employing organisation, that were utilised to underpin the cross case analysis. Remaining from this process were a number of interesting extracts that could not be evaluated as representing evidence in support of any of the emergent cross case categories, but which remained significant because they appeared to represent a different kind of reality. These extracts were evaluated from the perspective of the particular circumstances of both the contributing interviewee. These exceptions to the general understandings, derived from the cross case analysis, were subsequently evaluated on an exceptions basis to form the within case analysis. The iterative process of inspecting the transcripts, highlighting extracts, collating and evaluating these, either against a cross case evidence template, that was itself developing iteratively, or as an exception as part of the within case analysis, continued until 'saturation' (Patton, 2002) had been achieved.

Thus, on this basis, a case study analysis was completed to examine whether the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management exerted an overt influence over practitioner decision – making.

3.3.7 Content analysis

Whilst a case study analysis was completed as a means of examining the overt influence of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models over management practitioners, it seemed clear that this approach would be unable to provide evidence for any covert influence. Indeed, it seemed highly probable that the practitioners themselves would be unaware of any covert influences that were being exerted and thus they would be unable to report it in any kind of direct way. Inevitably this meant that it would be necessary to detect such covert influences in the language that the interviewees had utilised when explaining their practices and the first approach to achieving this was to undertake a simple content analysis (Weber, 1990; Krippendorf, 2004).

In this regard Kirk & Miller (1986: 10) confirm that the adoption of a qualitative approach to research 'does not imply a commitment to innumeracy'. In addition, they confirm that 'the diverse expression' of qualitative research includes 'content analysis'.

Furthermore, Ritchie & Lewis (2003: 200) list nine different qualitative research traditions. Their listing also includes content analysis. In relation to this they describe the purpose of content analysis as being the analysis of 'both the content and context of documents' from which 'themes are identified with the researcher focussing on the way in which the theme is treated or presented and the frequency of its occurrence'. Similarly, as part of their detailed 'rules of thumb' regarding the construction of qualitative data display matrices, Miles & Huberman (1994: 242) also confirm that such matrices 'can also be open to using numbers, either in direct quantities, or judgements in the form of ratings or scales'.

In addition, it is particularly interesting to note the references to the historical development of content analysis (Krippendorf, 2004; Kirk & Miller, 1986; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). These clearly show that content analysis was regarded as a qualitative, rather than a quantitative technique. Accordingly, it was concluded that it was totally congruent and completely acceptable for frequency data, obtained via content analysis, to be included within a qualitative research study.

However, it should be stressed that the case for the inclusion of relevant, numerical, analysis is not that, by so doing, the validity of this research might be more easily demonstrated; nor even that by doing so it might be argued that the outcomes of the research project are more capable of being generalised; nor even that by some strange means the provision of relevant, numerical information is more objective than the provision of qualitative data. To adopt any of these positions would be to undermine the research paradigm that underpins this entire study. However, it is to assert that the inclusion of numerical information is a legitimate aspect of content analysis, that is conducted within the qualitative research tradition and that doing so has the potential to contribute different insights and additional understanding.

Hence, it was decided that the initial analysis of interview transcripts would seek to establish the extent to which the thinking of the 20th century's management gurus had influenced the language of the interviewees. This process required that a compendium of these ideas, theories, concepts and models should be checked against the transcripts so that the frequency of these occurrences could be established.

In this regard, it was quickly established that there is no universally accepted compendium which comprehensively details all of the established ideas, theories, concepts and models about management (Carson, Lanier, Carson & Guidry, 2000). However, there were a number of credible, potential building blocks and by utilising a process of ‘snowball sampling’ (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003) it was possible to create a compendium of managerial ideas, theories, concepts and models from seven key sources:

1. Lindvall, J. (1999). The creation of management practice: A literature review. The Creation of European Management Practice, Report 1
2. Pascale, R. T. (1990). Managing on the edge: How successful companies use conflict to stay ahead. New York: Touchstone
3. Kennedy, C. (1998). Guide to the Management Guru’s. London: Random House
4. Harvard Business Review. (1997) 75 Years of Management Ideas and Practice, September – October Supplement
5. Crainer, S. (1998). Key management ideas: The thinkers who changed the management world. London: Pitman
6. Clegg, S. R.; Kornberger, M.& Pitsis, T. (2006). Managing organizations: An introduction to theory and practice. London: Sage
7. Mol, M. J. & Birkinshaw, J. (2008). Giant steps in management: Innovations that change the way we work. London: Financial Times Prentice Hall. (Including personal correspondence)

These seven sources were identified by the usual literature searching techniques and were representative of three general types. The most significant group consisted of Lindvall (1999) and the Harvard Business Review (1997). Lindvall (1999) is a 154 page literature review that contributed to an 18 part report of a research project, the Creation of European Management Practice, which was funded by the European Union. The Lindvall (1999) report included an appendix which listed management practices, their sources and an evaluation of the extent to which each had been implement across Europe. The Harvard Business Review (1997) was a special edition that identified the most significant management ideas and practices of the last 25 years of the 20th century. The second group consisted of the business books of Kennedy (1998), Crainer (1998) and Mol & Birkinshaw (2008). Each of these identified those management gurus and their ideas which in the opinion of the authors had been the most influential. Although Kennedy and Crainer are established journalists and authors in relation to business and management, Mol & Birkinshaw are both distinguished academics. The final group of Pascale (1990) and Clegg, Kornberger & Pitsis (2006) are essentially fairly standard management text books that identify the key contributors to the development of management and accordingly seek to provide the foundations for undergraduate study.

In addition, some obvious gaps and omissions were filled by a process of inspection and the resulting compendium totalled 449 managerial ‘terms’. However, a key issue is that it is not necessary for the bespoke compendium to include absolutely every, potentially relevant, entry. Indeed, in order for the content analysis to provide meaningful insights and comparisons, it is only necessary for the bespoke compendium to be as comprehensive as is reasonably possible.

The resulting compilation of 449 managerial ‘terms’ was subsequently used as a bespoke dictionary to complete a traditional ‘content analysis’ (Weber, 1990). Hence, the interview transcripts were analysed for their content and this was compared to the content of the bespoke dictionary. This process provided a sense of the extent to which the potentially available ideas, theories, concepts and models about management were represented in this dataset and this gave a general indication of their prevalence within the discourse of management practitioners.

In addition, it will be recalled that access to the initial batch of 24 interviewees was facilitated by five different organisations. For four of these five organisations it subsequently proved possible to obtain some publicly available corporate documents, such as annual reports and strategic plans. This enabled the textual content of each organisations document’s to be compared with the textual content of the interview transcripts from the interviewees from that organisation. It was anticipated that this comparison would provide a sense of the extent to which there was a resonance between the publicly expressed discourse of the employing corporate entity and that of its senior management practitioners. In effect this part of the content analysis would provide evidence regarding whether, or not, the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners involved processes that were organisationally specific. In relation to the fifth organisation this kind of analysis was not possible because it is a privately owned commercial company that is not obliged to make this kind of information publicly available.

As has been discussed in the literature review, the diffusion of innovations theory implies a centre to periphery process of diffusion. This presupposes that the energy necessary to facilitate the diffusion process lies at the centre. In addition, an implication of fashion theory is that those within an organisation with both seniority and authority, once personally persuaded of the value of a new fashionable idea, could ensure that this became the predominant cultural motif. In such circumstances it might be reasonable to expect that an organisation would have a core culture that was strongly aligned with a relatively small cluster of currently fashionable ideas, theories, concepts or models about management. A corollary of this could be that the senior managers within each organisation would articulate their support for these central tenets. Any such process would also imply an organisational distinctiveness. The basis for this would be that it is unlikely that organisations from different sectors with different histories, traditions, governance requirements, regulatory frameworks, senior executives, management structures, products, customers and suppliers would alight upon the exactly same themes at exactly the same moment. In such circumstances it might be reasonable to anticipate that any such organisational distinctiveness would be detectable within the organisational discourse. In addition, it might be reasonable to presume that this would be so, whether the discourse took the form of the publications produced both to promote the organisation and to comply with its accountability requirements; or whether the discourse took the form of transcripts of the interviews provided by the organisations management practitioners.

In practice the interview transcripts from each of the interviewees were collated into a single MSWord document for each of the five organisations and in each case the interviewer's questions were removed, so that only the words spoken by the interviewees remained. The frequency with which each of the 449 managerial 'terms' from the compendium occurred within the collated interview transcripts of the interviewees from each of the five organisations was then determined by utilising the 'Edit' > 'Find' facility within MSWord. In addition, the total number of words in was determined using the Tools > Word Count facility within MSWord. This enabled the frequency with each 'term' occurred within the transcripts to be expressed on the common basis of 'per 100K words'. The result of this analysis was recorded in an MSExcel spreadsheet and these discoveries are shown by Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 of Chapter 5.

Subsequently, the publicly available, strategic documents from four of the five organisations were downloaded from the internet in Adobe Acrobat format. The frequency with which each of the managerial 'terms' that had been collectively utilised by the interviewees occurred within the publicly available documents of these four organisations was determined by utilising the 'Search' facility within Adobe Acrobat document files. The result of this analysis was also recorded in an MSExcel spreadsheet, so that appropriate comparisons could be made. These discoveries are shown by Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6 of Chapter 5.

3.3.8 Intertextuality

A second phase of textual analysis involved an 'intertextual' (Worton & Still, 1990; Bernstein, 1996; Allen, 2000; Thomas, 2003; Bazerman, 2004) examination of the interview transcripts with the objective of indexing extracts from the transcripts to both 'index categories' and 'intertextual domains' (Thomas, 2003). The objective of this phase of the research was to discover whether the more formal, more academic ideas about management exerted a covert, subliminal or even subconscious influence over managerial thinking and decision making.

Bassnett (2007) attributes the origins of the concept of intertextuality to Matthew Arnold's Oxford Inaugural Lecture of 1857 in which he declared that :

> "Everywhere there is connection, everywhere there is illustration, no single event, no single literature is adequately comprehended except in relation to other events, to other literatures".

Thus, intertextuality is the proposition that any text does not stand alone, but is dependent upon a host of contexts and conventions that are both cultural and aesthetic. In addition, prior texts are also perceived as exerting an unavoidable influence over everything that is written, or said. Sometimes this influence is in an obvious deliberate way that includes direct references, quotations and even pastiches of the original text. Sometimes the influence occurs in a more subtle, hidden, subconscious, or even subliminal way. Thus, from the perspective of intertextuality any text is both entangled with and interwoven with its antecedents and will contain either overt, or covert references to these prior texts. Furthermore any reader's ability to extract meaning from a text is affected by a similar, but different set of influences.

Allen (2000) describes this in the following terms :

> "Texts, whether they be literary or non-literary, are viewed by modern theorists as lacking any kind of independent meaning. They are what theorists now call intertextual. The act of reading, theorists claim, plunges us into a network of textual relations. To interpret a text, to discover its meaning, or meanings, is to trace those relations. Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts. Meaning becomes something which exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates, moving out from the independent text into a network of textual relations. The text becomes the intertext".
>
> (Page 1)

Similarly, Bazerman (2004: 83) concludes that 'almost every word and phrase we use we have heard or seen before' and that 'our originality and craft as writers come from how we put those words together in new ways to fit our specific situation, needs, and purposes'. Indeed, Bazerman (2004) suggests that :

> "We create our texts out of the sea of former texts that surround us, the sea of language that we live in. And we understand the texts of others within that same sea".
>
> (Page 83)

Hence, Bazerman (2004 : 86) regards intertextuality as the ‘explicit and implicit relations that a text or utterance has to prior, contemporary and potential future texts’. However, he also concludes that ‘although this is now a widely recognised phenomenon, there is not a standard shared analytic vocabulary for considering the elements and kinds of intertextuality’.

Finally, Warner (2006: 225) discusses the notion that documents are ‘active’ rather than ‘inert or static’ texts. In addition, she discusses ‘the role of the reader and the notion that the act of reading constructs the meaning of a document’. She then asserts that ‘in terms of documentary analysis, there are at least three levels of meaning that are relevant’. Although the third of these, which is semiotics, is not relevant to this research study, her comments in relation to the others are pertinent, thus :

> “First, the authors themselves have one set of meanings which they intend to communicate to their readership. Second, there are the meanings received by the readership, which are themselves prefigured by the social context within which they read the document”.
>
> (Page 225)

In addition, Bernstein (1996) proposes that any discourse exists within a regulative environment that ensures that these conform to the appropriate requirements of social relations, identity and order. In addition, he concludes that any discourse is ‘recontextualised’ into new situations in ways that are consistent with the dominant interest groups who control the process. In the light of this insight Thomas (2003) also suggests that :

> “An academic idea may be imported into a practical management context, but will be altered as the regulative discourse in the practical domain is different to that in the academic one”.
>
> (Page 785)

Thus, by utilising the linguistic notion of ‘intertextuality’ it was possible to empirically explore whether the discourse of management practitioners is both made up from and influenced by the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management. This approach also had the potential to confirm whether the process of appropriation is a genuinely rare, wholly exceptional occurrence, or whether ‘recontextualisation’ means the process of appropriation is a much more subtle phenomenon than had previously been envisaged.

However, it was also clear that ‘intertextuality’ was more of a philosophical understanding and a theoretical insight, than a set of detailed methods and procedures. Indeed, in recent publications there are examples of intertextual analysis being undertaken in association with (i) an established methodological framework that had been previously and independently developed by others (Pantaleo, 2006 & 2007); (ii) an approach that has been developed by individual researchers that are both context specific and developed to meet the requirements of both their specific data sets and their particular research questions (Voithofer, 2006) and (iii) an approach that utilises, presents, classifies, evaluates and interprets significant sections of verbatim transcripts without reference to any methodological framework (Torr, 2007).

In fact, the data handling aspects of this stage of the research were undertaken utilising the framework analysis technique (Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor, 2003) following established processes and procedures (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994; Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000; Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor, 2003; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The framework analysis technique was adopted because it was developed within an independent social research institute specifically for use in relation to applied policy research. As Ritchie & Spencer (1994: 173, 174 & 178) indicate 'applied research can be broadly distinguished from basic or theoretical research through its requirements to meet specific information needs'. In particular, they draw attention to the fact that 'in applied policy research, the objectives are usually clearly set and shaped by specific information requirements'. They argue that as a result of this 'the research needs to be appropriately targeted towards providing answers, in the form of greater illumination or understanding of the issues being addressed' and that 'this has important implications for the form and functions of the analysis undertaken'. They also note that the framework analysis technique 'has been refined and developed over the years but the general principles of the approach have proved to be versatile across a wide range of studies'. Finally, they summarise the 'five key stages to qualitative data analysis' using the framework analysis technique as (i) familiarisation; (ii) identifying a thematic framework; (iii) indexing; (iv) charting; and finally (v) mapping and interpretation.

Equally, Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor (2003: 219 & 220) describe the framework analysis technique as 'a matrix based method for ordering and synthesising data' in which 'analysis is a continuous and iterative process'. Thus, the 'thematic framework which is the central component of the method is used to classify and organise data according to the key themes, concepts and emergent categories' and 'once it is judged to be comprehensive', each main theme may be 'displayed or charted in its own matrix where every respondent is allocated a row and each column denotes a separate subtopic'. In addition, they also confirm that the framework analysis technique 'was developed during the 1980s at the National Centre for Social Research' and that it 'is now widely used by qualitative researchers'. In addition, they note that it 'facilitates rigorous and transparent data management such that all stages involved in the analytical hierarchy can be systematically conducted'.

Accordingly, the framework analysis technique seemed to be consistent with the nature of these particular enquiries, which appeared to have much more in common with 'applied' research, than 'basic' research. In particular, it was clear that key elements of any 'thematic framework' would effectively be predetermined both by the core rationale for the research study and its fundamental interest in the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models. Hence, this was likely to be rather different from an approach in which qualitative data was organised and classified into categories that emerged and evolved through a completely open ended process of increasing familiarisation with the raw data. Thus, the objective of the qualitative data analysis process used within this research study was not to establish themes that both characterised and illustrated the essential nature of managerial discourse; nor even to establish the thematic nature of the managerial challenges themselves; nor even to establish the success or otherwise of the approaches that the interviewees had adopted; but rather to establish the extent to which the managerial discourse could be taken to indicate the influence of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and model about management.

The first part of the analytical process involved a detailed examination of the 355,000 word verbatim transcripts of the semi - structured interviews and the identification of the words, phases and expressions that were of potential interest. As can be seen from the illustrative example that has been included below, the basis of the identification was simply that, in the context of the overall dialogue, the usage appeared to be interesting and meaningful. In simple terms they were assessed as 'standing out' in some way against the 'background noise' of the overall sentence. Within the limits of manageability the extraction process aimed to be as inclusive as possible and this is illustrated by the fact that ultimately the complete collation totalled 1447 interview extracts.

As an example of the detailed process, a sample section from an interview transcript is shown below.

[Q3] That's an interesting background isn't it, my word? OK. Into the um… first question, so a sharp change of direction, which I'll flag, which is the first, which is, so can we go straight to the first question you had advance notice of which is the one or two or three main managerial challenges you're facing, we're defining management as leading and directing an organisation and getting things done through people. So its both leadership and conventional management stuff really.

[O1I2] Challenge. Um… the team I have inherited, um… I say inherited, I was on the appointment panel for three of them, um… and they were working in similar roles previously to this, our team performing – our team is called the capability and capacity, um… no, capacity and capability unit. And um… so they've been working actually, the CCU had been up and running as a pilot in the organisation so when I came on 22nd January and spelt out my vision for the team, the, their chins hit the deck, they were oh, this is very, very frightening and worrying, we've never done this before. So my first challenge was to try and engage their support. I have to say they rose to it quite well on the whole. There were some what I'd call minor, no, middle to major wobbles actually, with a couple of individuals and I think it was about their perceived skills, they didn't know if they were up to the job. Um… in fact they didn't know if I was up to the job. Um… I had to balance that with, I had this very, very strong vision about what I want our team to do, and I'd been given more or less, the freedom I want to develop that, and, which is great. I had to balance that vision with getting, as I say, the team on side, giving them some really good, clear objectives and getting them to dabble around with some creative thinking as well.

> Some of them, as I said, rose to that very well, some felt very much in panic, out of their comfort zone. So the managerial challenges have been taking them by the hand and leading them through this and trying to get their trust and their will, goodwill, but also getting them actually to start performing, start doing some tasks, and I'm still having um… what I'd call a reasonably serious challenge with one particular individual who is digging heels in a little. I still think some of that is about um… that individual's personal panic, so I've got some work to do in terms of coaching that person, um… but its now bordering on an issue for me, in terms of OK, perhaps I need to get a little bit less soft (laugh) and start um… performance managing.

In practice each of the interview transcripts was examined in detail and sections of text, examples of specific terminology, interesting metaphors and specific usages of language that resonated with the tasks of management were all highlighted. In accordance with the requirements of the framework analysis technique the highlighted segments of text were examined to establish an appropriate hierarchy for the selected data. Hereafter this will be referred to as the 'index' (Richards & Richards, 1994). In reality key parts of the resulting index were strongly influenced by (i) the terms of reference for the research project itself; (ii) the precise nature of the research questions; (iii) the 'regulatory domains' proposed by the extant literature, and (iv) the insights gained from the completed field work. Thus, some key elements of the index were obtained from the references to ideas, theories, concepts and models that are fundamental to this research project. Additional elements of the index related to the discovery, made during the field work that frequently the interviewees were referring to tools and techniques, rather than ideas, theories, concepts and models. In addition, the detailed examination of the transcripts and the early highlighting of text suggested that, during substantial sections of the interviews, the interviewees were discussing both the behaviour of individuals and groups and, in relation to the key challenges that they were describing, the relative advantages and disadvantages of the alternative approaches that they might have adopted. Hence, the index for the framework analysis became theories, models, concepts, ideas, approaches, behaviours, techniques and tools. Whilst it was clear that theories and models could reasonably be regarded as belonging to an 'academic domain' and that techniques and tools could reasonably be regarded as belonging to a 'practical domain'; the situation regarding the more generalised index headings of concepts, ideas, approaches and behaviours was less clear. It seemed at least possible that these represented some kind of more neutral, or more common, or less specialised ground between the two polarities suggested by the extant literature. A more detailed discussion of the indexing of interview extracts occurs at the end of this section and in Section 3.3.9.

At this point it is important to re - emphasise that within this index the purpose of indexing any segment of text was not, as is often the case with the framework analysis technique, to establish the detailed topics and themes that emerged from the interviews. This was because the central rationale for this phase of the research project was not to establish the precise nature of the key challenges that the interviewees were facing, but to establish the extent to which the interviewees drew upon the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models when deciding how best these challenges might be addressed. Thus, the purpose of evaluating the textual extracts was to determine whether each could reasonably be taken as representing an intertextual reference to a theory, a model, a concept, an idea, an approach, behaviour, a technique, or a tool.

It is also important to highlight that the evaluation of any interview extract as conforming to any domain or category within the index neither says, nor implies, anything about the circumstances and situations in which the interviewee acquired such terminology. Whilst it is entirely possible that any acquisition was from first hand experience of an educational or training setting, it is also entirely possible that that the terminology was acquired from a source very many stages removed from any such setting.

In effect this whole textual analysis process may be analogous to the role that mitochondrial DNA plays in genetics, by comparison with the kind of linear analysis and the causal linkages that are a feature of research into ancestry. From this perspective the purpose of these inquires is not to seek to establish the linear, causal linkages that would identify precisely when and how each term entered into an interviewee's vocabulary. Rather it is to look at the residual language of the interviewees and to highlight the differences, if any, in the genetic roots of their 'intellectual DNA'.

However, a significant challenge remained, namely the need to identify a detailed approach to indexing that was consistent with the overall research paradigm and which, in relation to 1447 interview extracts, could provide the kind of consistency and certainty of indexing outcome that was required.

In relation to the task of identifying some options for a viable approach to indexing, Robson (2002: 353 & 354) proved to be helpful. Firstly he highlights the fact that the most commonly used 'recording unit' is the individual word. However, he also confirms that phrases, paragraphs or even 'whole items' can be used with equal validity. In addition, he highlights that coding can be undertaken on the basis of either a 'low inference' system that deals with 'manifest content', or a 'high inference' system that seeks to incorporate 'latent content'. In this context 'manifest content' implies an obviousness that requires little interpretation and 'latent content' implies a subtlety that might require searching for hidden meanings. In fact Creswell (2003: 192) illustrates this issue with his detailed guidance for the coding process. This invites the coder to go through a transcript asking 'What is this about?'. However, he then advises 'Do not think about the "substance" of the information but its underlying meaning'. It is precisely this kind of 'high inference' searching for both 'latent content' and 'underlying meaning' that makes coding potentially problematic.

In relation to the broader, but related issue, concerning the selection of data that is an unavoidable aspect of any qualitative analysis, Patton (1987) reaches this conclusion :

> “Even a comprehensive report will have to omit a great deal of the data collected by the evaluator. Focus is essential. Analysts who try to include everything risk losing their readers in the sheer volume of the presentation”.
>
> (Page 163)

Similarly, in relation to the issue of how much descriptive material should be included, he makes the following observation :

> “Detailed descriptions and in-depth quotations are the essential qualities of qualitative reports. Sufficient description and direct quotations should be included to allow readers to understand fully the program and the thoughts of the people represented in the report. Description should stop short, however, of becoming trivial and mundane. The reader does not need to know absolutely everything that was done or said”.
>
> (Page 163)

In addition, as part of their detailed guidance regarding the completion of qualitative matrices, Miles & Huberman (1994) confirm that one of the options for the completion of ‘cell entries’ is to utilise ‘direct quotes’, thus :

> “You always have choices about the level and type of data to be entered. For example, you can include: direct quotes, extracts from field notes, summaries, paraphrases or abstracts, researcher explanations, ratings or summarised judgements, combinations of the above”.
>
> (Page 241)

Finally, in relation to the population of qualitative data display matrices they also provide the following ‘rule of thumb’ :

> “Keep an explicit record of the ‘decision rules’ you followed in selecting data chunks for entry”.
>
> (Page 242)

and

> “The decision rules and other aspects of the matrix should be explained clearly in a legend that will always be associated with the matrix, whether you, a colleague, or the final reader is looking at it”.
>
> (Page 242)

Thus, it became clear that a viable approach to indexing the qualitative data from this research project could be based upon :

1. A flexible approach to a ‘recording unit’
2. A commitment to a ‘low inference’ indexing system
3. Selectivity and a focus upon the presentation of a limited number of evidential instances, rather than every instance, or even the majority of instances
4. The presentation of explicitly stated decision rules and indexing rationale, via a legend that is associated with construction of the matrix
5. An indexing framework based upon four ‘intertextual domains’ (Thomas, 2003), rather than eight index categories
6. The presentation of interview extracts within their context

Accordingly this is the approach that has been taken.

However, a related aspect of these particular methodological challenges was the issue of whether, even with a greatly simplified, low inference and completely transparent approach to the indexing process, the outcome should be subjected to some form of intercoder reliability testing.

Firstly, Robson (2002) concludes that the kind of ‘low inference’ indexing that has been utilised within this research project is more likely to provide reliable results than a ‘high inference’ system. However, he also concludes that, in circumstances where a ‘high inference’ system is appropriate, this will place greater stress upon ensuring that reliability can be demonstrated through the use of independent coders. Hence, there is an association between a ‘high inference’ approach to indexing and the need for independent coders to be used.

However, it is also clear that some externally funded qualitative research projects are so large that it is necessary both for the interviewing and for the subsequent analysis to be undertaken by a team of researchers. Where this is the case there is clearly an issue concerning the consistency and replication of the coding. As Searle (1999: 157) indicates, a key aspect is that these kinds of studies is that ‘the corpus of data generated is very large, sometimes famously so, consisting of mounds of paper transcripts or gigabytes of hard disk space, gradually accumulated over months of fieldwork or tape transcription sessions’. In this kind of situation, if consistency and reliability are to be achieved, there is little alternative other than to follow the kind of detailed coding procedures that are outlined by Tesch (1990) or even the kind of coding manual and coder training that was utilised by Abraham, Krahe, Dominic & Fritsche (2007). Indeed it may even be appropriate to extend the checking for consistency of coding to the kind of calculated reliability indices (Guertzkow’s U, Cohen’s kappa, Scotts pi and Krippendorff’s alpha) that are described by Folger, Hewes & Poole (1984), Brennan & Prediger (1981) and Holsti (1969). However, it is also clear that this kind of intercoder reliability testing is a means of demonstrating both consistency and certainty of outcome in relation to a very large coding task that has been undertaken by a number of individuals. Thus, intercoder reliability testing is a ‘means’ rather than an ‘end’ in its own right.

In addition, there are those such as, Sandelowski (1993: 2-3) who are sceptical that the validity of any aspect of any research project can be demonstrated by the outsourcing of such evaluations, either to ‘a panel of experts or persons other than the investigator’. The rationale for this perspective is that implicit in this thinking is ‘the notion of reality as external, consensual, corroboratory and repeatable’, when in reality it is ‘multiple and constructed rather than singular and tangible’. Similarly, Johnson, Long & White (2001: 243) are sceptical that ‘rigid adherence to particular procedures’ might ‘increase the validity of the research outcome’.

However, in relation to this research project the key issue is not the consistency and repeatability of the coding undertaken by a team of researchers, but the extent to which the assessments, evaluations and judgements of a single researcher might be relied upon by the wider research community. Once again Sandelowski (1998: 467) is sceptical that any expert ‘no matter how impressive their credentials’ is ‘in any position to certify as valid the findings – descriptions, categories, theories, or meanings – in studies in which they played no intimate part’. In addition, whilst acknowledging that ‘reality is multiple and subjective’ Graneheim & Lundham (2004: 110) conclude that the issue is not simply whether third parties would label and sort the data ‘in exactly the same way’, but whether the wider research community ‘would agree with the way those data were labelled and sorted’.

Fortunately, Searle (1999: 158) provides a way forward by suggesting that reliability can be demonstrated by a degree of reflexivity that involves ‘showing the audience of research studies as much as possible of the procedures that have led to a particular set of conclusions’. In addition, Ganeheim & Lundham (2004: 110) also suggest that an alternative to seeking agreement amongst researchers, experts and participants ‘is to show representative quotations from transcribed text’.

At this point it may be helpful to restate that the task to which this discussion refers is the low inference indexing of a relatively small number of interview extracts to an established thematic framework in the context of one individual’s research project. In this context the kind of transparency that is proposed by Searle (1999) and Graneheim & Lundham (2004) is a viable alternative to an ‘intercoder’ reliability regime that would be complex, resource intensive and unnecessary. Within the context of this research study it is also worth noting that the outcome of the indexing process will also be validated both by the case study findings and by a synthesis of other corroborating scholarship from a number of different academic disciplines.

Ultimately it was concluded that the indexing process should be based around a thematic framework that consisted of four domains; the ‘theoretical’, the ‘conceptual’, the ‘tactical’ and the ‘practical’ and that each of these domains should encompass two of the categories, respectively theory and model; ideas and concepts; attitudes and behaviours; and tools and techniques. Although consideration was given to basing the indexing process upon the eight categories, rather than the four domains, this was discounted. The primary reason for this decision was concern that the definitions of theory and model; concept and idea; approach and behaviour; and technique and tool may be too similar for a meaningful distinction to be made in relation to some of the interview extracts. The indexing definitions for each of the eight categories are provided in Section 3.4.9 below and this difficulty can be best appreciated by a comparison of the definitions for concept and idea.

Accordingly, the 1447 interview extracts were examined and representative examples were allocated to each of the four domains within the indexing framework. In addition, each of these extracts was identified by a ‘superscript’ number which acted as a legend. Each of these numbers linked (i) the interview extract; (ii) a section of the interview transcript in which the extract had occurred and from which its context could be assessed; and (iii) a detailed explanation as to why the extract had been indexed to that domain. By this means the whole of the indexing process was transparent and verifiable by any reader of the research study.

Finally, the 1447 interview extracts were examined in order that all of the extracts that could be indexed to the ‘theoretical domain’ were identified. A comparison was then made between the frequency with which these extracts occurred in the transcripts of the initial ‘organisation’ based interviewees and the frequency with which they occurred in the transcripts of the subsequent ‘MBA’ interviewees.

3.3.9 Indexing definitions

The process of indexing the interview extracts to (i) the four domains of the theoretical, the conceptual, the tactical and the practical was guided by reference to a number of definitions that had been collated for each of the eight index categories.

1 The Theoretical Domain

Theory

(i) A well substantiated explanation
(ii) An organised system of accepted knowledge

(iii) An explanation based on observation, experimentation and reasoning

(iv) A set of propositions which summarise, organise and explain a variety of known facts

(v) An extremely well substantiated explanation

(vi) An abstract formulation of the constant relations between entities

Model

(i) A framework for thinking and acting

2 The Conceptual Domain

Concept

(i) An abstract or symbolic tag that attempts to capture the essence of reality

(ii) A word, phrase or term expressing an idea

(iii) A mental picture of a group of things that have common chatacteristics

(iv) An abstraction or symbol that represents similarities or common characteristics

Idea

(i) The product of thinking about a problem, or issue

(ii) A specific thought that arises in the mind as a result of cognition

3 The Tactical Domain

Approach

(i) Actions intended to deal with a problem, or situation

(ii) To set about, go about, or to begin to deal with

(iii) A way of doing things

(iv) A way of dealing with, or accomplishing something

Behaviour

(i) A manner of acting

(ii) The actions, or reactions of an organism

(iii) A response to an external, or internal stimuli

(iv) The actions of people

4 The Practical Domain

Technique

(i) A way of doing something
(ii) A method, or procedure
(iii) A practical method applied to a task
(iv) A specific method, or system of working
(v) An approach, practical method, well defined procedure, or system of working that is applied to perform a task, or activity

Tool

(i) An implement used in the practice of a vocation
(ii) A device that provides advantage in accomplishing a task
(iii) An instrument used to solve a problem
(iv) A device used to perform, or facilitate a task
(v) A device that aids the accomplishment of a task
(vi) An object, device, implement, or artefact modified for a particular use and used in the practice of a vocation

As can be seen from the information that has been provided above, there was a range of definitions for most of the index categories and each of these definitions had its own nuances and subtleties. However, in relation to the index category of 'theory' there was a more marked and significant differentiation. Here the definitions ranged from the more specific and 'positivist' of an 'explanation based on observation, experimentation and reasoning' to the more general and 'interpretist' of a 'well substantiated explanation'. In reality, each of the extracts was compared against each of the criterion and assessed for its conformance, or otherwise and each of these comparisons guided the indexing process. However, as has been previously explained, earlier in this section, full details of the rationale for each of the indexing decisions, for each of the interview extracts, is provided in Section 5.3.1. In addition, the details of the sources for these definitions are provided by Appendix 9.

However, in this general regard it is recognised that there are scholars who define a 'theory' in terms of 'causal' or even 'cause – and - effect' relationships (McAuley, Duberley & Johnson, 2007). This is not an approach that has been adopted in relation to this research.

The rationale for defining a 'theory' in the broader, more inclusive way that has been adopted is that doing so seemed more appropriate for qualitative research undertaken in the realist tradition and that the narrower, more exclusive alternative seemed more appropriate to quantitative research undertaken in the positivist tradition (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The impact of using these less positivist, more interpretist and more inclusive definitions has been to increase the number of interview extracts that were capable of being indexed as a reference to 'theory'. Of course, a corollary of this is that had the requirement been that interview extracts needed to meet the much narrower and much more positivist definitions that involved either a 'causal' or a 'cause-and-effect' relationship, then management would have been seen as a much less 'theoretical' discipline.

3.4 Validity & Reliability / Trustworthiness & Authenticity

From the admittedly somewhat narrow perspective of a research study that is built upon the use of the critical incident technique it is worth noting that the two most cited references that are generally used to demonstrate that CIT is both valid and reliable are Andersson & Nilsson (1964) and Ronan & Latham (1974). In the first, the researchers conducted an extensive evaluative study of the validity and reliability of CIT based upon an analysis of 1800 incidents obtained in the context of a Swedish grocery store. In the second, the researchers undertook a similar analysis in relation to 440 critical incidents obtained in the context of timber harvesting and pulpwood production in the USA. Both found that the CIT was reliable and valid.

However, as Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson & Maglio (2005) point out, both the Andersson & Nilsson (1964) and the Ronan & Latham (1974) study were conducted within the context of CIT's original task analysis role. In this regard they conclude that :

> "We think this raises the question of whether the tradition of establishing credibility and trustworthiness in the findings by using these two studies applies to newer research that uses the CIT method for exploring issues that are not related to task analysis".
>
> (Page 485)

The objective of these authors, in reviewing and evaluating 50 years of the critical incident technique, was to assess its applicability to counselling psychology. In this regard they conclude that 'the time has come to move out of the positivistic tradition and into the post - modern qualitative tradition when establishing the credibility of results in a CIT study'. In addition, they note 'Cresswell's definition of qualitative research and its characteristics' and in the light of this they conclude that 'Flanagan's description of the essence of the CIT fits these definitions of qualitative research'.

Similarly, White & Locke (1981) also conclude that CIT is appropriate within qualitative research, but for different reasons, thus :

> "Asking subjects for their direct interpretations of specific events seems more scientifically defensible than accepting a statistical relationship between two sets of numbers as evidence for a cause and effect relationship. While the present design is not the ultimate answer to the causality problem, the authors believe that it is a step above the most common approach currently in use and produces results that are at least as valid as those provided by correlational studies".
>
> (Page 385)

However, from the widest possible context of any qualitative research study Lincoln & Guba (1985) propose that the terms 'trustworthiness' and 'authenticity' should be the main concepts that are used to establish the credibility of a qualitative research study, rather than the terms 'validity' and 'reliability' that are unavoidably associated with quantitative research. In addition, both Guba (1981) and Creswell (2003) propose that operational techniques such as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, member checking, thick description and external audits can be utilised to achieve this outcome.

Creswell (2003) also makes this recommendation :

> "Examining these eight procedures as a whole, I recommend that qualitative researchers engage in at least two of them in any given study".
>
> (Page 203)

In relation to this qualitative research study, seven of the eight procedures have been complied with, as follows :

1. Triangulation: as a result of the use of a number of different data analysis techniques, the citing of corroborative evidence and the drawing upon theory from a diverse range of scholarship.
2. Peer Review and Debriefing: as a result of regular internal and external supervision, the presentation of various elements of the work to two internal peer conferences and one internal peer seminar and the keeping of field notes, study notes and a reflective journal covering all the key phases of the research project.
3. Negative Case Analysis: as a result of the active pursuit of exceptions, variations and disconfirming evidence, particularly as part of both the cross case and within case analysis of the case studies.

4. Clarifying Researcher Bias: as a result of the explanation of the researchers personal history that has been provided, together with an honest appraisal of the impact of this upon the research project.
5. Member Checks: as a result of circulating both a summary of the key findings of the study, together with a review of the relevant literature to each of the interviewees and in the case of the organisational samples, those who facilitated access.
6. Rich, Thick Description: as a result of a commitment to a detailed description of both the context and the setting of the study, together with those who participated in it and a clear description of the processes and procedures that have been utilised.
7. External Audit: as a result of a commitment to transparency and accountability via the provision of an audit trail, through which all of the important judgments can be reviewed and assessed.

Accordingly, although the author would clearly wish to persuade the reader that the research discussed in this thesis is both ‘trustworthy’ and ‘authentic’, he would also wish to join McAuley (2004: 201) in maintaining that ‘the research is an account that is on one hand truthful (authentic) to the data but is, on the other hand, not the only truth (authentic account) that could be produced’.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Leedy & Ormrod (2004: 107 & 108) consider that from a generalised perspective the main ethical issues in research are ‘protection from harm’, ‘informed consent’, ‘the right to privacy’ and ‘honesty with professional colleagues’. However, from the perspective of research methods in a business context Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003: 130 & 131) discuss the negotiation of research relationships, including the ethical considerations. They conclude that in a business setting the key ethical issues are around privacy, the voluntary nature of participation, informed consent, maintenance of confidentiality and anonymity, concerns regarding data collection methods, the effect upon participants of data analysis and usage and the behaviour and objectivity of the researcher.

In this regard, each of the participants was advised that they would be participating in a research interview that was connected with a potential PhD and that no other individual or organisation had a vested interest. They were also advised that the interview would be recorded and they were fully aware of the periods when the recorder was operating. Indeed, during some of the face to face interviews there were occasions when the interview was interrupted and the recorder was turned off. The participants were given advanced notice of two of the semi - structured interview questions and they were advised that the whole of the interview recording would be transcribed. Finally, the participants were advised that it was anticipated that the discoveries of the research study would be written up as part of PhD thesis and that as such it would be publicly available via academic libraries. It was also indicated that there was the potential for some aspects of the research study to form the basis of articles and that accordingly there was the potential for discoveries to appear in academic journals. It was also indicated that on average the semi - structured interviews would be likely to have a duration of around an hour.

Each of the participants was also advised that the interview would be conducted on the basis of both anonymity and confidentiality and that accordingly the names of the interviewees, their employing organisation and other identifiers, such as organisation specific job titles, would be removed from any data that was included in any publication or presentation. For those interviewees who were recruited via the active facilitation of their employers, an undertaking was given that no organisationally specific feedback would be provided to the employer. The provision of confidentiality and anonymity was considered an essential prerequisite to obtaining responses that were both honest and self - revelatory.

All of these 'ground rules' had the potential to influence the degree to which the interviewees would be willing to discuss openly the issues and events that were of interest and hence the trustworthiness and authenticity of the research study. However, in reality all of the interviewees were experienced, managers of significant seniority who were used to dealing with issues of confidentiality and disclosure. In addition, it was clear from the detailed nature of their comments that they had opted for openness. This is illustrated by the fact that interviewees demonstrated a willingness to discuss sensitive issues such as the difficulties between various parts of their organisations, their sometimes poor relationships with their boss, their own ineffectual habits and instances of their own poor performance. In addition, it was clear from the critical incidents that they had selected to discuss that they had chosen some of the most difficult situations and circumstances that any manager could expect to encounter. Their main concerns appeared to be that there should be no direct commercial beneficiary from the research to which they were contributing and that they, their colleagues and their employing organisation should be protected from harm by the provision of confidentiality and anonymity.

Prior to commencing each of the interviews, each participant was asked if they were happy to proceed on this basis and accordingly they were considered to have given their 'informed consent' (Leedy & Ormrod, 2004: 107; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003: 133).

Following the case study analysis of the data each of the interviewees was provided with a summary of the discoveries. This included an invitation to comment upon the discoveries if they so wished. However, none chose to do so.

3.6 Limitations

This section of the thesis will both highlight and discuss the limitations that directly stem from the decisions that were made when determining both the methodology and the methods. A broader consideration of the overall limitations of the research study as a whole will be included in Chapter 6.

In relation to the original purposes for which the critical incident technique (CIT) has been historically used Norman, Redfern, Tomalin & Oliver (1992) highlight two key assumptions, (i) that the observers will make inferences about the person's competence on the basis of his or her observed performance in specific situations and (ii) that they make a definite judgement that the behaviour observed makes a significant contribution, either positively or negatively, to the general aim of the activity. However, in terms of this research project, neither assumption is relevant because this research project, in common with very many others during the subsequent development of CIT, has utilised the technique in the context of 'self - reporting' by participants.

However, Care (1996) concludes that a disadvantage of the critical incident technique is its dependence upon the ability to recollect specific examples of the incidents in question. In addition, Schluter, Seaton & Chaboyer (2008) recognised the importance of participant preparation, if interview time was not to be wasted whilst participants identified incidents to discuss. In relation to this research project, the two trial interviews confirmed that the interviewees found that the need to immediately cite their most significant current and previous managerial challenges was a problem. Both of the trial participants suggested that advanced notice of the need to identify these incidents would have been useful and as a result of this feedback, this approach was adopted for all of the research interviews.

From a slightly broader perspective Care (1996) also suggests that another slightly more general disadvantage of the critical incident technique is that it is dependent upon the memories of the respondents per se. In addition, Norman, Redfern, Tomalin & Oliver (1992) and Gremler (2004) conclude that the dependence of the technique upon the retrospective perceptions of the participants, rather than their memories, is another limitation. Frequently citing the work of others, they identify concerns regarding (i) the potential for the participants' perceptions of the events to be distorted because of the retrospectivity (sic) of the situation, (ii) the fundamental design of CIT that may result in recall bias, (iii) the possibility that the method may be affected by memory lapses and (iv) the possibility that the respondents might reinterpret the incidents. However, in contrast Perry (1997) suggests that the dependence of the CIT upon the recalling of events is a strength rather than a weakness! His rationale for reaching this conclusion is that the process of recalling is a form of reflective practice and that reflection occurs when an anticipated outcome has failed to emerge and hence it is more memorable. In fact Perry's conclusion resonates with Flanagan's own observation that ordinary incidents or events were more difficult to recall than the kind of untypical events that were the subject of CIT. In relation to this research project, it may be worth noting that 60% of the incidents that were recounted by the interviewees were current, rather than historical occurrences.

However, the fact remains that this research study is founded upon a methodology that is dependent upon the retrospective explanations of managers regarding what they did, how they did it and why they did it that way.

Care (1996) and Keatinge (2002) conclude that versatility and flexibility are the main advantages of the critical incident technique and in particular Hopkinson & Hogarth-Scott (2001) conclude that :

> "CIT has been shown to be a valuable technique in several substantive areas. It may be used to describe one category of incident or to explain different categories. The content analysis may be inductive or deductive. CIT may be used to look at the situated character of incidents and it may also be used alongside quantitative data".
>
> (Page 32)

Gremler (2004) and Schluter, Seaton & Chaboyer (2008) identify a number of other strengths and advantages, frequently citing the work of others, these include (i) that the data collected are from the respondent's perspective and in his or her own words, (ii) that the method can be used to generate an accurate and in-depth record of events, (iii) that the CIT method can provide a rich set of data, (v) that rich contextual information can be obtained using this technique and (vi) that it generates information and uncovers tacit knowledge through assisting participants to describe their thought processes and actions during an event.

However, Schluter, Seaton & Chaboyer (2008) also recognised that some participants found that the interview process produced concerns for the interviewees when it resulted in them being asked questions about basic matters, or where answers appeared to be obvious. This issue also emerged during the two trial interviews that were conducted as a part of this research project. As a result of this each of the participants were reassured, early in the interview, that the answers to some of the questions may seem obvious to them and that where this occurred, it was likely that a simple and straightforward response would be appropriate.

In addition to the issues associated with the use of the critical incident technique there may also be an issue regarding the bespoke compendium of managerial ‘terms’, which was created through the use of ‘snowball sampling’. Whilst it is clearly possible to demonstrate that ‘snowball sampling’ is an accepted research technique, the trustworthiness and authenticity of the resulting compendium is clearly a matter of judgement.

In this regard it is worth noting that the resulting compendium is very comprehensive and that the author is fairly satisfied that most, if not all, of the significant developments in managerial thinking that have occurred during the 20th century have been included. In addition, it is suggested that the ultimate test of the compendium is whether there are a significant number of important ideas, theories, concepts or models about management that do not appear in the compilation? Furthermore, even if it can be demonstrated that there are some omissions it would be necessary to demonstrate that the scale of the omissions was such that it invalidated the discoveries. This is regarded as unlikely.

As has already been discussed in Section 3.3.3 it was decided that the semi - structured interviews that were to be undertaken with the interviewees who were in the midst of a significant educational experience would need to be undertaken by telephone rather than face to face. Whilst it is accepted that this resulted in lower ‘requisite variety’ and that accordingly this is also a limitation, the literature regarding telephone interviewing has confirmed that this was not an inappropriate decision.

However, the more obvious limitations of the study are the small sample sizes, the restricted geographical spread of the participating interviewees and the small number of enterprises and organisations that it has been possible to include. In addition, a further limitation is that the recruitment of part time MBA students was restricted to a single institution. Fortunately, these kinds of limitations are not uncommon in this kind of qualitative research project, where the objective is to obtain ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz: 1973: 6) of a phenomenon and to subsequently utilise ‘theoretical’ generalisation (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 264) to make wider inferences regarding the more general applicability of the insights that have been obtained.

3.7 Conclusions

This chapter has provided details of both the methodology and the methods that have been selected and the rationale for each of these decisions. The chapter has also sought to persuade the reader that each of these decisions is both consistent with a clearly stated overarching design philosophy and best practice for research projects conducted in an academic environment. In addition, this chapter seeks to acknowledge that all research methodologies and methods have their relative advantages and disadvantages.

In common with all other research projects, this study has design limitations and these have been both recognised and explicitly stated. The more general limitations of the research project as a whole, rather than those which result directly from the decisions regarding it methodology and methods, are considered in chapter six.

Chapter 4

Overt appropriation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter of the thesis will present the case study evidence regarding the overt appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners. In this regard the term overt is intended to convey a sense of obviousness, consciousness and awareness.

The initial phase of this field work involved a total of 24 semi-structured, face to face, recorded interviews that were conducted with interviewees from five different organisations. These interviews lasted a total of 24 hours 34 minutes, provided information relating to 98 critical incidents and the verbatim transcriptions of these interviews totalled 248,000 words. A subsequent phase of the field work involved a total of 15 semi-structured, telephone, recorded interviews that were conducted with individuals who were both practicing managers and, as part-time MBA students, were also individuals in the midst of a significant educational experience. These interviews lasted a total of 10 hours 19 minutes, provided information relating to 39 critical incidents and the verbatim transcriptions of these interviews totalled 106,000 words.

In accordance with the Eisenhardt (1989) procedures for the data analysis of case studies, the verbatim transcripts of these interviews were analysed within each case to determine any unique characteristics that were particular to individuals, organisations, or those who were in the midst of a significant educational experience. They were also analysed across all of the cases to determine both the similarities and commonalities regardless of these differentiators.

4.2 The cross case analysis

The purpose of this cross case analysis was to examine the data provided by the verbatim interview transcripts and to highlight those features that were common to the majority of the interviewees, regardless of the organisation in which they are working, or the interviewees' substantive role, or whether they were engaged in a significant educational experience.

As has been previously explained the interviewees had been asked to recount firstly details of their most significant, current managerial challenges and secondly their most significant managerial challenges when they considered the whole of their managerial careers. The purpose of building into the research design a requirement for this kind of critical incident narrative was that it would help to provide perceptions and opinions that were grounded in the reality of actual events, rather than some theoretical or idealised version of that which had occurred. Interviewees were subsequently asked to describe the approach that they had taken in relation to each of these challenges and to then identify the source of the approach that they had taken. As has been previously explained in Section 3.4.5 the interview template then broadened to incorporate questions about a small number of related aspects of these matters.

Thus, a key objective of the cross case analysis is to discern the situations and circumstances in which the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models may have exerted an overt influence over the interviewees and whether this is different between those interviewees who are in the midst of an intense academic experience and those who are not.

Accordingly this analysis involved data relating to all 39 interviews, covering 160 critical incidents, lasting a total of 34 hours and 53 minutes and the verbatim transcripts of the interviews totalled 355,000 words. The resulting data handling processes and procedures were broadly in accordance with Eisenhardt (1989: 532) and these consisted of the following ten steps :

1. Identification of some initial constructs.
2. Keeping of field notes – reflective journal.
3. Within case analysis.
4. Cross case analysis.
5. Identification of tentative themes, concepts and relationships.
6. Sharpening of the emergent constructs.
7. Iterative, cross case citing of evidence for each emergent construct.
8. Enfolding existing literature.
9. Testing for closure.
10. Evaluation using established criteria.

In practice each of the interview transcripts was repeatedly subjected to a detailed inspection process and as a result of this sections of the dialogue were highlighted and extracted into a separate compilation for further consideration. Each extract within this subsequent compilation was then examined for the strength of its evidential contribution in relation to a template that was itself evolutionary. Over a period of some months, each extract was reviewed, on a cyclical and iterative basis, for the weight of evidence that it provided, or otherwise, in relation to ten key evidential categories and each of these is discussed in detail below. In each case the resulting evidential categories were closely linked to a range of answers that were given in response to the questions of the semi-structured interviews.

However this is not to suggest that the range and nature of the actual answers had been anticipated in advance.

Ultimately 888 interview extracts were attributed to the ten evidential categories that are discussed below and the complete tabulation of this evidence, showing the attribution of each of the 888 interview extracts, is provided by Appendix 1.

4.2.1 Recognition based decision - taking

The most obvious way in which the interviewees react to the situations and circumstances that arise around them is by recognition. This is that they simply know what the organisational signs and symptoms mean, or imply; they know what works, they know the approach to take and they know that the implementation of these instantly recognisable and retrievable remedies will result in the situation being stabilised and the signs and symptoms being ameliorated. Indeed, the application of the remedy may even affect a permanent cure, although achieving this may not be an immediate priority. However, there is neither the need for, nor indeed the time for, recourse to a managerial text book, nor is there the need for, nor the time for any great philosophising. The action that needs to be taken is clear and the priority is to get on and do it. In this way managers appear to carry out a continuous triage (although they may well not use this word to describe it) and through this process the constant flow of issues and concerns get prioritised into those that need dealing with now, those that will need dealing with soon and those that can wait until later.

The term that this research study has used to describe this process is recognition based decision - taking (Klein, 1993) and within the transcripts the kind of words that the interviewees use to describe this phenomenon are experience, instinct, experiential, common sense, subconscious, intuitive, informal, reactive, immediate, practical. However, they also use some more colourful and graphic representations of this generic approach to some of their key managerial challenges, such as :

> “A wing and a prayer”.
>
> [O1I3]

> “Been there, got the t-shirt”.
>
> [O1I4]

> “I’ll just rock up and do it”.
>
> [O2I4]

> “A no brainer”.
>
> [O3I5]

"Instinct is a word".

[M1W7]

"I think its intuition".

[M1W5]

"Blindingly obvious".

[M2W1]

"Common sense".

[M2W1]

"Gut instinct".

[M2H1]

"Years of experience".

[M2H3]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 1.

Given that the interviewees were describing their most significant current and previous managerial challenges it may, at first glance, appear surprising that so many of these might be susceptible to this kind of recognition based decision - taking. However, there may well be subtle but important distinctions between the scale of any challenge, the clarity of the signs and symptoms, the certainty of the practitioner's diagnosis, the assuredness of the proposed remedial action, the prospects for success and the consequences of an unsuccessful outcome. Hence, there may be no absolute correlation between the complexity of the prevailing circumstances and either the appropriateness, or the viability of recognition based decision - taking.

4.2.2 Emergent decision - building

Whilst it may be convenient if all organisational issues and concerns could be addressed via recognition based decision - taking it would appear that there are some situations that can not be handled in this way, either because of their complexity, or because of a management practitioner's inability to instantly recognise an appropriate course of action. Accordingly management practitioners need other means, mechanism and routines that are capable of dealing with these kinds of organisational circumstances and situations.

Thus, when management practitioners are unable to apply recognition based decision - taking they adopt a process that this research study describes as emergent decision - building. Thus, by this means a management practitioner builds a single, viable approach which they believe has the features and characteristics that are necessary to address the organisational situation that is concerning them. Within the interview transcripts the kinds of words that the interviewees use to describe this phenomenon are gradual, evolving, discovering, emergent and considered. Some more memorable representations of this generic approach, are as follows :

> "I can remember going through quite a large discovering process".
>
> [O2I3]

> "It goes back to this sense checking all the time, both externally and internally, of the right thing to do and very much it's still this emergent learning process".
>
> [O4I5]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 2.

It is in these kind of uncertain, or unclear situations that practitioners might be expected to adopt a more classical approach to decisions. From this perspective all of the options and alternatives would be identified, the advantages and disadvantages of each would be explored and subsequently some kind of assessment criteria would be applied in order that the best course of action might be discerned. It is in this context that academic research, text books, theory, ideas, concepts and models, together with formal training and education in management might also be expected to play some kind of part. Interestingly, within these interview transcripts there is no evidence of this kind of classical decision - making.

4.2.3 Extensive personal reflection

In addition, the interviewees demonstrate two main processes for emergent decision - building and the first of these is characterised by self sufficiency and DIY.

In support of this first routine the interviewees demonstrated extra - ordinary levels of personal reflection. Although their approach to this was largely unstructured, indeed it may even be fair to describe it as slightly chaotic; it would be difficult to overstate the extent to which the role and responsibilities of these management practitioners occupied their minds, particularly when they are away from the workplace. Indeed, there was precious little evidence for management practitioners having the time, or perhaps it is fairer to say making the time, for this kind of reflection during the working day. The interviewees gave examples of thinking about their key managerial challenges in the shower, on their journeys to and from work; when they were socialising with friends and family; when they were watching TV, or reading a book; when they were walking the dog, or taking exercise in the swimming pool. It seemed that there was little that either couldn't, or wouldn't stimulate their minds and that the burden of their organisational responsibilities was constantly occupying their subconscious minds. A significant minority of the interviewees were willing to admit to being woken from their sleep by concerns, thoughts and worries about work. A number recognised that the scale of this interference with their personal, social and domestic lives was not sustainable.

Within the transcripts the kind of examples provided by interviewees in support of the general role of their reflective practices were as follows :

> "It was only when I discovered that, actually it didn't roll smooth, flow as smoothly as I expected it to, that I had to start thinking".
>
> [O3I2]

> "I mean, the big influence for me is the ability to reflect".
>
> [O1I1]

> "Experience tells me, that it is, … it is useful to rewind the tape and think".
>
> [O1I4]

> "It's thinking outside the box, about having the bloody time to think outside the box".
>
> [O3I4]

> "Of course, anyone in my position is going to have to think, well how am I going to handle this".
>
> [O5I5]

> "So I could have done it entirely differently and it may not have made an iota of difference, but I'd like to have tried".
>
> [O2I1]

Examples of the situations and circumstances in which this might happen were as follows :

> *"[The]* news, or anything like that, triggers you off".
>
> [O1I3]

> "It might happen on the drive home, or it might happen at three in the morning".
>
> [O1I4]

> "I think about it in the shower".
>
> [O2I2]

"I can't read any paper without relating something in it back to work, even when I'm relaxing at the weekend".

[O2I5]

"I do spend a lot of time, when I'm not at work, thinking about it".

[O3I2]

"Very often when I'm out running, I think about something and I think, 'Oh, you could sort that like that' ".

[O3I3]

"I spend a lot of time thinking about work and I sort of bed it down, I almost put it into geological strata".

[O5I2]

"So it would be impossible for me not to be thinking about work when I'm outside the workplace environment".

[O5I4]

"It's very random".

[O1I2]

"It's a bit sort of haphazard".

[O4I5]

Examples of the scale and scope of these reflections being both inappropriate and unsustainable were as follows :

"So, by too much that's what I mean, you know, almost 24 hours a day at the moment".

[O1I2]

"The golf course is about the only place I forget about everything".

[O1I3]

"I would say in the last three months work has dominated my head space in every sense".

[O2I4]

"It gets to the point where it has an impact on my personal life and that's not, its not acceptable and not what I want".

[O2I4]

"Sometimes *[if]* it's really bad, I wake up in the night with it as well".

[O3I2]

> "I was up at three o'clock this morning thinking about it".
>
> [O3I4]

> "I can't see it being sustainable".
>
> [O5I1]

Part of the overall reflective process appeared to be a willingness to think about what had happened, what had gone well, what had gone less well, together with what needed doing and what kind of approach was likely to be successful. Where, in relation to a current challenge, the approach that should be adopted was unclear, there appeared to be both a willingness and an ability to rifle through similar, related experiences and to deconstruct these, so that elements of a number of experiences could be reconstructed to form an untried, but potentially viable approach.

> "It was therefore then being able to match to *[details of technical role omitted]* experience with the managerial experience and then using the academic thing to consolidate that".
>
> [O1I1]

> "I suppose it is a bit amorphous, … um … It is a bit, kind of, pick and mix-ish, really".
>
> [O1I2]

> "I mean, I'm entering a phase right now where I'm big into linking certain dots and I'm, I'm building something in my head. … It's like little lights that come on and they don't come on until you can actually see the link between them, if you see what I mean".
>
> [O4I1]

> "A lot of it probably goes back to um… you know, reflecting at what you've done, looking at how you can do things better, um… and, and seeking advice from others if you don't know. And sometimes, its just about talking things through with them".
>
> [M2H3]

> "Um… a lot of kind of self-reflection as well. You know, looking back on how you've done things before, what's gone well, what's not gone well".
>
> [M2H4]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 3.

4.2.4 Influence of personal values

For a significant minority of the interviewees another component of the self - sufficiency, DIY approach to emergent decision - building was the overt application of a clear set of personal values. These were used as both a compass to steer by and as a means of ruling out some potential approaches on the basis that they would be unprofessional, culturally unacceptable, or simply not how people should be treated.

Within the transcripts the kind of examples provided by the interviewees were as follows :

> "A lot of it is a personal value".
>
> [O2I2]

> "So it was quite a difficult situation and our styles and values were enormously different and it caused me a lot of soul searching".
>
> [O2I3]

> "I'll talk more about work when there's a, … er … something that's against my principles or values".
>
> [O2I2]

> "That probably stems from my father, to be honest with you. It's just in the beliefs that, that he's given me … um … and the way you treat people. I suppose, yeah, I suppose I've learned a lot from him".
>
> [O4I3]

> "It's more personal I suppose, but it's from … um … my Mum and Dad in a way".
>
> [O5I2]

> "I very much will treat people how I would be expected to be treated".
>
> [M1W7]

> "Oh, I suppose, ethics, I don't know. That's … oh… I never thought about that. I guess everybody has values … um … and … um … everybody somehow knows what's right or wrong".
>
> [M1O1]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 4.

4.2.5 Hedge trimming

Some interviewees also showed that an additional component of the self - sufficiency, DIY approach to emergent decision - building was the willingness utilise trial and error, the willingness to experiment, the willingness to make progress, at least in the short term, via small incremental steps whilst closely monitoring the impact via both hard and soft measures. Klein (1993) describes this phenomenon as the preference of managers for 'hedge clipping to tree felling'. The following are examples of this kind of phenomenon :

> “A lot of it was learning on the job, learning as we went along. … If things didn’t work out, we’d adjust them, try them again, re-adjust, re-evaluate, that sort of thing really”.
>
> [O1I3]

> “I think some things were better than others, so you drop the ones that don’t, don’t *[work and]* you, and you sort of focus on the ones that do”.
>
> [O1I3]

> “It was a case of testing stuff out, getting new information, making decisions based on that, trying it differently”.
>
> [O2I2]

> “Trial and error is probably the first one, where you try something and its not being afraid to actually try something and make, … you know, … make mistakes”.
>
> [O3I4]

> “I think this management thing, its all about behaviours. It’s difficult to learn in a book but you have to try different approaches, don’t be afraid to try something”.
>
> [O4I1]

> “And it was a little bit of suck it and see, really”.
>
> [M1W5]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 5.

4.2.6 Hard and soft indicators

Within the transcripts there were examples of a wide range of success criteria. These included hard measures, such as key performance indicators, project milestones and the performance of the business and soft measures such as, whether people were engaged in the process and liked being at work. There were instances of both hard and soft measures, being used in relation to both recognition based decision-taking and emergent decision-building. Indeed there are examples of both hard and soft measures being used in relation to single decisions of both sorts.

> “It really came back from feedback and us keeping our finger on the pulse”.
>
> [O4I5]

> “The softer stuff is also what your team managers are telling you”.
>
> [O3I2]

"I'm not sure there's a deeper evaluation process than my own sense of OK, I'm happy with the things, the way things are going at the moment or I'm not".

[O2I1]

"There's other more intangible things, are they comfy at work, do they like being at work".

[O3I3]

"The informal measurement was, you know, just how well they, [were] sort of, engaged in the process".

[O2I3]

"I guess the easy answer to that is you measure to an extent. You measure what you can measure".

[O4I2]

"I think you've just look at the small gains that you get".

[O2I3]

"I suppose what I'm doing is I'm using the milestones of the programme to say I need to deliver this".

[O2I5]

"We're ISO9001 accredited so we have auditors all, swarming over us".

[O3I4]

"We monitor key performance indicators".

[O1I3]

"But ultimately, the measure is in the performance of the business".

[O4I4]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 6.

4.2.7 Management as a 'craft'

In the event that this self - sufficient, DIY approach to emergent decision - building was unable to provide an approach, or if the management practitioner had sufficient doubts regarding its potential viability, their recourse was to fellow professionals, including peers, colleagues, bosses, mentors, facilitators and trusted advisers. Here the key requirement was for the people who were consulted to have gained both the trust and the confidence of the interviewee and for them to also have a track record as a successful, fellow practitioner. The interviewees utilised their extensive personal networks, both inside and beyond their current organisations, to identify such individuals and this included individuals from within both their supply chain and their contractor base. Ultimately, if the issue was sufficiently significant and the practitioner sufficiently senior, this could result in receiving fee based advice from a consultant. However, even here there was a strong preference for an individual who had a proven track record as a recent practitioner rather than as simply a consultant per se. Almost inevitably this meant that the chosen consultant tended to be a self employed, former practitioner who had chosen this role for life style reasons, or who was doing so as a temporary measure whilst seeking their next corporate appointment.

Apart from issues concerned with both credibility and confidence a key driver of this approach appeared to be the requirement for not just analysis, options and recommendations, but for both tools and techniques and hints and tips that would assist with the implementation of any proposed course of action.

Within the transcripts the kind of example provided by the interviewees were as follows :

> "So, I would seek help wherever I could really".
>
> [O3I2]

> "I tap into my network both internally within the company and also externally within the suppliers and within the customer base".
>
> [O4I2]

> "That's where we said, we felt we needed some help with it, because we weren't sure what to do with it".
>
> [O2I3]

> "Talking to other people, my peers, just other Heads, about … (pause) … you know, what they might do in their approach".
>
> [O2I4]

> "I draw as much from that as I do from the manager I had previous to that, who I totally and utterly respect and still utilise as a mentor".
>
> [O4I3]

> "I think what we recognised is that we needed some expertise around that, somebody, as you say, that can really … um … help us shape what our approach should be".
>
> [O2I3]

> "*[If]* I find myself in a bit of pickle, I'll go and talk to someone that … er … that I trust, their judgement".
>
> [O4I1]

> "For me, it was about … um … asking colleagues basically. It was about finding people who'd been similar situations and saying, "How have you handled this?"
>
> [O2I1]

> "We go out and, and look for those who, who could offer a solution and if, from wherever we have connections".
>
> [O4I4]

> "That's where networking came in. I know a lot of people, *[and it was]* worth its weight in gold, you know, it really was".
>
> [O3I4]

> "You know a lot of people and … um … so you can find out what other people have done".
>
> [O5I2]

> "I go and talk to people that I know um … who I think might be able to help me on things, outside of work as well as inside of work".
>
> [O4I4]

All of the above are taken from Appendix 1 : Table 2.

These discoveries are consistent with the views expressed by Peroune (2007) who suggests that peer relationships within organisations are the context within which sense - making can take place and that such relationships are founded upon trust, which encourages dialogue, and expertise, which ensures that a common language is spoken. Kram & Isabella (1985) also show the important role that peer relationships play in information sharing, giving and receiving job related feedback, providing an opportunity to both give and receive personal confirmation and validation, giving and receiving emotional support, learning the ropes, getting the job done, acquiring a sense of professional requirements, gaining a sense of competence, assuming a consultative role and passing on wisdom.

Thus, on the basis of the testimony that is provided by these practitioners in these interviews, there is strong evidence for the proposition that, at least in part, management can be characterised as a craft learnt through lifelong collaboration with other practitioners. In this context it is important to state that the sense in which this research project is using the term 'craft' is that of :

"An occupation requiring skill and technique".

In addition, elsewhere in the transcripts there are other clear examples to support the view that the necessary knowledge and understanding of management is acquired in the place of work. Further examples of this are as follows :

“What I did was, I tended to model myself on … um … the previous manager”.
[O3I2]

“I went to him and said who could I go and talk to that would help me understand a little bit more about the culture, you know, the way people do business, and how things are done”.
[O4I5]

“That comes from people telling me that there’s a way of doing these things”.
[O2I2]

“So that’s why I’m saying it’s a bit experience and age and becoming more, in my case, more open to understanding and to realising what some of these managers have done for me, through their advice, and then little by little it kind of sinks in and it kind of, it makes sense”.
[O4I1]

“It helped very practically … um … being able to go through examples with, with other people in similar situations, as to what’s worked and what hasn’t”.
[O5I2]

“I had the benefit of some very good role models”.
[O5I5]

“I think the third *[example]* is a combination of experience and also … (pause) … choosing who advises you carefully”.
[O2I5]

“All the way through my career I’ve been lucky to have some really good people that have, have, … I’ve been able to learn from and aspire to”.
[O4I4]

“And I have a network of people that I use for different things. So, you know, if I’ve got a challenge in the day, or in the evening, you know, I want to have a chance to reflect on it, there’s a few people, certainly, I would think, there’s probably three or four, that I would think about giving a call to and saying, have you encountered this, how did you deal with it, what worked, what didn’t”.
[M1W5]

“I have some sort of informal mentor who, its interesting, it was my boss in my previous job, he wasn’t my … she was one of my line managers on my previous job in a company. Um… and I, even at the time, I knew she was an excellent manager. And so even when I was at the company and she wasn’t managing me any more, I would go and ask for advice, and I still do today”.
[M1O1]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 7.

4.2.8 The confirmatory role of ideas, theories, concepts and models

If, as has been suggested by the testimony of these practitioners in these interviews, management is learnt through an extended period of practical collaboration with fellow practitioners, the question remains as to the purpose that the formal study of management in an academic setting might serve?

Within the background papers provided, on a confidential basis, by one of the participating organisations there was research data from a training consultancy that had been engaged to report upon the effectiveness of the organisations approach to management training and education. This provided evidence that the employees of this organisation choose to pursue an academic qualification in management; (i) because it conferred both professional and social standing upon the successful student; (ii) because it acted as a threshold qualification that provides credibility to an application for high level roles in certain types of organisation; and (iii) because it enhanced an individual's financial prospects.

Amongst the organisation based interviewees there were those who had obtained a post graduate qualification in management. Some of these individuals recognised that their academic studies had retrospectively explained why at least some of their established managerial practices were effective. In some instances the confirmatory role of theory occurred many years after the individual had adopted the practice in question. None the less these interviewees appeared to draw some comfort from this discovery. Some examples of this are as follows :

> "I think the theories are, I think they've been useful in confirming what a lot of my ideas are".
>
> [O3I5]

> "I did the *[name of academic course omitted]*, many years ago, and thought "Oh yeah, I understand that now".
>
> [O3I1]

> "I am a product, I suppose, of academic stuff which was very interesting and it didn't really teach me an awful lot, but you think, "Ah yeah, … right, … yeah, … Oh that makes sense now" ... and I've always sort of thought that, but now there's like a confirmatory science behind it".
>
> [O3I4]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 8 and, in marked contrast to some of the other tables, the small amount of qualitative data in this table illustrates the comparative scarcity of this viewpoint.

4.2.9 The indirect, subconscious and even subliminal influence of ideas, theories, concepts and models

A proportion of the interviewees also concluded that all of the management training and education that they had experienced over the years with all of the attendant exposure to the more formal ideas, theories, concepts and models about management 'must' be exerting an influence over them. Since they were unable to point to specific examples of this, these individuals concluded that the influence must be indirect, or subconscious, or even subliminal. Typical of these contributions are the following :

> "I don't know, it's always subconscious".
>
> [O2I2]

> "I think, yeah, it is very indirect".
>
> [O1I2]

> "I suspect that the theory side of it is fairly minimal for me. … um … It probably gets in there by stealth".
>
> [O2I1]

> "What happens, with those kinds of things, is they then just go into my general mush of how I do things and what I learn".
>
> [O2I4]

> "It sits in the back of your mind and helps your work".
>
> [O3I1]

> "Unconsciously I'm sure it's *[management education]* there".
>
> [O5I1]

> "I'm sure it's *[management education]* embedded".
>
> [O5I1]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 9 and once again the paucity of the qualitative data illustrates the comparative rarity of this viewpoint.

4.2.10 Transformational adult learning

The final line of enquiry with each of the interviewees was to investigate the situations and circumstance in their lives as a whole, both inside and outside work, when they had learnt the most. The rationale for this was the proposition that arguments are best made from the general to the particular, rather than the particular to the general. Thus, the general situations and circumstances, in which any adult would learn the life skills that are necessary for their survival and success, were likely to be relevant to the particular situations and circumstances in which they would acquire the skills that would ensure their survival and success as a management practitioner. A corollary of this line of enquiry was also embedded in the related proposition that the generic means and mechanisms by which an adult human beings might learn could prove to be subtly but importantly different to those that were utilised by children and adolescents.

Without exception the interviewees cited the classical ‘rites of passage’ moments in their lives and experiences of ‘genuine hardship’ as being those that had prompted a fundamental shift in the paradigm through which they viewed the world. Typical of these experiences were university, gap year travelling, working abroad, birth of children, death of parents etc and typical of the contributions made are the following :

> “One of the biggest has got to be the birth of my daughter”.
>
> [O1I1]

> “In *[name of country omitted]* when, … um … I was working for two separate NGOs and was very young”.
>
> [O2I1]

> “I’ve had quite a lot of grief and I, ... I’ve learned a lot”.
>
> [O2I4]

> “The second was probably travelling, … um… *[for]* eighteen, eighteen months”.
>
> [O2I5]

> “My first job was a huge learning curve”.
>
> [O3I1]

> “My own parents becoming ill and needing me to look after them”.
>
> [O3I2]

> “The experience of being at University, being away from home, mixing with other people”.
>
> [O3I5]

> “It is fascinating if you have that kind of experience to go and live abroad”.
>
> [O4I1]

> “I was made redundant in a company I joined”.
>
> [O4I4]

> “Losing my Dad … um … suddenly about eleven years ago”.
>
> [O5I2]

Although the participating interviewees were invited to identify the occasions when as a adult they had learnt the most, a subtle but important change in methodology was that it was made clear to the participants that these responses would not be explored. This self imposed limitation was considered appropriate on the basis that some of the responses could include the profoundly personal as well as the professional. Hence, from this perspective, some important ethical considerations suggested that this was a boundary that should be observed.

However, from a practical viewpoint it is also important to recall that the core rationale for this line of enquiry was a desire to obtain information in relation to the generic circumstances and situations that might trigger a significant learning episode in an adult. In order to obtain this information it was not necessary to explore the interviewee responses in detail and accordingly the self imposed limitation had no material effect upon the usefulness of the data that was obtained.

Although the majority of the responses were personal, rather than professional in nature, the interviewees also identified a number of key professional transitions. The key requirement here appeared to be a sudden, significant and particularly demanding change in the role and responsibilities of the interviewee that amounted to an experience of ‘professional discontinuity’. Typical of these are the following :

> “When my line manager was on maternity leave at *[organisation name omitted]*, … um… I was suddenly thrust into a position with an awful lot more exposure, with, … um … and just had to do a huge amount and sort of, step up to the plate”.
>
> [O2I1]

> “It’s a long time ago now, but I set up a whole new department from scratch and it was completely and utterly outside of my comfort zone. And I learned so much in such a short period of time and I completely and utterly got chucked in at the deep end, and I loved every single minute of it”.
>
> [O2I4]

> “I would say probably my field sales experience. … I was an engineer. I was a guy that designed. At the time I was designing and building assembly equipment. I’d never talked to a customer. The next day I’d jump in a car and my responsibility was to go and service this huge customer base and grow the business. And that was really tough”.
>
> [O4I2]

The complete tabulation of these responses is provided by Appendix 1 : Table 10.

Summary

The purpose of the cross case analysis was to examine the data within all of the interview transcripts and to highlight those features that were common to the majority of the interviewees, regardless of the organisation in which they are working, or the interviewees' substantive role, or whether they were involved in a significant educational experience, or not. The details are as follows :

1. Within the interview transcripts there was strong evidence of recognition based decision-taking that the interviewees described as experience, instinct, experiential, common sense, subconscious, intuitive, informal, reactive, immediate and practical.

2. Where management practitioners were unable to apply recognition based decision-taking they adopted a process that this research project describes as emergent decision-building. By this means the manager builds a single, viable approach which they believe has the features and characteristics that are necessary to address the organisational situation that is concerning them. The kinds of words that these interviewees use to describe this phenomenon were gradual, evolving, discovering, emergent and considered.

3. There was no evidence of 'classical' decision - making through which an individual seeks to identify all the potential options and alternative, all of the associated benefits and risks and to then evaluate the 'best' course of action.

4. The interviewees demonstrated two main processes for emergent decision-building in this kind of way and the first of these is characterised by self sufficiency and DIY.

5. In support of their self sufficient, DIY, emergent decision-building routines the interviewees demonstrated extra-ordinary levels of personal reflection. Although their approach to this is largely unstructured, indeed it may even be fair to describe it as slightly chaotic, it is difficult to overstate the extent to which the role and responsibilities of a management practitioner occupies their mind, particularly when they are away from the workplace. Indeed there was precious little evidence for management practitioners having the time, or perhaps it is fairer to say making the time, for this kind of reflection during the working day. The interviewees gave examples of thinking about their key managerial challenges in the shower, on their journeys to and from work; when they were socialising with friends and family; when they were watching TV, or reading a book; when they were walking the dog, or taking exercise in the swimming pool. It seemed that there was little

that either couldn't, or wouldn't stimulate their minds and that the burden of their organisational responsibilities was constantly occupying their subconscious minds. A significant minority of the interviewees were willing to admit to being woken from their sleep by concerns, thoughts and worries about work. A number recognised that the scale of this interference with their social and domestic lives was not sustainable.

6. For a significant minority of the interviewees another component of the self-sufficiency, DIY approach to decision-building was the overt application of a clear set of personal values which they used as both a compass to steer by and as a means of ruling out some potential approaches on the basis that they would be unprofessional, culturally unacceptable, or simply not how people should be treated.

7. Some interviewees also showed that an additional component of the self-sufficiency, DIY approach to decision-building was the willingness utilise trial and error, the willingness to experiment and the willingness to make progress, at least in the short term, via small incremental steps whilst closely monitoring the impact via both hard and soft measures.

8. Within the interview transcripts there were examples of a wide range of hard and soft success criteria. These included hard measures, such as key performance indicators, project milestones and the overall performance of the business (in terms of profit and loss, return on capital employed and inventory etc), and some very soft measures, such as whether people were 'engaged in the process' and liked 'being at work'.

9. In the event that this self-sufficient, DIY approach to decision-building was unable to provide a approach, or if the management practitioner had sufficient doubts regarding its potential viability their recourse was to fellow professionals, including peers, colleagues, bosses, mentors, facilitators and trusted advisers. Here the key requirement was for the people who were consulted to have gained both the trust and the confidence of the interviewee and for them to have a track record as a successful, fellow practitioner. The interviewees utilised their extensive personal networks, both inside and beyond their current organisations, to identify such individuals and this included individuals from within both their supply chain and their contractor base. Ultimately, if the issue was sufficiently significant and the practitioner sufficiently senior, this could result in receiving fee based advice from a consultant. However even here there was a strong preference for an individual who had a proven track record as a recent practitioner.

10. Apart from issues concerned with both credibility and confidence a key driver of this approach appeared to be the requirement for not just analysis, options and recommendations, but for both tools and techniques and hints and tips that would assist with the implementation of any proposed course of action.

11. On the basis of the overwhelming evidence provided by these interviews it would appear that management is best characterised as a 'craft' learnt through lifelong collaboration with other practitioners, rather than an applied science that is learnt through the study of more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models.

12. However some of the interviewees recognised that the more formal, academic ideas, theories, models and concepts about management had the potential to retrospectively explain why at least some of their established managerial practices had worked. In some instances the confirmatory role of theory occurred many years after the individual had adopted the practice in question.

13. A proportion of the interviewees concluded that all the management training and education that they had experienced over the years with all the attendant exposure to the more formal ideas, theories, concepts and models about management 'must' be exerting an influence over them. Since they were unable to point to specific, cause and effect, examples of this they concluded that the influence must be indirect, or subconscious, or even subliminal.

14. When asked to identify the times when as adults they had learnt the most the interviewees cited the classical rites of passage moments in their lives and the experiences that caused a fundamental shift in the paradigm through which they viewed the world. Typical of these experiences were university, gap year travelling, working abroad, birth of children, death of parents etc. They also cited instances of genuine 'hardship' such as being made redundant. However, a number of other key professional transitions were also identified and here the key requirement appeared to be a sudden, significant and particularly demanding change in the role and responsibilities of the interviewee. These may be regarded as instances of 'professional discontinuity'.

15. The situations and circumstances in which a management practitioner appeared to directly consult the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management were both rare and exceptional. The details of are discussed by the within case analysis.

4.3 The within case analysis

As has been previously indicated, perhaps the most remarkable feature of the semi-structured, interviews was the uniformity of the views expressed by the interviewees. This was to the effect that the more formal, academic, research based ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played very little obvious, conscious part in their managerial practices.

However, the purpose of this within case analysis is to examine the handful of genuinely rare and wholly exceptional occasions in which a minority of the interviewees appeared to make some kind of reference to the more formal more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management playing at least some conscious part in their managerial practice.

The within case analysis includes interviewees from each of the five organisations and also individuals from the cohort of practitioners who were also in the midst of a significant educational experience. Where relevant, the analysis includes some background information regarding an interviewees' substantive role and the context in relation to which they had identified their exceptional use of ideas, theories, concepts and models about management.

However, it is important to note that even within the very broad understanding of the fact that there were isolated, rare and exceptional circumstances in which a minority of managers did indicate that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played some kind of role within their managerial practice, of itself, this does not necessarily amount to evidence of appropriation.

4.3.1 HealthTrustOrg

For two of the four interviewees from this organisation it was clear that formal ideas, theories, concepts and models about management made little, or no, conscious contribution towards helping them to discharge their organisational responsibilities. However, for two of the four interviewees there appeared to be at least some situations and circumstances in which the more formal, more academic, ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played at least some part in relation to their managerial practice.

The first of these interviewees was a Director with responsibilities for the delivery of services to a particular client group. This mature and highly experienced individual had taken a year out to complete a Masters qualification in Human Relations. Within the detailed narrative of the critical incidents that he was invited to recount, the interviewee referred to the opinions of colleagues, his overall experience and his ability to reflect upon situations as the key influences upon his decisions. However, he also referred to the role that organisational theory occasionally played within his sense - making routines, as follows :

> "Recently this idea of my view of where the organisation finds itself, at this moment in time, in terms of merger, took me back to some of my books and I

> went through what 'So and So' said about it, to see if it reinforced my thinking about that, or whether I was … um … completely off at a tangent".
>
> "I just use it as a checking process to make sure I'm on the right lines, that I understand where I'm at".
>
> [O1I1]

This appears to be a fairly clear instance of an individual with organisational responsibilities for strategic direction using academic ideas and organisational theory to sense - check his analysis of some overarching organisational issues, prior to considering how these ought to be addressed. It may also be reasonable to assume that there would be organisational imperatives that might require an individual in this kind of position to be fairly sure regarding the accuracy of their insights before they would consider raising such matters with the Chief Executive and their fellow Directors. Similarly, the interview transcript suggested that there were issues concerning confidentiality, loyalty and risk which reasoned against discussing such matters informally with either colleagues or third parties and such concerns are consistent with the overall levels of managerial 'angst' in this organisation.

The second interviewee from this organisation was responsible for providing integrated services to a particularly vulnerable group of clients across the whole of the geographic area served by the organisation. In relation to the challenges associated with this, the interviewee referred to the part that previous experience played in their decisions. However, in a previous role, he had been responsible for the closure of a large institutional hospital and its subsequent replacement by the provision of services from within the local community. He described the situation in these terms :

> I'd never been involved with something of that complexity before in terms of getting the balance between running something down and developing something and ensuring that the money be released from there was feeding into there, and keeping a balanced picture, you know, … that was quite a challenge.
>
> [O1I3]

When asked to describe the overarching approach that he had taken to the closure of this old fashioned institutional hospital and opening of a community based service, he responded in the following terms :

> "A wing and a prayer I'll be honest with you, looking back".
>
> "*[You]* followed your gut instincts an awful lot".
>
> "So you spent an awful lot of time checking with people".
>
> [O1I3]

However, he also made the following observation :

> "At the time of that closure *[of]* the hospital I was actually doing a *[details of qualification omitted]* at *[University name omitted]* so I was travelling up on day release for two years, and … um … and I was able to implement some of that knowledge into the job, you know, because it was a good opportunity obviously".
>
> [O1I3]

He further illustrated the kind of knowledge that he had been able to implement on the job by making reference to 'quantitative analysis' that had enabled him to undertake 'number crunching' to determine the required levels of staffing for the new service and 'presentation skills' that had enabled him to 'present something to key community stakeholders'. Accordingly, in terms of this overall research project, it may be reasonable to regard these particular examples as tools and techniques, rather than ideas, theories, concepts and models.

However, it would also appear that in generic terms another important feature of this example is the timeliness of the interviewee's exposure to these 'tools and techniques' at the very point where he was in need of additional support, enhanced skills and a means of coping with a very challenging situation.

4.3.2 CharityOrg

For three of the five interviewees it was clear that formal ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played little, or no, conscious, part in helping them to discharge their organisational responsibilities. However, for two of the five interviewees there appeared to be very infrequent, very particular situations and circumstances in which ideas, theories, concepts and models did play at least some part in their managerial practices.

One of these two interviewees was responsible for a chain of several hundred charity shops. In addition, as a senior member of the directorate this individual also shared in the collective responsibility for the overall performance of the retail leadership team. This interviewee acknowledged that overall his managerial style was :

> "More an intuitive one as opposed to a, you know, an academic one, for sure".
>
> [O213]

However, within this understanding the interviewee also referred to the fact that he had 'got into the habit of using' Stephen Covey: 'The seven habits of highly effective people' and that currently he was also referring to Mary Bragg: 'Reinventing influence' to support his 'learning around influencing'. Within the semi - structured interview he described his use of these resources in the following terms :

> "I do like to dip in and out of management books. I'm not a great reader of them but I like to, if there's something that … um … that I'm working on, you know, I will dip in".
>
> [O2I3]

In a subsequent exchange of emails, regarding his use of books in this way, the situation was clarified in the following terms :

> "I tend to use management books to focus upon a particular area that I am working on and specifically looking for new angles, new ways of doing things and new tools to work with that will make me more effective. In my new temporary role I need to do a lot more influencing with my peer group across [details of directorate omitted] and I have been using Reinventing Influence by Mary Bragg as a source of ideas to help me build effective relationships".
>
> [O213] : Email of 28 June 2007

Whilst the first part of this clarification makes clear that when dipping into books the interviewee is actually seeking 'tools and techniques', rather than ideas, theories, concepts and models, the second half of the clarification specifically mentions the role of this particular publication as being that of 'a source of ideas'.

Mary Bragg is a principal lecturer in the Faculty of Business at London Guildhall University and an independent consultant. Her book, 'Reinventing Influence', was the winner of an award for the Best Management Book of 1996 and the book set out to provide 'new strategies that work and a four-stage model for negotiating agreement and commitment'. The model consists of step one – know yourself, step two – identify your target, step three – diagnose the system and step four – decide on strategy and tactics. The book contains fifteen pages of references in which a number of academics appear, including Mintzberg, Kanter, Peters, Drucker, Handy and Kotter and a further two pages of celebrity business names, including Jack Welch, Alan Sugar, Richard Branson, Anita Roddick, Bill Gates and Steve Jobs. Although the book clearly contains ideas about influencing and a four stage model it is written in highly accessible, self help style that includes self - assessment exercises, action checklists, quizzes, hints and tips, case study examples and summary checklists. It is clearly designed as a workbook to either work through, or dip into; rather than a scholarly text.

Thus, within the general context of an individual who 'dips into' business books, seeking 'new angles', 'new ways of doing things' and 'new tools to work with', there is a single, clear example of this interviewee using a self help workbook to provide ideas that might enhance his practice in a mission critical area. Since the subject matter of interest is that of influencing and since the subtitle of the book is ‘how to get things done in a world without authority’, it may be fair to assume that there would be key imperatives, associated with the undermining impact of any disclosure, which would suggest that discussing these matters with colleagues and peers might be counter productive.

Thus, once again, within the context of this overall research project, it must be questionable as to whether this can be regarded as a clear cut example of the role played by the more formal, more academic, ideas, theories, concepts and models in managerial practice. Given the overall rather serendipity nature of this workbook, it seems likely that this is another example of a practitioner’s interest in the expression of ideas, theories, concepts and models in highly accessible tools and techniques.

The second of these two interviewees is an individual who had recently been allocated the task of both recruiting and leading the members of a multi - disciplinary, strategic project group. The remit of the project group was to introduce customer relationship management technology, systems, structures, processes and insights to the work of the organisation. This was the first time that the organisation had considered these issues and the central proposition underlying this approach was that the insights of customer relationship management, when transposed translated and transferred to the relationship between the charity and its supporters, would be one of the means by which the organisation’s future funding requirements might be met.

However, it was clear that the subject matter of this project was outside both the personal experience of the interviewee and the collective experience of the organisation. It was also clear that because this project was seen as being central to the organisation’s ability to meet its new funding requirements, it was regarded as being highly confidential. Indeed, individuals with even a modest understanding of the project were required to enter into a formal confidentiality agreement.

Whilst restricting any meaningful knowledge of the project to a strictly ‘need to know’ basis had the advantage that it protected the organisations commercial interests; it also had the disadvantage that it severely restricted the ability of the project group to seek insights, experience and expertise from both internal and external sources. A further challenge was that the interviewee had no previous experience of leading this kind of project group.

Thus, when as part of the semi - structured interview, the interviewee was invited to discuss the approach that he was taking to this very considerable challenge, he identified ‘the Four Rooms of Change’ model, to which he had been introduced whilst participating in a ‘leading strategy and change' course at a management college. Not only was the interviewee using this model as a kind of personal compass, he was also using it as a means of inducting new members into the work of the project team. In addition he had co - incidentally attended the management course immediately prior to assuming his new responsibilities.

The interviewee described his uses of the model in the following terms :

> "I think, it consciously lodges there, helps me go, Where are we at?, What's real?, What is the situation we're dealing with here? It will help me define the problem, I suppose, in some ways".
>
> "Sometimes it helps provide a language for a discussion".
>
> "*[It]* helps me then explain what I, what I might mean, about my own ideas, to other people. It also helps to start a debate, so it gives me some tools".
>
> [O2I5]

As part of his own familiarisation process with the topic of CRM, the interviewee had also undertaken a literature search, thus :

> "So before I started CRM, I went and, Harvard Business Reviews, via their, loads of their articles, on CRM and stuff".
>
> [O2I5]

At this point it is particularly interesting to note that although this interviewee had reviewed journal articles relating to CRM, and accordingly this clearly presented an opportunity to identify ideas, theories, concepts and models regarding CRM that he had appropriated, he did not do so.

However, subsequently the interviewee also referred to a time in his career when, within a week of his very first appointment as a manager, he had attended a management training course. During this course he had been introduced to John Adair's action centred leadership model of 'task', 'team' and 'individual'. This was something that had remained meaningful to the interviewee and he described its continuing usefulness in the following terms :

> "I do roughly these three things, its tasks, teams and individuals. I'm not saying those are the only things, but I'm saying if I focus on those, we'll broadly be on the right track. And if we try and find the right balance between those things and I roughly split my time three ways, I know I won't go far wrong. And I know that seems incredibly simple, but I know when I'm out of balance with things, when I've spent too long on something. I just use it as a guide".
>
> [O2I5]

Thus, in relation to the ‘Four Rooms of Change’ model this interviewee provides clear evidence both for the direct usage of an academic model and for its acquisition in a very direct way. The interviewee also provided compelling reasons why this kind of exceptional acquisition and usage was necessary. Given that this individual had not previously managed a project of either this type, or this significance, he was clearly in need of a framework that could be used as a guide. In addition, since the wider organisation had no direct experience of the issues associated with CRM and since the perceived need for confidentiality prevented seeking external advice, there was no individual to whom the interviewee could turn for wise counsel. It is also interesting to note that at the very start of his managerial career, where for other equally compelling, but completely different reasons, the interviewee may have felt unable to seek advice from colleagues, he had also found that the use of a single model, acquired in a similarly direct way, provided an appropriate framework.

However, an interesting and new insight provided by the current situation was that the interviewee described the recently discovered model also provided ‘a language’ in which the project could be discussed within the team. In addition, it served as a means for the interviewee to ‘explain’ his ideas. In this respect the model appears to have a role in assisting the interviewee, to discharge his envisioning responsibilities, by acting as some kind of metaphor for the important contribution that the project will make to the future success of the organisation.

Equally, it would appear that, once again, an important feature of this example is the timeliness of the interviewee’s exposure to this resource at the very point where they were in need of additional support, enhanced skills and a means of coping with a very challenging situation.

Another way in which the substantive, current example is particularly interesting is that it has proved possible to trace the genealogy of this model all the way from its creator to the interviewee. Thus, in the middle of the 1970s Dr Claes Janssen, a ‘social psychologist’ at the University of Stockholm, was undertaking post graduate research in relation to ‘individual and collective defence mechanisms’. This resulted in the development of the ‘Four Rooms of Change’ model and in 1986 this was published in the book, “Forandringens fyra rum”. However, the book has never been translated into English!

However, some eight years prior to the book’s publication Janssen had met, Marvin Weisbord and the two had discussed Janssen’s research. This resulted in Weisbord using the model “with many consulting clients from 1978”. It is also interesting that professionally Weisbord is a journalist who graduated from the University of Illinois in 1953 and completed an MA at the State University of Iowa in 1955. On his web site Weisbord makes the following observation :

> "What I know about OD I learned 'in the streets' working as a business executive in the 1960's and a consultant for 22 years after that".
>
> http://marvinweisbord.com/personal.html
> 20 September 2007

It was Weisbord who first made reference to Janssen's 'Four Rooms of Change' model in a publication written in English. The reference was in the article 'Toward Third – Wave Managing and Consulting' published in Organizational Dynamics, Vol. 15, No. 3, Winter 1987, 4 – 25.

During the 1980's Weisbord was a co - founder of Blue Sky Productions and in this role he wrote, or otherwise helped to produce more than 30 videotapes on the general topic of 'workplace improvement'. Thus, it would seem that Weisbord played the key role in Janssen's 'Four Rooms of Change' model becoming known in the English speaking world.

It would now seem that primary custodians of the 'Four Rooms of Change' model are Anders & Lindstrom Partners who are a Stockholm based consulting firm specialising in 'organisational diagnosis'. Janssen is described as being part of this organisation's 'inner circle'.

Since 1997 this organisation has apparently trained and certified more than 300 external and internal consultants in the 'Four Rooms of Change' model and some key clients for the model have been the Government of Sweden and the Swedish retail organisation IKEA which is 'the worlds' largest user of the model'.

In terms of the broad conclusions that this research study might potentially reach, some of the material used to promote the 'Four Rooms of Change' model is particularly interesting. In relation to the value of the model the current promotional leaflets says :

> "It gives users a mutual language which opens the lines of communication and enables them to handle challenges like stress, conflict, anxiety, chaos, learning, and collaboration more effectively".

and in relation to its implementation the leaflet says :

> "The Four Rooms Change theory has a set of working tools connected to it. They are designed to help learners grasp and apply the theory quickly".

In March 2005 Anders & Lindstrom Partners undertook certified training in the 'Four Rooms of Change' model at the management college attended by the interviewee and it was there that he was introduced to the model as part of a 'leading strategy and change' course.

4.3.3 CouncilOrgOne

This organisation provided both ‘in house’ skill development and knowledge acquisition training and access to an external management development programme at Certificate, Diploma and Masters level. However, despite this it was interesting that for four of the five interviewees, the more formal ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played little, or no, conscious, part in helping them to discharge their organisational responsibilities. However, for one of these interviewees there appeared to be a single situation, prior to them joining this organisation, in which ideas, theories, concepts and models about management made a key, but not totally exclusive, contribution to their handling of a very challenging situation. Once again it is the precise circumstances in which this occurred that is of particular interest and potential importance.

At a much earlier stage in their career the interviewee had worked as leisure services manager for a different Council and during this time these services were outsourced to a private contractor. The interviewee regarded his transfer from the public sector, to a private sector contractor, as being one of the most challenging managerial situations that he had experienced in his career to date and he describes this transition in the following terms :

> “All, the whole goalposts sort of changed overnight. From having no … er … seeming objectives to *[an]* existence, *[where]* we suddenly had very clear ones, which were … er… financial ones”

> “Previously we had no access to financial information in terms of income *[and]* expenditure, you know, we were just operating in a void with the Council”.

> “To suddenly … um … having a monthly management report (laugh) of profit and loss”.

> “It was … and the fact that you had monthly meetings with my manager, you know, saying, you know, What’s happening here? What’s going on here? you know, What are you spending? What are you making? And so that was obviously, for me, a huge … er … change in the way that I’d ever worked, or had to work, before”.

> "The organisation who got the contract there, I did know, they had a pretty good track record of getting rid of managers, pretty quickly who didn't … um … achieve what they're trying to do".
>
> [O3I3]

In response to the magnitude of this challenge, the interviewee described his overall approach as 'survival technique'. This included taking advice from a previous line manager. However, he also attributes part of his survival to training that he received in what he described as 'business management processes'. When later during the interview, he made a subsequent reference to the value of the 'building blocks of management process', he confirmed that what he meant by these references was the 'plan, do, review' cycle. However, he describes the central experience of this learning and the part it played in his longer term success in the following terms :

> "I'm a bit of a, critical these like management courses that teach management process, but actually it was key for me at one stage. I did that actually when I worked for this, the private sector. They put all the managers through … er … these courses and it was all about business management processes and that was all about planning really, understanding what you've got to do, planning to achievement, implementing and then reviewing, all that kind of thing. For me, that was quite critical, for me, because I'd not been exposed to that at all until that point. So understanding that was really quite, was absolutely crucial. I remember when I first went to work for them, all this stuff was handed in my direction and I thought, "Phew, I've no idea how I'm going to achieve this"! And then the penny dropped, I need a plan. So everything I did, I planned really methodically".
>
> I think that *[the]* experience *[of]* working for that outfit and actually the training which they did for me, was absolutely crucial, because otherwise I would have, … er … would have sunk without a trace, I think.
>
> [O3I3]

Thus, at a critical stage in this individual's career, where his professional survival was at stake, in an organisation where there was a culture that was outside of his previous experience, the interviewee had sought advice and guidance from a trusted mentor. However, he had also been introduced to the 'plan, do, review', cycle via a management course. The interviewee regarded his introduction to 'business management processes' as being 'absolutely crucial' to his subsequent success.

Yet again, within the context of this overall research study, it must be questionable as to whether this can be regarded as a clear cut example of the role played by ideas, theories, concepts and models in managerial practice, or whether in fact it amounts to another example of a practitioners interest in the expression of ideas, theories, concepts and models through highly accessible tools and techniques.

In addition, it would appear that this in another instance where a key feature is the timeliness of the interviewee's exposure to these 'tools and techniques' at the very point where they were in need of enhanced skills as a means of coping with a very challenging situation.

4.3.4 ManuCo

For three of these five interviewees it was clear that formal ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played little, or no, direct part in helping them to discharge their responsibilities. However, for two of the five interviewees there appeared to be at least some situations and circumstances in which ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played at least some part.

One of these two interviewees was the Director of European Operations and this individual was responsible for the overall performance of three manufacturing centres within Europe. In addition, he had the lead role in relation to the issue of lean manufacturing across the whole company. Prior to his recent appointment to his current role, he had been the Operations Manager for the manufacturing facility within the UK. There is little doubt that the interviewee was being stretched by the different requirements of his new role. He described this in the following terms :

> "The job I have now, which I've had for the last year, is extremely challenging. And the reason it's challenging is because it's the first time I've had a corporate role which is almost entirely an influencing role".
>
> [O4I4]

> I've had a direct operational line and had a management team working for me that delivered the goods straight, you know, straight to the coal face. And … um … sorry, straight from the coal face. Now, I have to influence others to actually deliver the goods for me and bring it, bring it together.
>
> [O4I4]

It is in the context of needing both to impart his vision for European manufacturing operations and to influence others in relation to how this might be brought about, that he had instigated a number of training sessions that were based upon Stephen Covey: 'The seven habits of highly effective people'. However, in relation to this there were a number of aspects that were particularly striking.

Firstly, the interviewee had never read the book from cover to cover, but instead had listened to it via a series of tapes, thus :

> "I've never read the book. But I tell you what I have done; I've listened to the tapes".
>
> "I've heard him about forty times on his tapes. So I know all the stuff really, really well".
>
> "I've never actually read the book end to end because I haven't needed to because I've just had it from him, and I've got it, you know".
>
> [O4I4]

In addition, whilst the Stephen Covey book describes seven habits, the interviewee was interested in conveying information that related to only one, 'Put first things first'. Even then the information that the interviewee was concerned to put across, related to a quarter of this single Covey model. The interviewee described this as follows :

> "I encourage them to invest at least twenty percent of their time in, in Covey Box II activities, you know, the stuff that's important but it's not immediately urgent. And the stuff that's going to, going to be making things better for the future, rather than just dealing with the issues that have come up today".
>
> "I try to create a, an environment whereby my team know that I expect them to spend twenty percent and the more successful they are with, with investing the twenty, the more that twenty will grow to be thirty and forty. And then we'll be working on the things that are going to make us better in the long run rather than working on putting out the fires that are being lit every day because of the inadequacies of the structure."
>
> [O4I4]

Thus, although this interviewee is clearly citing evidence of his use of an established model, in reality he is using only part of the model. In addition, he is doing so without reference to any of the associated tools and techniques that Covey has included in his book as the means by which, in practice, its readers might achieve the desired outcome. In fact, the interviewee was using the model, or more correctly his selected part of the model, to discuss an overarching concern that he had regarding the future of the organisation. Furthermore, he was doing this in the context of a new role in which by his own diagnosis he had given up direct, operational, line management responsibility for a more strategic role in which his principle mechanism was one of influencing.

Accordingly this would appear to be the second instance in which a model appears to have a purely conceptual and metaphorical role in assisting an interviewee to discharge their responsibility for envisioning and discussing issues associated with the future of an organisation. This kind of usage is consistent with the suggestion made by Nonaka (1994: 21) that an 'analogy allows the functional operation of new concepts or systems to be explored by reference to things that are already understood', and that it 'enables us to know the future through the present'.

The second of these two interviewees was the HRD Director for Europe whose responsibilities involved 500 employees spanning seven countries. Interestingly she was the only interviewee from this organisation to make a substantive reference to Kouzes & Posner's : 'The leadership challenge'. This is despite the fact that this model had recently been adopted by the newly appointed Chairman & CEO and that everyone in the organisation had received training that had introduced them to this. Even then, the interviewee overtly referred to only one of the five principles that Kouzes & Posner espouse. However, in support of this approach she had a poster that made reference to this on the wall of her office and she described the role of this as follows:

> "It was interesting, I wanted to put some artwork up in the office when we moved into the office and I could have put a picture up there, you know. I chose not to because that keeps me honest, if you like, you know, when I look at that, how often do I model the way. And I know when I do and when I don't".
>
> "Then it helps me then when I'm talking to other people, because the other part of it is quite often, is in my role, I can be talking to people about what they need to do".
>
> [O4I5]

In response to the direct question concerning the role that the more formal academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management, played in helping her to discharge her responsibilities the interviewee made a passing reference to the *[Hersey &]* Blanchard model of situational leadership and then explained her general use of these kind of models in the following terms :

> "Because of the way I came into HRD, which is through the, you know, *[the]* learning and development aspect, I was the only one that was actually teaching these models".
>
> "So they are, they are things I naturally go back to".
>
> "Quite often it's more when things don't go the way that I wanted them to, or, I'm stuck on something that, it isn't blindingly obvious that this is the route to take".
>
> [O4I5]

This instance provides evidence of a different kind of role that can be played by models. The interviewee is the Director with strategic responsibility for HR issues. It is clear that this includes responsibility for maintaining and developing the organisation's core culture and values, particularly as this is expressed through the behaviours of the various managerial teams.

As has already been seen the organisation is using the Kouzes & Posner leadership change model both as part of the strategic envisioning process and as an overarching metaphor for the organisations future culture. Since one of the requirements of the new culture as described by Kouzes & Posner is that individuals ‘model the way’, and since the interviewee’s role is such that she is a prime custodian of this vision, she uses the model as a self - assessment tool that keeps her ‘honest’.

However, in a broader context it is also clear that the interviewee is opting to use a selected range of models to facilitate the thinking of other more operational managers who are unable to identify an approach that they are happy to adopt regarding a difficult management challenge. This appears to be another example of a model being used in a metaphorical or analogous way to provide a language in which the future can be described and new options can be considered.

4.3.5 CouncilOrgTwo

This organisation had developed its own managerial competency framework and a modular training programme was available in support of this. The precise nature of the content of this was discussed with the manager who was responsible for both the framework and the associated training programme and information was provided in relation to a randomly selected module. This module made a passing reference to the Peter Drucker book, Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices and attributed to him the origin of the term ‘management by objectives’. However, the core content of the module was the definition of a SMART objective and detailed training in the organisation’s own target and goal setting procedures. These formed part of the organisations performance appraisal process.

In addition, individual directorates were able to access more specialised training that was specifically designed to meet their particular needs. Indeed the department from which one of the five interviewees came was in the midst of some ‘tools and techniques’ training that was concerned with the perceived need for this directorate to make efficiency gains via improvements to their core processes.

Thus, it seems clear that both sources of training were a structured approach to the acquisition of specific tools and techniques, rather than a process leading to the appropriation of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management.

Within this context and on the basis of this analysis CouncilOrgTwo was the only organisation in which none of the interviewees made mention of a potential direct role for the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models in helping them to discharge their organisational responsibilities.

4.3.6 The 'MBA' cohort

The cohort of 15 part - time MBA interviewees also produced a small number of instances which appeared to suggest that some interviewees had been able to directly utilise something that had been presented as part of their studies. Since any or all of these instances could provide primary evidence of the actual process of appropriation, as it occurred, each will be discussed in some detail.

In fact four of the five instances were very similar in their nature. The first involved a reference to the use action centred leadership, the second SWOT analysis, the third stakeholder analysis and the fourth Cameron's four dimensions. However, it is the precise form and nature of the usage that is particularly interesting.

In the first, the interviewee described how he used Adair's action centred leadership model as a kind of check list, prompt, or personal reminder to ensure that conversations and discussions at staff meetings resulted in a tangible and practical outcome :

> "It was simple and useable. Because it just seemed to be that you can walk into a room and so many times you go into meetings where you sit down with a group and say OK … and, and nothing ever seems to come out of the end of it. … But by actually looking at what ware we here to achieve, it just … and that's what it seemed to do. It seemed to be able to pull that together and say OK, have we achieved … then you could say, have we achieved what you wanted to achieve? Yes we have. Fantastic, we've done something. Um … rather than just sitting around talking and getting into philosophical debates and it going off on a tangent. Its like, no, no, I can pull … I feel if I can keep it in my head and pull, pull … use it as a resource to pull people back".
>
> [M1W7]

In the second, the interviewee described the fairly straightforward usage of SWOT analysis to provide an assessment of a team's progress, immediately prior to responsibility for its management being handed over to a different individual who would be participating in a short term secondment. The core rationale for doing this was that the technique provided a structured means of acquiring both positive and negative information, in a context where the substantive manager was concerned that the 'usual suspects' and the 'strong personalities' would focus upon the negative.

> "So I decided in the staff meeting to do an exercise using the, sort of, you know, where you are now strength / weaknesses and what you're facing, to try and actually get a more objective picture because actually".
>
> "Um… so as I say, we did the, you know, try and get a balanced view um… that's what I did to try and move it away, really, from sort of an emotional um… response".
>
> [M1W4]

In the third, the interviewee's substantive role was that of a project manager and she was able to utilise the approach to stakeholder analysis that had been included in an assignment concerning strategy.

> "Um … I mean, we've recently been through, … um … I'd say the last assignment that we did, was … um … very much around … um … strategy at a very high level".
>
> "Um … and some of them … um … I could actually see myself using. Some of them I kind of felt like I never want to look at this again. Um … but other ones … um … were incredibly practical. Um … I mean for me, in project management, stakeholder analysis is brilliant".
>
> [M2H1]

In the fourth, the interviewee appeared to utilise Cameron's four dimensions as part of her routines of personal reflection.

> "Some of which you may well go to for, you know, kind of an outline of something that you're doing, you know, kind of, one I keep returning to, no matter how much I try, is Cameron's Four Dimensions and looking, you know, using that and think well, you know, are we looking, you know, at the key stakeholders, are we looking … have we got healthy internal processes, do we have goals, you know. And you're looking and thinking, and you test things out against, quite often, something simple like".
>
> [M2H4]

What is interesting about each of these four instances is that regardless of whether it would be appropriate to respectively categorise action centred leadership, SWOT analysis, stakeholder analysis and Cameron's four dimensions as an idea, theory, concept or model, the reality is that primarily, each of the interviewees is utilising their chosen resource in a highly practical way as a tool or technique.

However, it should be noted that there were other interviewees who were very clear that there were no connections between their MBA studies and their managerial practices, thus :

> "I would like to tell you that it was on a particular model by such and such, and such and such, but actually it wasn't".
>
> [M2H4]

> "How it works for me was it just got… I must admit, doing the reading … um … with the, the MBA, got me thinking … um … not so much about, you know, this theory's brilliant, I must take that into the workplace. The kind of, it got me thinking about all … how could that work and, you know, would it work and then … but then … um … you know, not actually putting the theory in the workplace, really".
>
> [M1W2]

> "Yeh, its people. I read the books for College but that … that's about it. I sort of read 'em because I have to. Um … when it comes to it, I mean, I think the experience of people around me is the most useful thing and that's what I use, definitely".
>
> [M2W2]

However, there was one clear cut example of an individual who had been so strongly influenced by a topic raised in an MBA lecture that, following this and confirmatory conversations with trusted colleagues and other advisors, they had radically altered their whole approach to management. The individual worked for a significant, West Midlands based, worldwide supplier of automotive injection moulding components where he was the head of the strategic planning department. The raising of the topic of delegation during an MBA lecture had not only changed this individual's personal philosophy regarding management, it had also resulted in them undertaking a significant restructuring in the work of the department; thus :

[M2W2] Um … quite simply, what I've done, or what I do, is I've devolved all of the work down to my staff. I avoid doing any of the actual work myself. Um … which means I devolve it to those guys and then spend my time … um … reviewing their work and providing support to bring them up to the level that I require. Now, you know … so I'm not able to give them training elsewhere and sometimes there might be a general capability issue that no matter how much training they get, they just haven't got the right sort of analytical brain or whatever. Um … so I spend my time providing the training and plugging the gaps, you know. So I let them do the work and then I'll review it and check and say, are we a hundred percent, or am I satisfied that this is the way I would have done it. Um … and for me, I can, I can check over stuff and see if this is how I would have done in about an hour, whereas I'd take about ten hours to do it.

In addition, when asked to explain how this transformation came about the interviewee provided the following explanation :

[Q5] OK. That's fine, I wasn't asking you to attribute it to an individual. That's … I understand that's often the way it is, that's absolutely fine, thank you. Just want it like it is. Um … and now the second challenge you talked about this kind of, of the salaries that the organisation can offer and getting people with sufficient … um … skills to do the quality of the work that the organisation wants in your team, and then you've talked about this kind of … um … devolving of the tasks to them, a kind of reviewing, coaching, mentoring role for you and your ability to kind of plug the, the gaps and raise the quality in what they do yourself in much less time than you can do it yourself, where's that approach come from?

[M2W2] Um … a combination of … um … my study actually and the time at Worcester University, or University of Worcester, whatever its called. Um … and as my old … my father's advice.

Just talk, talk to me a bit about how the study at the Uni influenced that?

[M2W2] Um … well really, [name of lecturer omitted], … er … in one of his lectures, came … said to us, "Look, here's something that managers don't do very well". And what they don't do very well is delegate work. Typically, manager's aren't great at delegating …

Yep.

[M2W2] … they all want to do it but they don't really know how to do it. And I thought bloody hell, he's right here. Um … and I think over time its stuff that he's, he's picked up on and stuff that particularly in his lectures on managing people, its just become more and more apparent to me that I've got staff working for me and I need to get them doing it. Um … so particularly, I couldn't, I couldn't narrow it down … um … but his advice and his recommendations on how to delegate work certainly influenced me.

OK. And then just, likewise, can you just recap about what your father's role in this was, you said advice from your father.

[M2W2] Well, yeh, the advice from my father. My father was a, also a manufacturing manager, he was a site general manager for a couple of factories for [name of organisation omitted], … um … and prior to that for [name of organisation omitted], … um … who are all part of one company. Um … so really, I've always gone to him for advice … er … you know, and once again, I couldn't narrow it down to one thing he's told me, but he has sort of made it clear to me in you know … that I need to have good people doing my work for me who … doing the work of the department for me …

Yep.

[M2W2] … and actually finally, my boss as well, you know, he gave us a big lecture oh, a couple of years ago, and he said, our role as managers is to minimise the input and maximise the output.

Subsequently, the matter was raised with the lecturer concerned and it emerged that the topic of delegation had arisen within the context of 'motivation'. Primarily this had been a discussion regarding the activities, behaviours and habits of managers that can de - motivate their staff by comparison with those activities, behaviours and habits that can be motivational. In addition, there had been structured inputs regarding the benefits of delegation, such as (i) increasing the skill, confidence, initiative and self discipline of staff; (ii) instilling an increased sense of responsibility and job satisfaction; (iii) freeing the delegator for more important duties; (iv) helping to reduce overload and stress; (v) improving team building and (vi) contributing to on – the - job staff development and training. The teaching session had also included, some 'hints and tips' regarding how to make delegation work. These had been centred on the need to effectively brief beforehand, to monitor during the process and to evaluate the results. There was also worksheet in the form of a self assessment grid that invited the course members to consider (i) their willingness or reluctance to delegate; and (ii) the willingness or reluctance of their subordinates to accept delegated tasks.

However, in terms of the fundamental questions that this research study is asking, it is particularly interesting to note that the discussion regarding delegation is framed with two specific academic theories and models about management. These were 'situational leadership' (Hersey & Blanchard) and 'empowerment' (Kanter) and in both cases the relevant lecture contained structured input in relation to both of these academic theories and models. Despite this fact, within the discourse of the interview, the interviewee made no mention of either of the relevant 'management gurus', nor the relevant theories or models. This may be particularly surprising because doing so could be regarded as adding considerable authority to the interviewee's decision to completely restructure the working practices of the department? In fact, the transcript shows, that the individual concerned seemed content to carry out the restructure once he had retrospectively reflected upon comments that his boss had previously made and discussed both the topic of delegation and his intentions with a trusted advisor!

Summary

The purpose of the within case analysis was to examine the handful of rare and exceptional occasions in which a minority of the interviewees appeared to make some kind of direct reference to the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management playing at least some conscious part in their managerial practice.

From a detailed analysis of the interview transcripts from the of the original batch of 24 semi - structured, organisation based, interviews it has been possible to discern a number of characteristics that might explain this exceptional phenomenon :

1. Seven of the eight instances involved the interviewees finding themselves in challenging circumstances that were significantly different from situations that they had previously experienced during their careers. [O1I1, O1I3, O2I3, O2I5, O3I3, O414]

2. In four of the instances there were barriers and impediments that prevented the individuals from discussing the underlying issues with third parties such as colleagues, peers, bosses, mentors, advisers and consultants etc. This presented the interviewees with little alternative than to search for resources by other means. [O1I1, O2I3, O2I5]

3. In four of the instances the interviewee was introduced to the idea, theory, concept, or model via a training event that took place at a time of considerable need. Hence the timeliness of the discovery process appeared to be an important factor. [O1I3, O215, O3I3]

4. In three of the instances the idea, theory, concept, or model was used as either a personal, behavioural compass, or as a necessary enhancement to an individuals sense - making routines. [O1I1, O2I5, O4I5]

5. In two of the instances an idea, theory, concept, or model was used in a metaphorical way by those with very clear, very significant strategic leadership challenges. The idea, theory, concept, or model was utilised as a means to both envision and describe either the future of the whole organisation, or an important part of it. In the process the idea, theory, concept, or model appeared to also serve as a kind of shared language in which the organisationally important matters could be discussed. [O2I5, O4I4]

6. There was one instance where a very small, very select number of ideas, theories, concepts and models were used by an individual, whose organisational role involved facilitating the thinking of others, assisting them with their sense - making routines and helping them to consider alternative managerial options. In the process the selected ideas, theories, concepts and models were used in a metaphorical way and as part of this they appeared to act as a kind of language in which these important matters could be discussed. Although taken from a slightly different context, this is another example of an idea, theory, concept, or model being used in this way. [O4I5]

In addition, from a detailed analysis of the interview transcripts from the subsequent batch of 15 semi-structured interviews, with managers who were in the midst of a significant educational experience, it has been possible to conclude that :

1. Four of the five interviewees were very similar in their nature and concerned these individuals using their chosen resource in a highly practical way as either a tool or a technique. This involved; (i) the use of a single aspect of the action centred leadership model as a personal prompt to ensure that team discussions resulted in a tangible outcome; (ii) the use of SWOT analysis to provide a balanced view of team issues for an interim manager; (iii) the use of the stakeholder management model as part of an interviewees project management toolkit and (iv) the use Cameron’s four dimensions model to provide some structure for an interviewees personal reflections. [M1W7, M1W4, M2H1, M2H4]

2. The fifth interviewee had responded to the issue of delegation that had been raised by a lecturer during an MBA class. After further discussion with a mentor and their line manager the individual had completely restructured their way of working. However, from both an examination of the resources used in the lecture and conversations with the lecturer, it subsequently became clear that the issue of delegation had been raised in the context of motivation. In addition, it

became clear that the lecture had included structured input in relation to both 'situational leadership' (Hersey & Blanchard) and 'empowerment' (Kanter). It is important to note that the interviewee made no reference to either these management 'gurus', nor their theories and models, nor even the short hand terminology by which their academic work is known. [M2W2]

4.4 The MBA rationale

From the case study analysis of the verbatim interview transcripts it would appear that the situations and circumstances in which a management practitioner might directly appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management are both genuinely rare and wholly exceptional. In addition, this finding appears to hold true even for those managers who are in the midst of a significant educational experience, in the form of part - time study for an MBA.

On the face of it, this discovery seems counter - intuitive. If the appropriation of the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management is not the prime purpose of an individual's decision to participate in a significant educational experience, then what is it that would appear to make this very significant commitment worthwhile? Fortunately the verbatim interview transcripts can shed some light on this, as follows :

> "So, for example, they [peer manager colleagues] haven't written essays where, you know, you're looking at … um … putting forward arguments for and against certain things".
>
> [M1W4]

> "I think it's about putting the icing on the cake, to be honest. Um … and to have some credibility in what you're saying".
>
> "It's also about … um … wanting to change the way I write things as well. Its … I've got more and more … I've had more and more need to write at probably a higher level than what I've ever done before and I've found that quite difficult, without having the academic background".
>
> "And I think also, the um… if, from my, from a personal point of view, if I was to look to go to work in another organisation …… it would … your reputation doesn't go with you necessarily. So you have to have some academic, … um … you know, work there behind you".
>
> [M1W6]

> "What I believe has happened is that it's opened my eyes, being perfectly honest".
>
> "But I also think it's developed a side of me that I've never done before which is to challenge people and so, critically thinking about what they're saying to me. And actually, asking some probing questions back".
>
> [M1W5]

> "What it's [the MBA course] had a direct effect is on … um … my own personal confidence, I would say … in the role. It's … that's personal confidence whereas perhaps before, … um … I was confident that I was able to do the role but not necessarily confident that … of, of the management of the people, maybe".
>
> "I think that the… one of the more valuable, or one of the valuable experiences of the MBA is having a cross section from different businesses within a group and …… and those open discussions actually are quite interesting in terms of um… cultures between government business, you now, civil service kind of businesses, er… service businesses and a manufacturing business, because we've got quite a good spread across the group of … er… of businesses, all with their own challenges and their own um… models for dealing with things".
>
> [M1W1]

> "I would, I would summarise it as it has its place, its nice to know that I'm sort of along the line of what most of the, the top thinkers, if you like, in the world are saying that I should be doing".
>
> [M2W1]

> "And I suppose that's it… where its given me, its given me the strength to challenge in a much more um… positive way".
>
> [M2H3]

Summary

Whilst there was little, if any, evidence to support a view that for these interviewees the appropriation of theory, ideas, concepts and models about management was a key benefit of their participation in a part - time MBA; this is not to suggest that for these interviewees their participation was devoid of benefits. Indeed they were clear that this was not the case.

The key benefits that the identified included; (i) improving both their critical thinking and their ability to put forward structured arguments; (ii) raising the level of their writing skills; (iii) increasing their self assurance and 'personal strength' so that they were more able to challenge the status quo; (iv) increasing and improving their level of personal confidence; (v) 'opening their eyes' and broadening their understanding of organisational difference through mixing with delegates with a wide variety of backgrounds; (vi) providing comfort from the knowledge that their existing practices were aligned with those proposed by the 'top thinkers'; (vii) adding to and confirming their personal credibility; and (viii) providing a recognised and transferable statement of their abilities that was independent of their current employer.

4.5 Conclusions

This chapter has discovered that the more formal, more academic, research based ideas, theories, concepts and models about management played very little direct, obvious, conscious part in helping these interviewees to address even the most significant of their managerial challenges.

There were a small number of very isolated and very particular circumstances in which ideas, theories, concepts and models did appear to play at least some part in the interviewees' managerial practices and these exceptions have been both codified and explained.

Whilst outside of these exceptions there is little, if any, evidence for the overt appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models per se there is some evidence for the acquisition of tools and techniques that have been derived from and are obvious expressions of such academic ideas, theories, concepts and models.

However, these discoveries leave open the possibility that appropriation might be a much more subtle, covert and subconscious process than had previously been envisaged and the next chapter will seek to establish whether there is evidence to support this.

Chapter 5

Covert appropriation

5.1 Introduction

This chapter of the thesis will present the evidence from the textual analysis of the verbatim interview transcripts regarding the covert appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners. It will also present the evidence from the textual analysis of a number of publicly available, strategic documents from four of the five employing organisations that had facilitated access to some of their senior managers.

The initial phase of the field work involved a total of 24 semi - structured, face to face, recorded interviews that were conducted with interviewees from five different organisations. The interviews lasted a total of 24 hours 34 minutes, provided information relating to 98 critical incidents and the verbatim transcriptions of these interviews totalled 248,000 words. A subsequent phase of field work involved a total of 15 semi - structured, telephone, recorded interviews that were conducted with individuals who were both practicing managers and as part-time MBA students were also individuals in the midst of a significant educational experience. These interviews lasted a total of 10 hours 19 minutes, provided information relating to 39 critical incidents and the verbatim transcriptions of these interviews totalled 106,000 words.

The initial approach to investigating the covert appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners involved performing a content analysis to determine the frequency with which 449 managerial ‘terms’ occurred within the verbatim interview transcripts. The managerial ‘terms’ were collated from academic sources via ‘snowball’ sampling into a bespoke compendium. Subsequently, a content analysis of the company documents established the frequency with which each of the 449 managerial ‘terms’ that had been used by the interviewees had occurred within the publicly, strategic available documents of the employing organisations. Finally, an intertextual analysis was performed in relation to 1447 words, phases and expressions that had been identified within and extracted from, the verbatim interview transcripts.

5.2 The content analysis

A key purpose of the content analysis was to examine the interview transcripts and to establish the frequency with which the 449 managerial ‘terms’ had occurred within these. This analysis of the interview transcripts would seek to establish the extent to which the thinking of the 20th century's management gurus had influenced the language of the interviewees.

The managerial 'terms' were collated via 'snowball' sampling and seven key sources were utilised to create the bespoke compendium (Lindvall, 1999; Pascale, 1990; Kennedy, 1998; Harvard Business Review Supplement, 1997; Crainer, 1998; Clegg, Kornberger & Pitsis, 2006; and Mol & Birkinshaw 2008). In addition, some obvious gaps and omission were filled by a process of inspection. This contributed 54 of the 449 terms. The resulting bespoke compendium of managerial terms is included as Appendix 2.

5.2.1 Content analysis of the verbatim interview transcripts

The interview transcripts for each of the interviewees from the original batch of interviews were collated into a single word document for each of the five organisations and in each case the interviewer's words were removed, leaving only the words spoken by the interviewee. The frequency with which each of the 449 managerial 'terms' from the compendium occurred within the collated interview transcripts was then determined by utilising the 'Edit' > 'Find' facility within MSWord. In addition, the total number of words in the collated interview responses was determined using the Tools > Word Count facility within MSWord. This enabled the frequency with which each 'term' had appeared in the interview transcripts to be expressed on the common basis of 'the frequency of usage per 100K words'.

The result of this analysis was that was that of the 449 'terms' from the compendium, only 114 'terms' appeared in the interview transcripts. This is a utilisation rate of 25%. The range of the usage frequency also varied considerably. The highest average usage across all of the transcripts was a frequency of 479 per 100K words and the lowest a frequency of 2 per 100K words.

There was also a difference in the total number of 'terms' utilised by the interviewees from each organisation. The greatest number was used by the interviewees from ManuCo (37) and the least by the interviewees from CouncilOrgTwo (24). This is a difference of 54% which is interesting because CouncilOrgTwo had a particularly well developed, comprehensive and multi - level management development programme.

In addition, two terms were used with an average frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words. These were team(s) and change. Although these two words have everyday usage they appear in the compendium on the basis of their inclusion in the collation of Lindvall (1999) as a key part of her contribution to the research programme of the European Union: The Creation of European Management Practice. In this context the term 'team' was attributed to

Katezenbach & Smith (1993) and the term ‘change’ was attributed to both Kanter (1983, 1989 & 1997) and Kochen & Useem (1992). In fact this highlights a important issue regarding the usage of ‘terms’ by management practitioners. Sometimes they will take a word that has common usage, but utilise it in a particular way that has a more specific meaning between management practitioners. Equally they will take a word with a very specific, frequently scientific meaning, and use it in a much more generalised way. Of course, management practitioners may not be alone in using language in this way.

However, a further 15 ‘terms’ were used with an average frequency between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words. These were customer, feedback, profession(al), target, culture, leadership, quality, coach(ing), objective(s), balance, restructure, budget(ing), mentor(ing), performance indicator(s) and values.

An additional 96 terms were used with an average frequency of between 1 per 10,000 words and 1 per 100,000 words.

However, within this overall situation there were significant organisational variations. ‘Customer’ was the most frequently used term within ManuCo and it occurred with a frequency of 228 per 100,000 words. This was 15 times more frequent that the next highest user. There were similar, if less exaggerated distinctiveness in the use of other terms by each of the organisations. For HealthTrustOrg the relevant terms were budget(ing), target and culture; for CharityOrg the term was coach(ing); for ManuCo the terms were leadership, mentor(ing) and values; for CouncilOrgOne the term was performance indicator and for CouncilOrgTwo the terms were profession(al) and restructuring. In each case the frequency of usage was between twice and six times the average. In addition, ManuCo was the only organisation to use the terms lean, matrix and supply chain; whilst HealthTrustOrg was the only organisation to use the term merger, even though three of the four other organisations had also experienced either a merger or a take over in the last five years.

Thus, whilst the language utilised by the managers, from these very different organisations, may not be identical, it clearly stems from a common root and has sufficient in common to be understandable by a broad spectrum of practitioners. However, there is also a sense in which the language that is utilised is also characteristic of each organisation. Perhaps this is best viewed as being a common language that is spoken with distinctive organisational dialect?

Overall, perhaps one of the most striking aspects of the analysis was that the interviewees from all five organisations had ‘team’ and ‘change’ as the words most frequently used. However, in this regard it could be argued that the interviewees were simply using ‘everyday words’ to describe two of the key features of all organisations? Equally striking was that the interviewees of the manufacturing organisation had the word ‘customer’ as their most frequently used 'term'. In fact it may be equally surprising that the word 'customer' was absent as one of the most frequently used 'terms' by the interviewees of the four other organisations? On the face of it this could perhaps be attributed to the fundamental nature of the manufacturing organisation when compared to the health, charity and council organisations. However, if the word search is broadened to encompass other organisationally relevant terms for customer, such as client, patient and service users, this difference still exists. In fact the frequency of usage of these collated, generic terms for a customer, per 100,000 words of the interview transcripts, was 15 and 18 per 100,000 words for the council organisations; 22 per 100,000 words for the health organisation; 30 per 100,000 words for the charity organisation and 235 per 100,000 words for the manufacturing organisation. Accordingly, at least on the basis of this measure, it seems clear that the customer orientation of the commercial manufacturing organisation is a whole order of magnitude greater than that of the other organisations.

The result of the content analysis of these interview transcripts is shown by Tables 1, 2 & 3 below.

Table 1 : Interview transcripts: Managerial 'terms' with a usage of more than 1 per 1,000 words

HealthTrustOrg	**CharityOrg**	**ManuCo**	**CouncilOrgOne**	**CouncilOrgTwo**
Team(s)	Team(s)	Customer	Team(s)	Team(s)
Change	Change	Change	Change	Change
		Team(s)		

Table 2 : Interview transcripts: Managerial 'terms' with a usage of less than 1 per 1,000 words and more than 1 per 10,000 words

HealthTrustOrg	**CharityOrg**	**ManuCo**	**CouncilOrgOne**	**CouncilOrgTwo**
Target	Target	Leadership	Profession(al)	Profession(al)
Culture	Coach(ing)	Feedback	Objective(s)	Restructuring
Budget(ing)	Feedback	Mentor(ing)	Target	Feedback
Profession(al)	Culture	Quality	Quality	Budget(ing)
Feedback	Brand	Coach(ing)	Performance indicator	Performance
Partner(ship)	Objective(s)	Values	Culture	Activity

Balance	Balance	Matrix (environment)	Leadership	Quality
Quality	Leadership	Balance	Performance measurement	Performance indicator
Merger	CRM	Profession(al)	Mentor(ing)	Culture
Appraisal	Succession planning	Supply chain	Customer	Leadership
Objective(s)	Innovation	Value	Feedback	Management training
Internet	Value	Benchmark(ing)	Values	Value
Performance	Internet	Culture	Stakeholder(s)	Customer
	Personal development	Lean (operations)		Benchmark(ing)
	Scenario(s)	Objective(s)		One to one
	Customer	Performance		
	Mentor(ing)	Stakeholder(s)		
		Matrix (organisation)		
		Performance measurement		

Table 3 : Interview transcripts: Managerial 'terms' with a usage of less than 1 per 10,000 words

HealthTrustOrg	**CharityOrg**	**ManuCo**	**CouncilOrgOne**	**CouncilOrgTwo**
Activity	Quality	Partner(ship)	Balance	Stakeholder(s)
Coach(ing)	Performance	Performance management	Budget(ing)	Balance
Motivation	Values	Value	Motivation	Motivation
Performance indicator	Budget(ing)	Scenario(s)	Health & safety	Health & safety
Personal development	Profession(al)	Budget(ing)	Restructuring	Project management
Value	Motivation	Target	Partner(ship)	Target
Leadership	Performance indicator	Brand	Performance management	Bureaucracy
One to one	Stakeholder(s)	Succession planning	Appraisal	
Scenario(s)	Partner(ship)	CRM	Management training	
Stakeholder(s)	Performance management	Personal development	Coach(ing)	
Values	Project management	Motivation	Value	
	One to one	One to one	Internet	
			CRM	

			Bureaucracy	

A comparable content analysis was also undertaken for the subsequent cohort of interviewees who were both management practitioners and part - time MBA students. This analysis showed that of the 449 managerial 'terms' from the compendium, only 68 terms appeared in the interview transcripts. This is a utilisation rate of just 15%. Once again the two most frequently used managerial 'terms' were teams and change and as before these were used with a frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words.

A further 17 managerial 'terms' were used with an average frequency between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words. These were motivation, profession(al), culture, project management, quality, target, customer, value, leadership, performance, balance, budget(ting), feedback, activity, internet, mentor(ing) and values.

An additional 49 managerial 'terms' were used with an average frequency of between 1 per 10,000 words and 1 per 100,000 words.

Accordingly it has been concluded that influence of the thinking of the 20th century's 'management gurus' over both sets of the interviewees was weak.

5.2.2 Content analysis of company documentation

As has been previously discussed, the diffusion of innovations theory implies a centre to periphery process of diffusion which presupposes that the energy necessary to facilitate the diffusion lies at the centre. In addition, an implication of fashion theory is that those within an organisation with both seniority and authority, once personally persuaded of the value of a new fashion, could ensure that this became the predominant cultural motif. In such circumstances it might be reasonable to expect that an organisation would have a core culture that was strongly aligned with a relatively small cluster of currently fashionable ideas, theories, concepts or models about management. It may also be reasonable to suggest that in these circumstances the majority of individuals within these organisations would articulate their support for these ideas. Thus, any such process would imply an organisational distinctiveness, since it would be unlikely that organisations from different sectors with different histories, traditions, governance requirements, regulatory frameworks, senior executives, management structures, products, customers and suppliers would alight upon the exactly same themes at exactly the same moment. Finally it would be reasonable to anticipate that any such organisational distinctiveness would be detectable within the organisational discourse. This would imply that such distinctiveness would be detectable in the organisations publications, including those produced both to promote the organisation and to comply with its accountability requirements.

This was the core rationale behind the final content analysis which sought to discern whether there was an organisational distinctiveness to the discourse of the organisational documentation.

Accordingly, a number of publicly available, strategic documents from four of the five organisations were downloaded from the internet in Adobe Acrobat format. The kind of organisational documents that were scrutinised were annual reports and accounts, annual reviews, operating plans and corporate plans etc. Unfortunately this information was not available for the fifth organisation since it was a privately owned commercial organisation whose shareholders lived in the USA. Hence, the organisation had no obligation to make this kind of information publicly available. Subsequently, the frequency with which each of the 114 managerial 'terms' had occurred within these documents was determined by utilising the 'Search' facility within Adobe Acrobat document files.

This analysis showed that of the 114 terms collectively utilised by the interviewees, only 70 terms appeared in these documents. This was a utilisation rate of 61%. Once again the range in the frequency of usage was considerable. The highest was a frequency of 463 per 100K words and the lowest was a frequency of only 2 per 100K words.

Clearly these documents were designed to be public facing rather than internally focussed. Indeed some of the documents were necessary to comply with the governance requirements of that organisation. However, the remit of these documents was clearly strategic and in that sense it might be reasonable to expect that they might comment upon most of the key challenges that the organisation was facing. In addition, although an organisation's key challenges may not be totally synonymous with its most significant managerial issues this is clearly the strategic context in which such managerial challenges exist. Indeed, it may be reasonable to suppose that an organisation's key challenges would be either the direct or indirect cause of at least some of an organisation's managerial issues. It would certainly seem reasonable to expect at least some degree of resonance between them.

It is interesting to note that of the 114 terms that occurred within the verbatim interview transcripts the 'term' partner(ship) was the only one that occurred with a frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words within the documents of all four organisations.

However, HealthTrustOrg's documents featured partnership, performance and target with the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words; whilst each appeared in the lower category of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words in the interview transcripts.

Similarly the ‘term’ change appeared in the interview transcripts with the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1000 words; whilst it appeared in the lower category of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words in the documents. In fact team(s) was the only ‘term’ to appear in both the documents and the interview transcripts with the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words.

Of the 23 ‘terms’ that occurred at the lower frequency of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words in this organisation’s documents, 7 (diversity, health and safety, risk management, excellence, best practice, benchmarking and recognition) did not appear at all in the related interview transcripts.

CharityOrg’s documents featured the ‘terms’ team(s), change and partner(ship) with the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words; and whilst the ‘terms’ team(s) and change appeared with the same frequency in the interview transcripts, the ‘term’ partner(ship) appeared in the lower category of between 1 per 1,000 words.

Of the 7 ‘terms’ that occurred at the lower frequency of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words in this organisations documents, 2 (activity and excellence) did not appear at all in the related interview transcripts.

CouncilOrgOne’s documents featured performance, target, partner(ship), quality and performance manage(ment) with the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words; whilst within the interview transcripts the ‘terms’ target and performance manage(ment) appeared in the lower category of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words; the ‘terms’ partners(ship) and performance manage(ment) appeared in the lowest category of less than 1 per 10,000 words and the ‘term’ performance made no appearance at all. Similarly the ‘terms’ team(s) and change appeared in the interview transcripts with the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1000 words; whilst each appeared in the lower category of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words in the documents. In fact no ‘term’ was common to both the documents and the interview transcripts at the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words.

Of the 18 ‘terms’ that occurred at the lower frequency of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words in this organisation’s documents, 7 (diversity, best value, flexibility, benchmarking, induction, reward and best practice) did not appear at all in the related interview transcripts.

CouncilOrgTwo’s documents featured performance, target, partner(ship) and quality with the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words; whilst within the interview transcripts the ‘terms’ performance and quality appeared in the lower category of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words; the ‘term’ target appeared in the lowest category of less than 1 per 10,000 words and the ‘term’ partner(ship) made no appearance at all. Similarly the ‘terms’ team(s) and change appeared in the interview transcripts with the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1000 words; whilst each appeared in the lower category of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words in the documents. Once again no ‘term’ was common to both the documents and the interview transcripts at the highest frequency of more than 1 per 1,000 words.

Of the 22 ‘terms’ that occurred at the lower frequency of between 1 per 1,000 words and 1 per 10,000 words in this organisation’s documents, there were 10 (best value, risk management, objective, values, performance management, diversity, code of practice, excellence, evaluation and strategic planning) that did not appear at all in the related interview transcripts.

The result of the content analysis of the company documentation is shown by Tables 4, 5 & 6 below.

Table 4 : Organisational documents: Managerial ‘terms’ with a usage of more than 1 per 1,000 words

HealthTrustOrg	**CharityOrg**	**CouncilOrgOne**	**CouncilOrgTwo**
Team(s)	Team(s)	Performance	Performance
Partner(ship)	Change	Target	Target
Performance	Partner(ship)	Partner(ship)	Partner(ship)
Target		Quality	Quality
		Performance management	

Table 5 : Organisational documents: Managerial ‘terms’ with a usage of less than 1 per 1,000 words and more than 1 per 10,000 words

HealthTrustOrg	**CharityOrg**	**CouncilOrgOne**	**CouncilOrgTwo**
Quality	Target	Customer	Budget(ing)
Diversity	Objective(s)	Team(s)	Change
Feedback	Profession(al)	Project management	Best value
Change	Quality	Objective(s)	Risk management

Value	Activity	Budget(ing)	Performance indicator(s)
Stakeholder(s)	Excellence	Change	Customer
Performance management	Stakeholder(s)	Value	Team(s)
Activity	Support function	Diversity	Value
Health and safety		Leadership	Leadership
Risk management		Best value	Objective(s)
Profession(al)		Culture	Values
Excellence		Performance indicator(s)	Performance management
Best practice		Flexibility	Diversity
Objective(s)		Motivation	Activity
Balance		Benchmark(ing)	Code of practice
Performance indicator(s)		Induction	Stakeholder(s)
Personal development		Reward	Feedback
Merger		Best practice	Excellence
Leadership			Culture
Budget(ing)			Evaluation
Values			Restructuring
Benchmark(ing)			Strategic planning
Recognition			

Table 6 : Organisational documents: Managerial 'terms' with a usage of less than 1 per 10,000 words

HealthTrustOrg	**CharityOrg**	**CouncilOrgOne**	**CouncilOrgTwo**
KPI's	Performance	Feedback	Profession(al)
Organisational development	Value	Balance	Project management
Flexible working	Merger	Activity	Accountability
Culture	Leadership	Merger	Reward
Restructuring	Innovation	Management development	Quality assurance
Innovation	Reward	Intranet	Balance
Accountability	Values	Excellence	Benchmark(ing)
Research and development	Evaluation	Performance targets	Internet

Evaluation	Strategic planning	Risk management	Health and safety
Intranet	Induction	Recognition	SAP
Customer	Motivation	Team briefing	Bureaucracy
Brand	Feedback	Delegation	Flexible working
Appraisal	Risk management		Performance measurement
Lean	Balance		Innovation
Best value	Budget(ing)		Personal development
Flexibility	Recognition		Merger
Performance targets	KPI's		Team working
Coach(ing)	Culture		Intranet
Project management	Accountability		Market share
Competition	Project management		Organisational development
Reward	Competition		Added value
Team working	Succession planning		Best practice
Strategic planning	Intellectual capital		Flexibility
Added value			Performance targets
Empower(ment)			Mediation
Grievance			Recognition
Induction			
Centre(s) of excellence			

Accordingly it has been concluded that there was little, or no, evidence of a strong alignment between the language used within the company documentation and that of the verbatim interview extracts of the management practitioners from the same organisation.

However, in relation to the intertextual indexing of the verbatim interview transcripts that follows in Section 5.3, it may be important to restate the basis for the inclusion of a 'term' within the bespoke compendium. This was that each was regarded by at least one of the seven key academic sources as being a managerial 'term'. In the indexing of extracts from the verbatim interview transcripts that follows in Section 5.3, the indexing will be on the basis of conformance to the requirements of a relevant 'domain'. Hence, it is recognised that the managerial 'terms' included in the content analysis could be illustrative of ideas, theories, concepts and models, or even tools and techniques.

Summary

The purpose of the content analysis of both the verbatim interview transcripts and the company documentation was to was to establish the extent to which the thinking of the 20th centuries 'management gurus' had influenced the language of the interviewees and the organisations for which they worked.

On the basis of the content analysis of the verbatim interview extracts it has been concluded that (i) influence of the thinking of the 20th century's 'management gurus' over the interviewees was weak; (ii) there was little, if any, discernable difference between the original 'organisational' sample of interviewees and the 'MBA' sample of interviewees; and (iii) whilst the language utilised by the interviewees from the four different organisations was not identical it may be reasonable to view this as being a common language that is spoken with distinctive organisational dialect.

As a result of the content analysis of the company documentation it has been concluded that there was little, or no, evidence of a strong alignment between the language used within the company documentation and that of the verbatim interview extracts of the management practitioners from the same organisation.

5.3 The intertextual analysis

A key purpose of the intertextual analysis was to utilise the insights of intertextuality and the disciplines of the framework analysis technique to highlight any covert influence which the more formal, more academic, ideas, theories, concepts and models about management might be exerting upon management practitioners.

Hence, the first part of the intertextual analysis involved a detailed examination of the 355,000 word verbatim transcripts of the semi - structured interviews and the identification of the words, phases and expressions that were of potential interest. Ultimately this collation totalled 1447 items. Subsequently, the data handling aspects of this stage of the research study were undertaken utilising the framework analysis technique (Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor, 2003) following established processes and procedures (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994; Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000; Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor, 2003; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). In fact the 'five key stages to qualitative data analysis' using the framework analysis technique may be summarised as (i) familiarisation; (ii) identifying a thematic framework; (iii) indexing; (iv) charting; and (v) mapping and interpretation. The complete compendium of 1447 interview extracts is included as Appendix 3.

5.3.1 The framework analysis

In practice, each of the interview transcripts was examined in detail and sections of text, examples of specific terminology, interesting metaphors and relevant usages of language were highlighted. Subsequently a selection of the 1447 interview extracts were indexed to a framework that consisted of four domains; the 'theoretical', the 'conceptual', the 'tactical' and the 'practical'. Each of these domains encompassed two categories. These were theory and model; ideas and concepts; attitudes and behaviours; and tools and techniques. In addition, each of the interview extracts was identified by a 'superscript' number which acted as a legend. Accordingly, each of these 'superscript' numbers was used to link (i) the indexed interview extract; (ii) the section of the interview transcript in which the extract had occurred and from which its context could be assessed; and (iii) a detailed explanation as to why the extracted had been indexed to that domain. By this means the whole of the indexing process is transparent and verifiable by any reader of the thesis.

The result of the intertextual indexing of the 152 selected interview extracts is shown by Table 7 below. For the sake of convenience, within each of the four domains, the interview extracts have been listed in alphabetical order. The complete detail of the intertextual decision rules and the indexing rationale is included as Appendix 4. In each case the intertextual interview extract can be seen in its context in Appendix 5. In each of these tables the indexing process can be traced using the relevant 'superscript' number.

Table 7 : Intertextual analysis

Theoretical Domain	Conceptual Domain	Tactical Domain	Practical Domain
Action centred leadership [111]	Accountable [241]	Abdicate [337]	Action plan [418]
Aggressive [105]	Ambition [229]	Adapt [308]	Agenda [426]
Best value [116]	Authority [246]	Arrogant [338]	Benchmarking [420]
Bureaucracy [132]	Best practice [221]	Autocratic [317]	Body language [416]
Centre of gravity [125]	Busking [238]	Bullying [310]	Budget [410]
Centres of excellence [101]	Champion [201]	Charismatic [326]	Business plan [421]
Completer - finisher [103]	Change agent [217]	Coaching [334]	Checklist [413]
Culture [104]	Confidentiality [232]	Compromise [339]	Decision tree [409]
Ego [122]	Contingency [239]	Consult [335]	Delegation [423]
Emotional intelligence [107]	Core business [206]	Cynical [327]	Gap analysis [402]
Encouraging the heart etc [129]	Cross - fertilise [212]	Debate [316]	Implementation plan [425]
Energy [112]	Cross cutting [231]	Direct [305]	Job description [403]
Evolution [126]	Devolved [249]	Explore [314]	KPI [404]
Focal point [133]	Diverse [225]	Facilitate [318]	Managing by exception [415]

Group dynamics [117]	Dotted line manager [234]	Goal setting [331]	Manpower planning [401]
Inertia [131]	Dumped on [209]	Influence [336]	Mystery shopping [424]
ISO 9001 accreditation [118]	Empowerment [248]	Instinct [302]	Objective [417]
Lean organisation [127]	Entrepreneurial [243]	Internalise [311]	Prioritise [427]
Learning styles [108]	Ethic [222]	Logical [332]	Process mapping [428]
Matrix organisation [123]	Expedient [235]	Maverick [322]	Risk management [405]
Momentum [109]	Global footprint [244]	Mediation [320]	Schedule [408]
Myers Briggs type indicator [113]	Headhunted [215]	Naïve [340]	Scorecard [422]
NLP [110]	Hierarchy [230]	Navel gazing [306]	Service level agreement [406]
Osmosis [115]	Inclusive [216]	Negotiate [323]	Stakeholder [411]
Pivotal point [130]	Integrity [233]	Obsequious [307]	Succession planning [419]
Prince two [121]	Invest [220]	Persuade [324]	Target [412]
Situational leadership [124]	Managing up [210]	Pig headed [312]	Terms of reference [407]
Storming [119]	Morale [226]	Reactive [315]	To do list [414]
Strategic planning [102]	Pace [242]	Refining [329]	
Supply chain [128]	Pathfinder [245]	Segment [333]	
Team briefing [114]	Pride / Proud [202]	Sensible [321]	
Transactional analysis [120]	Privileged [223]	Shock [319]	
Waves [106]	Proactively [218]	Smart arse [304]	
	Professional [213]	Soul searching [313]	
	Quick & dirty [204]	Systematic [309]	
	Red herring [240]	Top down / Bottom up [303]	
	Rites of passage [228]	Turnkey [330]	
	Shadowing [205]	Twiddling their thumbs [328]	
	Silo [224]	Vociferous [341]	
	Sound bite [208]	Working group [325]	
	Sounding board [247]	Workshop [301]	
	Step up to the plate [211]		
	Success [219]		
	Synergies [250]		
	Touch points [236]		
	Touching base [203]		
	Tunnel vision [227]		
	Vertically integrated [237]		
	Watchdog [207]		
	Whinge - fests [214]		

As a result of this analysis it was concluded (i) that the discourse, dialogue and language of the interviewees could be indexed to four ‘domains’: the theoretical, the conceptual, the tactical and the practical; (ii) that, at least in part, management could be characterised as a ‘conceptual discipline’; (iii) that at the heart of the management process was a discourse, dialogue and discussion regarding concepts and ideas (the ‘conceptual’ domain’) and attitudes and behaviours (the ‘tactical’ domain) and (iv) that this core management process was occasionally augmented by the inclusion of theories and models (the ‘theoretical’ domain) and of tools and techniques (the ‘practical domain’). In fact on the basis of the number of interview extracts that were potentially capable of being indexed to the respective 'domains' it was clear that it could be concluded that, in its fundamental nature, management was at least as 'conceptual' as it was either 'theoretical', or 'practical'.

5.3.2 The comparison of the 'theoretical domain'

Subsequent to the basic framework analysis involving all four domains and all eight index categories, the 1447 interview extracts were further examined in order that all of the extracts that could be indexed to the 'theoretical domain' were identified. A comparison was then made between the frequency with which these extracts occurred in the transcripts of the initial 'organisation' based interviewees and the frequency with which they occurred in the transcripts of the subsequent 'MBA' interviewees.

Ultimately 144 interview extracts were regarded as being potentially capable of being indexed to the theoretical domain. The subsequent analysis of this indexing showed that for the original 'organisational' sample of interviewees the frequency of usage of an extract indexed to the theoretical domain was 8.9 occasions per thousand words. By comparison, for the subsequent 'MBA' sample of interviewees the frequency of usage of an extract indexed to the theoretical domain was 7.6 occasions per thousand words. Accordingly there seems little, if any, evidence to suggest that the discourse, dialogue and language of management practitioners is, in its basic nature, inherently more theoretical as a result of an individual's current participation in a significant educational experience. The complete compendium of interview extracts indexed to the theoretical domain is included as Appendix 6 and the details of the theoretical domain decision rules and indexing rationale are included as Appendix 7.

In addition, it became clear that of the 144 interview extracts that were indexed to the theoretical domain 24, or 16%, of these were theoretical terms from disciplines other than management or psychology. These included expressions such as catalyst, centre of gravity, energy, evolution, focal point, inertia, momentum, osmosis, tangent and waves. This demonstrates that, where helpful and appropriate, management practitioners are willing to absorb into their discourse expressions which have specific theoretical meanings within the physical sciences and to subsequently use these in a much looser, much less rigorous way. This is not to suggest that management practitioners are unique in this regard, but it is perhaps illustrative of a more general trend within society as a whole to use expressions with a clear scientific pedigree in a much less exacting and much less precise way where to do so is helpful in terms of conveying a meaning that is socially important.

As a result of this analysis it was concluded that there was little, if any, difference between the discourse, dialogue and language of the 'organisation' sample of interviewees and that of the interviewees who were in the midst of a significant educational experience, in this instance a part - time MBA.

Summary

The purpose of the intertextual analysis was to highlight any covert influence which the more formal, more academic, ideas, theories, concepts and models about management might be exerting upon management practitioners.

On the basis of the intertextual analysis of the interview extracts it has been concluded (i) that the discourse, dialogue and language of the interviewees could be indexed to four 'domains': the theoretical, the conceptual, the tactical and the practical; (ii) that at the heart of the management process is a discourse, dialogue and discussion regarding concepts and ideas (the 'conceptual' domain') and attitudes and behaviours (the 'tactical' domain); (iii) that management could be characterised as a 'conceptual discipline' and that in its fundamental nature, it was at least as 'conceptual' as it is either 'theoretical', or 'practical'; (iv) that this core management process was occasionally augmented by the inclusion of theories and models (the 'theoretical' domain) and of tools and techniques (the 'practical domain'); and (v) that there was little, if any, evidence to suggest that management theory was exerting an enhanced influence upon those practitioners who were in the midst of a significant educational experience, in this instance studying for a part - time MBA.

5.4 Management as a conceptual discipline

We have seen from the intertextual analysis of the verbatim interview extracts that a significant proportion of the discourse, dialogue and language of the interviewees can be indexed to a conceptual domain. This raises the question as to whether elsewhere within both the verbatim, interview transcripts and the case study analysis there is data that might corroborate this potentially significant and somewhat unexpected finding?

In fact the within case analysis has already revealed an instance where an interviewee from the MBA cohort had been so strongly influenced by the topic of 'delegation', when raised in the context of an MBA lecture, that following this and confirmatory conversations with trusted colleagues and other advisors, they had radically altered their whole approach to management. It had also resulted in them undertaking a significant restructuring of the work in their department. Subsequently, the lecturer concerned confirmed that the topic of delegation had arisen within the context of 'motivation' and that the context had been a discussion regarding the activities, behaviours and habits of managers that can demotivate their staff and those activities, behaviours and habits that can be motivational.

However, the lecturer also confirmed that the discussions regarding delegation had been framed within the context of two specific academic theories and models about management. These were ‘situational leadership’ (Hersey & Blanchard) and ‘empowerment’ (Kanter) and in both cases the relevant lecture contained structured input in relation to these academic theories and models. Despite this fact, within the discourse of the interview, the interviewee made no mention of either the relevant ‘management guru’, or the relevant theory or model.

Thus, it may be possible to regard this as an example of an interviewee who had appropriated the concept of delegation, to the point where they had dramatically changed their whole approach to management and completely restructured their departmental operations, without appropriating the theory and the models that underpinned the concept and without remembering the names of the relevant ‘gurus’ that might provide authority for the interviewees decision.

However, a close examination of the verbatim interview transcripts provided other examples. Indeed, other substantial passages of verbatim interview transcriptions showed the use of conceptual understandings, rather than a direct reference to the relevant theory and associated models. These corroborative discoveries relate to three different passages of text, provided by three different management practitioners, working in three different organisations. In each instance the extracts clearly show that the practitioner has a clear understanding of the need to adopt a flexible approach to their management practice. In addition there is a clear understanding that the appropriateness of their approach is dependant upon the experience of the subordinate, the wider organisational circumstances and the effectiveness of their previous approaches with the individual concerned. Accordingly there is little doubt that these three individuals have a clear conceptual understanding of the theoretical work of Hersey & Blanchard in relation to ‘situational leadership’. However, they neither refer to these two scholars, nor use the term ‘situational leadership’, nor refer to the model that illustrates this theory. The relevant interview extracts are reproduced below :

> “So the managerial challenges have been taking them by the hand and leading them through this and trying to get their trust and their will, goodwill, but also getting them actually to start performing, start doing some tasks, and I’m still having … um … what I’d call a reasonably serious challenge with one particular individual who is digging heels in a little. I still think some of that is about … um … that individual’s personal panic, so I’ve got some work to do in terms of coaching that person, … um … but its now bordering on an issue for me, in terms of OK, perhaps I need to get a little bit less soft (laugh) and start … um … performance managing”.
>
> [O1I2]

> "He's, you know, what he's trying to do is right, he just always goes about it completely the wrong way. Um … and I guess initially I thought I would, I would tackle it in quite a traditional way than what I might have done before, … um … which was performance management, probably, and …um … historically with my operations roles I, you know, I've often done roles where I've managed people, where I've actually done the role in the first place so you know, I've worked my way up through organisations. I've always been someone who's given a lot of answers, you know, you need to do this in that way, or you need to do this in this way, or come to me and I'll tell you how to solve that problem. And I guess I actively, probably in the last three or four months, I've tried to change my approach with this person um… and, you know, just tried to be a lot more coaching in my style which is not …. which I can do, again, it depends, you know, its very, when you're line manager its very different to any other person so actually, I find adopting a coaching role, some people are really easy, but I knew it was going to be a challenge here and its been quite … I've had to invest a lot more time. Some of it's paid off but I feel like I've scratched the surface, probably could have done another, you know, few months with him to feel like I was actually getting anywhere. It's a bit like, you know, he's got some fundamental … um… ways he works and behaves that are going to be quite difficult to uproot and understand and get out. So I've scratched the surface I guess. But I think what I recognised is I would have to change the way that I worked to get the best out of him".
>
> [O2I4]

> "I have people on my team that are experienced, one of them is a manager of people, … er … and there's only one person on my team that is what we call a junior person because she's a placement student. So OK, with her, I have to have a slightly different approach, more direct and a lot more close coaching, because that's what she needs, but some of the other, other people on my team, that's not what they need, because of their experience. Um … so that's made me a little bit, you know, trying to think of what would be the best approach with them and the key for me is I have, I have to listen to what they have to say. A top down approach doesn't work with a lot of the people I work with".
>
> [O4I1]

A further and unrelated, substantial passage of verbatim interview transcription, this time provided by an MBA studying practitioner, describes the process of conceptualisation operating in the context of an MBA lecture. This extract clearly shows the student - practitioner gaining sufficient understanding of the theory, which is being presented at the lecture, to meet their requirements and turning their attention to the processes of conceptualising and synthesising. Once again the relevant interview extracts are reproduced below :

> "Whilst there are many theorists out there, with many theories, but … they all support practice. So I'm not, … I'm, … I wouldn't think that I draw on anybody in particular in terms of what I would … you know, leadership or anything like that. But, … what, … what takes me forward is the understanding of the concepts. Erm, … and, … but also being able to look at, … look at, … look at them and say, 'Yes that fits in with what I am trying to do, but doesn't necessarily completely fit in'. I might have to draw on somebody else's theory to support that, … and whilst, you know, … um … certain lecturers at college enthuse about certain writers, you know, I'm very much more about looking at the wider picture … and picking out, … what's good, what's good for me to use

> at that particular time. And I'm not, … I'm not a big model person, … erm … my brain doesn't really think in models, as such, … I don't think".
>
> [M2H3]

It is apparent from the first three extracts [O1I2, O2I4 & O4I1] that these three managers clearly understand the central 'concept' that underpins the Hersey & Blanchard theory and model of 'situational leadership'. This is the 'concept' that managers need to adopt a flexible, adaptive style of management that reflects, amongst other things, the individual concerned, the nature of the particular challenges that are being faced and the nature of the wider organisational environment. In addition, these managers also show a clear understanding of the kind of changes in managerial style, tone and manner that Hersey & Blanchard suggest in their model. Indeed, they specifically talk about the potential need to move from a supportive, encouraging, coaching style to a tougher, more directive style of performance management. Thus, the practitioners are managing by reference to the 'concept' of adaptive - flexibility, but they are doing so without any direct reference to either the Hersey & Blanchard theory or the related model. In addition, they are not electing to explain their understanding and use of adaptive - flexibility by reference to the obvious, short hand, nomenclature of 'situational leadership'.

However, it is important to make clear that this observation makes no claims regarding how these individuals came to acquire their insight regarding adaptive - flexibility. They could have worked it out for themselves. Equally they could have acquired this understanding through their participation in a community of practitioners. However, they could also have acquired this understanding in a long forgotten academic setting, where they conceptualised the material that was of interest (in this instance adaptive - flexibility) and paid no attention to being able to actually reproduce the model, or to remembering the names of the academics, or to remembering the label of 'situational leadership'.

In addition, the subsequent extract [M2H3] shows a part - time MBA student who is clearly interested in 'understanding concepts' because she knows that these are what 'take her forward'. However, she also states that she has less interest in the 'writers' that 'certain lecturers enthuse about'.

Hence, when these four extracts [O1I2, O2I4, 04I1, M2H3] are combined with the previous example regarding delegation [M2W2], they provide strong corroborating evidence for the indexing outcome. This is that management can be characterised as a 'conceptual discipline' and that in its fundamental nature it is at least as 'conceptual', as it is either 'theoretical' or 'practical. It may also indicate that academic theory may exert an indirect influence over management practitioners, but that this influence occurs in the form of theoretical abstractions that are expressed in 'conceptual' terms.

In addition, as we have already seen in Section 2.8.1 of the literature review, the proposition that management can be characterised as a ‘conceptual discipline’ would appear to be congruent with the views of academics within the field of nursing. Indeed, collectively Rogers (1970), Hardy (1973), McFarlane (1977); Leddy (1998) and Orem (2001) all appear to view a wide range and variety of concepts; (i) as being an essential element in defining nursing practice, (ii) as being the fundamental building blocks upon which theory is built; and (iii) as providing a basis of theory which has ‘more to do with nursing practice than the previous obsession with medical diagnosis’. However, this scholarship suggests that ‘concepts’ are a precursor to the construction of sound theory; whilst the discoveries of this research project suggest that ‘concepts’ can also be abstractions of established theory. Of course these two alternatives may not be mutually exclusive. Thus, for academic researchers and theoreticians it would appear to be important to establish a relevant ‘conceptual’ basis for the formation of sound theory; whilst for management practitioners it would appear that the key task is to abstract relevant ‘concepts’ from their exposure to the teaching of formal academic theory?

However, a more generalised understanding of the role that concepts might play in helping individuals to understand their experiences is provided by Lakoff & Johnson (1980:116). They regard ‘language as providing data that can lead to general principles of understanding’ and they suggest that ‘such principles are often metaphoric in nature and involve understanding one kind of experience in terms of another kind of experience’.

Similarly, Hofstadter (2001: 500) suggests that thinking involves moving ‘fluidly from concept to concept’ and that this amounts to leaping ‘from one analogy bundle to another’. In addition, he describes ‘the relentless, lifelong process of chunking – taking ‘small’ concepts and putting them together into bigger and bigger ones, thus recursively building up a giant repertoire of concepts in the mind’. Finally, he concludes that :

> “Each person, as life progresses, develops a set of high level concepts that they tend to favour, and their perception is continually seeking to cast the world in terms of those concepts. The perceptual process is thus far from neutral or random, but rather it seeks, whenever possible, to employ high-level concepts that one is used to, that one believes in, that one is comfortable with, that are one’s pet themes”.
>
> (Page 522)

Once again, the discipline of nursing provides some useful and more generalised observations. Indeed, King (1971: 12) suggests that ‘concepts are abstract ideas that give meaning to our sense perceptions, permit generalisations, and tend to be stored in our memory for recall and use at a later time in new and different situations’. In addition, Rines & Montag (1976: 8) suggest that although concepts ‘are not laws or truths like principles, nor established propositions like theories’, they ‘are projections of ideas that can serve as guides’.

Furthermore, from the perspective of management consultancy Handley, Sturdy, Clark & Fincham (2005: 43) also suggest that ideas ‘are unproductive unless internalised or acted upon by individuals’ and that this involves a process in which ideas are both ‘made sense of’ and ‘conceptualised on the basis of what individuals already know and understand’. Similarly, from a business perspective Porras (2000: 3), as cited by Starkey & Madan (2001), suggests that senior ‘executives are experienced enough to understand that best practices come and go and that the only thing that really lasts is the conceptual underpinnings to current best practice’.

In addition, the literature review has previously demonstrated that management can be characterised; (i) as a high stimulus, rapid response environment; (ii) as a never ending series of contacts with people; (iii) as demanding, pressurised, time constrained, hectic and energy sapping; and (iv) as fragmented with an emphasis upon brevity. Thus, for management practitioners there would appear to be good reasons why it would be advantageous to focus upon the more generalised abstractions that might be provided by ‘concepts’, rather than the full, precise details of any formal academic theory itself. Equally, it would appear that it would be advantageous to focus upon the ‘gist’ of any formal academic inputs and the subsequent elaboration of these in a sophisticated way; rather than attempting to memorise these both in considerable detail and with great accuracy.

From a slightly different perspective the scholarship from such diverse fields as that which is related to metaphor, analogy, intuition and management consultancy suggests that the main advantage of experience is that it permits a ‘high level of abstraction’. Accordingly it seems at least plausible that there could be a relationship between this and the conceptualising process that this research study has suggested is at the heart of management. Clearly experience and ‘chunking’ (the process of taking ‘small’ concepts and putting them together into bigger and bigger ones) has at least the potential to provide management practitioners with the same kind of ‘high levels of abstraction’ that experienced chess players utilise to form ‘dynamic groupings defined by their strategic meanings’. It is this ability that enables chess players to subsequently ‘make good moves nearly instantaneously’ (Hofstadter, 2001: 501). Hence, from this perspective management would involve not only abstracting ‘concepts’ from an individual’s exposure to formal, academic teaching, but also the ability to conceptualise from experience?

Furthermore, the review of scholarship has also suggested that the human memory is an ‘adaptive system’ which is selective in the level of detail that it both stores and retrieves. In addition, we have seen that ‘gist’ based information is critical to the task of non-literal categorisation and that it frees human beings from being over-burdened by massive quantities of trivial information (Schacter, 2001; Bjork & Bjork, 1998 & McClelland, 1995).

Hence, there are strong reasons why management practice should be founded upon 'conceptual' understandings; rather than the detailed application of formal, academic theories and models. Equally there are strong reasons why the 'gist' of the academic theories, that underpin so much of formal management education, is sufficient to underpin managerial practice, if not academic scholarship.

Hence, the key requirements for the appropriation of any new scholarship would appear to be that this should be congruent with a practitioner's pre - existing experience; that it should be conceptualised at an appropriately high level of abstraction; and that it should be 'chunked', encoded and elaborated so that it is organised and consolidated into the structure of the individual's long term memory, in the kind of sophisticated way that makes its subsequent retrieval more likely.

Summary

The intertextual analysis of the interview extracts has suggested that that management can be characterised as a 'conceptual discipline' and that in its fundamental nature, it is at least as 'conceptual' as it is either 'theoretical', or 'practical'. The proposition that management can be characterised as a 'conceptual discipline' has been supported by corroborating data obtained from the case study analysis of the verbatim interview extracts.

In addition, a review of scholarship associated with the discipline of nursing has shown a wide range of concepts that have been regarded as essential building blocks for both theory and practice. A similar review of the diverse scholarship associated with fields such as metaphor, analogy, intuition and management consultancy has suggested that management practitioners also need to conceptual from experience. Furthermore, a review of the scholarship associated with the 'adaptive' aspects of human memory has identified advantages that would accrue from a 'gist' based approach to learning and remembering.

Accordingly, this research study concludes that at the heart of the management experience is the appropriation of ideas and concepts, rather than theories and models. Whilst, in part such concepts may be abstracted from the teaching of formal academic theory, there is probably also a need to conceptualise from practical experience.

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter has shown that there is little, if any, evidence of the covert, subconscious appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

However, this chapter has found strong evidence to support the proposition that that management can be characterised as a ‘conceptual discipline’ and that in its fundamental nature, it is at least as ‘conceptual’ as it is either ‘theoretical’, or ‘practical’. In addition, it has also been possible to identify some established scholarly insights, from a variety of disciplines, that have provided additional confirmatory support for this unexpected outcome.

Accordingly, it has been concluded that at the heart of the management experience is the appropriation of ideas and concepts, rather than theories and models.

Chapter 6

Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will seek (i) to provide an overview of the key discoveries from this study; (ii) to present the overarching model that results from the discoveries that have been made; (iii) to highlight the linkages between the discoveries of this research study and existing scholarship; (iv) to reflect upon the methodology and methods and to consider some limitations of the work that has been undertaken; (v) to identify some implications for professional practice; and (vi) to make some suggestions as to how this work might be taken forward (Rudestam & Newton, 2001; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988).

In accordance with the views expressed by Wolcott (2001: 120) the discussion will avoid referring to ‘findings’ on the grounds that this expression is more congruent with a quantitative approach to research.

6.2 Key discoveries

This research study has confirmed that the interviewees’ most significant learning took place in the moments of confusion, perplexity and doubt when their recognition processes are unable to help them. Typical of these occasions were the classical ‘rites of passage’ and times of ‘genuine hardship’. In terms of their working lives such moments translated into experiences of ‘professional discontinuity’.

This research study has also found that even in relation to their most significant managerial challenges the more formal, more academic theories and models about management exerted little, if any, overt influence over the interviewees. Indeed, even in the most challenging of circumstances their first recourse was to their experience, instinct, intuition and recognition processes. Where this failed to provide an immediate way forward they utilised a fairly chaotic process of self reflection, deconstruction and reconstruction. By this means the interviewees would seek to build an approach that had an adequate prospect of dealing with their concerns. Where appropriate, this process of discernment would be combined with ‘trial and error’. By this means, an incremental approach would be taken towards implementation and a whole range of hard and soft measures would be used to monitor progress. At least initially, the criteria for success could be very small. This included that the situation should deteriorate no further. Where both recognition and personal reflection failed to identify a viable approach, the interviewees turned to their fellow practitioners. This involved a whole range of trusted peers, bosses, subordinates, mentors, role models and confidential advisers recruited via their extensive personal networks. It also included personal friends and family members with relevant experience and expertise.

In addition, this research study found that there was no evidence of classical decision - making, through which an individual seeks to identify all of the potential options and alternatives, all of the associated benefits and risks and to then evaluate the 'best' course of action. For a significant minority of the interviewees, their self-sufficiency, decision - building approach to identifying a way forward, involved the application of a clear set of personal values. These were used both as a compass to steer by and as a means of ruling out some potential approaches.

On this basis it would appear reasonable for management to be characterised as a 'craft' that is learnt through lifelong collaboration with other practitioners.

However, some of the interviews provided evidence that the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models had retrospectively provided confirmatory support for some of an interviewees long standing practices.

It had been anticipated that it was when an individual was confronted with the most challenging situations of their entire career, that they might consult the more formal, more academic ideas about management. In part, this expectation was based upon evidence from the medical profession. Here it has been established that, in relation to their most challenging cases, doctors augment experience and recognition processes with references to their medical text books (Patel, Arocha & Kaufman, 1999). However, a key issue underpins any assumption that parallels can be drawn between management and medicine. This is the notion that it is realistic for management to be regarded as an 'applied science'. Of course a corollary of this is that within management there would need to be a consensus regarding the existence of an appropriate 'body of knowledge'; the circumstances in which it should be applied and the precise method of its application. However, within the discipline of management, there is no equivalent of a 'gate keeping' body such as the General Medical Council. In addition, the insights of 'systems theory' suggest that higher levels of complexity exist within social systems such as organisations, when compared to systems such as human physiology (Boulding, 1956; Wilby, 2006). A corollary of this understanding is that the outcomes of any particular intervention would be much harder to predict for a manager, than it would be for a medical practitioner.

At this juncture it is probably important to acknowledge that there are scholars who appear to conclude that the discipline of management can be regarded as a 'design science' (Simon, 1996). However, even if the various caveats, regarding the need for ‘field tested’, ‘grounded’ and ‘heuristic technological rules’ are accepted, this still results in management having a dependence upon an accepted body of research based, theoretical knowledge. In addition, the ‘design science’ approach also assumes that the essential nature of management is similar to that of both engineering and medicine (Van Aken, 2005: 23 – 28). The discoveries of this thesis provide little, if any, support for these propositions.

Inevitably there were exceptions to the general discoveries of this research project. However, it is important to emphasise that evidence of these exceptions was provided by only a small minority of the interviewees. In addition, each was able to provide details of only a single exceptional instance over an entire career in management. These exceptions involved (i) either personal or institutional barriers that effectively prevented the kind of widespread consultation with trusted peers, mentors, role models and confidential advisers that otherwise would have occurred; (ii) the coincidental attendance at either an educational or a training event, where relevant and useful material happened to be presented; (iii) the use of models in a metaphorical way to describe significant organisational change and the implications of this in both personal and organisational terms; and (iv) the use of a limited range of models by individuals whose organisational role included facilitating changes in managerial approach, frequently in support of a managerial ‘cultural norm’.

When asked to explain the apparently limited role that the formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models had played, in helping them to address their most significant managerial challenges; a significant minority of the interviewees suggested that the influence “must be” covert, indirect, subconscious, or even subliminal. This proposition was examined by a subsequent stage of the research.

On the basis of a content analysis of the verbatim interview transcripts it was concluded that the overall influence of the thinking of the 20th century’s ‘management gurus’ was weak. A subsequent ‘intertextual’ analysis of interview transcripts concluded that, the discourse, dialogue and language of the interviewees, could be indexed to four ‘domains’. These were the theoretical, the conceptual, the tactical and the practical. In addition, it was concluded that at the heart of the management process was a discourse, dialogue and discussion regarding concepts and ideas (the ‘conceptual’ domain’) and attitudes and behaviours (the ‘tactical’ domain). In the light of this it was concluded that management could be characterised as a ‘conceptual discipline’. Furthermore, it was concluded that in its fundamental nature, management was at least as ‘conceptual’ as it was either ‘theoretical’, or ‘practical’.

In addition, this research also found some evidence that, on an occasional basis, this core management process was augmented by the inclusion of theories and models (the theoretical domain) and of tools and techniques (the practical domain). However, in both of these instances there were special features that appeared to be a pre - requisite for their inclusion. In the case of the theoretical domain the inclusions appeared to be abstractions that represented the ‘gist’ of the theory or model; rather than a comprehensive and completely accurate version. In the case of the practical domain there appeared to be at least some ‘tools and techniques’, that had their ‘genetic roots’ in academia rather than practice. In these instances the pre - requisite for their inclusion into a practitioners repertoire appeared to be a requirement for the ‘tool or technique’ to be a highly practical representation of the theory or model, and not the theory or model per se.

In support of these latter discoveries the research study has noted that, within the field of nursing, a wide range and variety of concepts appear to have been regarded as; (i) being an essential element in defining nursing practice; (ii) the fundamental building blocks upon which theory is built; and (iii) providing a basis of theory which has ‘more to do with nursing practice than the previous obsession with medical diagnosis’ (Rogers, 1970; King, 1971; Hardy, 1973; Rines & Montag, 1976; McFarlane, 1977).

In addition, the research study has noted that management can be characterised as a high stimulus, rapid response environment that is fragmental, demanding, pressurised, time constrained and hectic (Mintzberg, 1973; Mintzberg, 1989; Stewart, 1983).

Furthermore, the research study has noted that the human memory is an ‘adaptive system’, which is selective in the level of detail that it both stores and retrieves. Finally, it has noted; (i) ‘that gist’ based information is critical to the task of non - literal categorisation; and that (ii) it frees human beings from being over - burdened by massive quantities of trivial information (Schacter, 2001; Bjork & Bjork, 1998 & McClelland, 1995).

Accordingly, it has been concluded that there are strong, corroborative explanations for why management should be founded upon ‘conceptual’ understandings; rather than the detailed application of academic theories and models per se. These insights also suggest that a ‘gist’ approach to management education is sufficient to underpin managerial practice; if not academic scholarship.

Hence, this research study has concluded that at the heart of the management experience is the appropriation of ideas and concepts; rather than theories and models.

6.3 The overarching model

The intertextual analysis that was undertaken in relation to the verbatim transcripts of the semi - structured interviews with management practitioners has revealed that at the heart of the managerial experience is a discourse, dialogue and discussion that can be indexed to both a 'conceptual' and a 'tactical' domain. Within the 'conceptual' domain are 'concepts' and 'ideas'. Both act as a metaphorical 'compass to steer by' and they also help with a practitioner's sense - making and decision - making routines. Within the 'tactical' domain is a repertoire of the 'approaches' that a practitioner may take, in order to address the challenges that they are facing. Also within the 'tactical' domain is the panoply of 'behaviours' that a practitioner will need to adopt, in order to effect the changes that they are seeking to make. In addition, this domain contains a catalogue of the 'unhelpful' behavioural responses that they are seeking to avoid triggering, in their subordinates, peers and bosses; as the 'unintended consequences' of their actions.

Thus, in its essential nature, the discourse, dialogue and discussion both within and between these two domains can be seen as being both cyclical and never ending, as incidents, issues, challenges, circumstances and individuals rise and fall upon a manager's 'radar screen'.

In part, the discourse, dialogue and discussion both within and between these two domains is an 'internal conversation' that each management practitioner holds with themselves. It is via this reflective process that a manager appears to process the data from their environmental sensors; decide which challenges and issues they are going to prioritise and settles upon the way in which they are going to approach those issues that are concerning them. It would appear that it is this never ending, cyclical process that is at the heart of the extra - ordinarily extensive, personally intrusive and somewhat chaotic managerial experience of ruminating and reflecting.

However, it is when this extensive, if somewhat unstructured, process of self - reflection is unable to identify a way forward that the discourse, dialogue and discussion of these two domains becomes an external; rather than an internal conversation. In these situations and circumstances the discourse, dialogue and discussion includes peers, bosses, subordinates, role models, mentors and other trusted advisors.

It also seems clear that some of the 'conceptual domain' is populated by ideas and concepts that represent the personal values that have been acquired during an individual's life journey; that some are acquired through an individuals participation in communities of practice; and that occasionally, some are appropriated in 'gist form', as abstractions of more formal, more academic theory; following an individual's direct exposure to this.

In addition, it seems clear that occasionally a practical expression of a formal academic theory can also be captured as either a 'tool or technique'. Accordingly, such practical expressions of a formal academic theory can populate the 'practical domain' and thereby be added to a practitioner's personal repertoire of 'tools and techniques'. Examples of this might be stakeholder analysis, or risk management analysis both of which could be regarded as 'technique' based expressions, of a particular project management model. Similarly, the balanced scorecard could be regarded as a 'tool' based expression, of a particular strategic planning theory and model.

Accordingly, a synthesis of the discoveries of this research project and some established academic insights, from a variety of different disciplines, results in this overarching model for the appropriation of ideas and concepts; rather than theories and models. Thus, it is an individual's ability to conceptualise that is the most significant factor in determining whether the process of appropriation is successful.

Hence, on the basis of this analysis, management has it's own 'ways of knowing' that are built around theoretical abstractions, conceptual thinking, reflexivity, social interaction, experience and practice. This would appear to resonate with the description of an 'epistemic culture' (Knorr Centina, 1999).

6.4 Linkages to scholarship

The extant literature that is concerned with 'the realities of management' (Carlson, 1951; Stewart, 1967; Mintzberg, 1973); 'the diffusion of innovations' (Rogers, 1962) and 'fashion - setting theory' (Abrahamson, 1991 & 1996; Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999) all served to provide some important contextual information. In addition they played an important role in dispelling some important potential misunderstandings that are common in this field of enquiry. However, unsurprisingly, they were able to provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

In the light of this the scope of the literature review was widened to encompass other, more broadly based scholarship. This included, but was not limited to, 'reflective thinking' (Dewey, 1933); 'self theory' (Rogers, 1969); 'meaning - perspectives' (Mezirow, 1977); 'trustworthy recipies' (Schutz, 1964) 'scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema' (Bartlett, 1967; Koffka, 1935; Abelson, 1976; Minsky, 1975; Louis, 1980); 'memory systems', (Baddeley, 1986; Craik & Tulving, 1975); 'tacit knowledge' (Polanyi, 1962; Nonaka 2007); 'metaphor and analogy' (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Hofstadter, 2001); 'sense – making' (Weick, 1995); 'requisite variety' (Ashby, 1956); decision – making (Klein, 1993); 'intuition', (Hofstadter, 2001, Hodgkinson, Langan-Fox & Sadler-Smith, 2008); 'action research' (Lewin, 1948) and 'communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger; 1991). However, whilst this broader range of interdisciplinary scholarship provided interesting and important insights regarding the processes that might be at work; the extent to which these might be discovered within the context of a population of management practitioners was unclear. Hence, the objective of this section of the thesis is to highlight the linkages between the extant scholarship and the discoveries of this research project.

However, it is also important to make clear that this research project has provided evidence to support the concerns that some scholars have voiced regarding both ‘diffusion theory’ and ‘fashion – setting theory’. In particular, it has provided evidence that when the interviewees were unable to identify, with sufficient confidence, a viable approach to their managerial challenges their recourse was to their fellow practitioners. In addition, the interviewees confirmed that their most important ‘resource’ was people, rather than business books and journal articles. In addition, it was only if the issue was organisationally significant and the individual was sufficiently senior that any consideration would be given to the involvement of management consultants. Even then the preferred mechanism would be to approach an individual, previously known to the practitioner, who also had a proven track record in management. Hence, there was little, or no, evidence that the interviewees were the rather gullible consumers of fads and fashions proposed by consultants (Clark & Salaman, 1998; Clark, 2003; Clark & Greatbatch, 2004; Mazza, Alvarez & Comas, 2001; Heller, 2002).

In addition, the case study analysis concluded that the overt influence of management theory over the decision making of the interviewees was a genuinely rare and wholly exceptional occurrence. Furthermore the content analysis, that utilised the bespoke compendium of 450 terms, confirmed that the influence of the thinking of the 20th century’s ‘management gurus’ over the interviewees was weak (Thomson, 2001; Daft & Wiginton, 1979; Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Mintzberg, 2004; Pearce, 2004).

Finally the textual comparison of the interview transcripts with some strategic documents from four of the employing organisations concluded that the language used by the interviewees had more in common with their fellow practitioners than with that of their employing organisations. This suggests that the key potential channel of diffusion that might be provided by either an organisation’s internal communication processes or the personal sponsorship of an organisation’s most senior executives was also a weak source of influence.

However, in relation to learning by adults this research study provides strong evidence that in moments of ‘hesitation and doubt’ (Dewey, 1933), when ‘trustworthy recipes’ (Schutz, 1964) are unable to provide the necessary guidance, the interviewees adopt a process of ‘emergent decision – building’. The interviewees described this process by terms such as ‘gradual, evolving, discovering, emergent and considered’. The study also provided strong evidence that this process of ‘emergent decision – building’ included extensive, unstructured and somewhat chaotic personal reflection by the interviewees. It seems plausible that a key part of this ‘churning’ process could be concerned with the processes of elaboration, encoding and consolidation that is a key factor in the effective storage and subsequent retrieval of long term memories (Craik & Tulving, 1975). However, it also seems plausible that an aspect of this ‘churning’ could be associated with the need to both ‘attribute meaning’ to and to ‘redress surprise’ (Weick, 1995). Finally, it seems possible that this ‘churning’ could be concerned with the process of deconstructing previous experiences and reconstructing them to meet the requirements of a different situation (Bartlett, 1967).

In addition, the research study provided evidence for the role of theory in providing retrospective validation of a practitioner’s previously established practices. This appears to support the proposition that the provision of theory can be an important ‘after - the - fact’ element in adult learning (Mezirow, 1977).

The research study also provided support for the proposition that a key aspect of learning by adults is the acquisition of new ‘meaning perspectives’ (Mezirow, 1977). In this regard the interviewees were asked to identify the situations in which, as adults, they had learnt the most. The interviewees identified three main sources of significant learning; (i) ‘rites of passage’, such as leaving the parental home, university, gap year travelling, birth of children, death of parents; (ii) ‘personal hardship’, such redundancy, illness, insolvency; and (iii) ‘professional discontinuity’, such as being placed in situations where their experience was unable to help them and their environmental antenna were unable to work (Handy, 2002).

In addition, the research study also provided some support for the proposition that metaphor and analogy are not just linguistic terms, but have a relationship to both cognition and long term memory. From this perspective metaphor and analogy are methods both of perceiving and thinking and of connecting new information to existing memory structures (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1986; Hofstadter, 2001). The, admittedly limited, evidence for this concerned a single, very senior individual who was seeking to make highly significant, strategic changes to the organisation. As part of his presentations to staff, this individual had utilised a strictly limited range of management models. The utilisation of these models could have been a means of giving his ideas both intellectual respectability and academic authority. However, it also seemed clear that it provided the employees with both a way to envisioning the future and a language in which the proposed changes could be discussed.

In relation to decision – making this research study provides strong evidence for ‘recognition’ based decision – taking (Klein, 1993). The interviewees described this by terms such as ‘experience, instinct, experiential, common sense, subconscious, intuitive, informal, reactive, immediate and practical’. In addition, outside of special situations, such as investment appraisal decisions, there was little, if any, evidence of classical, decision tree, decision – making in which all of the options are identified and weighted according to their relative advantage and disadvantage.

In relation to the proposition that management is neither a ‘science’, nor an ‘applied science’ (Mintzberg, 2004), this research study found even in moments of ‘hesitation, perplexity and doubt’ (Dewey, 1933), in relation to their most challenging situations and circumstances, that there was little, if any, evidence of the interviewees making an obvious, direct, conscious and overt usage of theory. In addition, there was little, if any, evidence of theory being used in a predictive way.

In addition, this research study provided support, at least in a generalised way, for the importance of ‘communities of practice’ (Lave & Wenger; 1991). Indeed when ‘recognition’ based decision – taking and ‘unstructured, slightly chaotic personal reflections’ were either unable identify a viable approach, or when the practitioner had sufficient concerns regarding the viability of the approach that they had identified, their favoured recourse was to their fellow practitioners. This involved collaboration with peers, subordinates, bosses, former colleagues, established mentors and other role models and occasionally discussion with organisationally appointed facilitators. In addition, when asked to identify the resources that they drew upon to sustain them in their managerial challenges, the overwhelmingly consistent response of the interviewees was that by far the most significant of these was people.

Finally, the scholarship relating to the discipline of nursing suggests that concepts and conceptual thinking are a necessary pre - curser to the development of sustainable theory (Rogers, 1970; Hardy, 1973; McFarlane, 1977; Leddy, 1998; Orem, 2001). However, this research suggests that concepts and conceptual thinking are also abstractions representing the ‘gist’ of an established theory. It is these abstractions that inform and guide managerial practice (Schacter, 2001).

6.5 Final reflections upon methodology and methods

Firstly, it may be worth reflecting upon the fact that this research study has been influenced, in a fairly significant way, by ‘systems thinking’. This influence is specifically detectable in the references to ‘requisite variety’ (Ashby, 1956) and in the reference to the hierarchy of systems that is proposed by the ‘skeleton of science’ (Boulding, 1956). However, in a more general way it is also detectable in the scholarship that is associated with Daft & Wiginton (1979) and Weick (1987).

In addition, from the most general of perspectives, it seems clear that personal factors such as the age, education, experience, background, character, personality, personal manner, voice and even the personal appearance of a researcher; all have the ability to influence the rapport that can be established with any interviewee. It is also clear that the precise nature of this highly transitory relationship will cause certain information to be imparted and revealed. However, a corollary of this is that such factors will also cause certain information to be withheld and concealed. In addition, each of the highly personal exchanges between any interviewer and any interviewee will be influenced both by the unique life stories of the two participating individuals and the wider social setting in which they now find themselves.

Thus, it follows from these understandings, that each of the interviews, that form the basis of this research study, is a completely unique exchange between the interviewer and the interviewee. Accordingly the precise replication of these research interviews will never be a possibility. Hence, the trustworthiness and authenticity of the discoveries that have been made will be dependent upon the respect, diligence, integrity and competence with which the information has been both obtained and subsequently treated.

More specifically, as has previously been discussed, a key potential limitation of the work that has been undertaken is the fact that it is based upon the critical incident technique. By its very nature, this technique invites an interviewee firstly to recall and subsequently to discuss, historical events. Although it is common place for the critical incident technique to be used in the context of 'self - reporting' by participants, the technique is clearly limited by the accuracy of an interviewee's memory.

Another obvious limitation is the relatively small samples sizes used by this research study. In fact 39 semi-structured recorded interviews were conducted. Cumulatively these lasted a total of nearly 35 hours, provided information in relation to 160 critical incidents and resulted in verbatim transcripts totalling 355,000 words. Although the scale of interviewing was consistent with the guidance provided for this kind of qualitative research study, the samples sizes are undoubtedly small by comparison with those that might be typical for a quantitative study.

In addition, although the initial cohort of interviewees was provided by organisations from the public, the private, the not for profit and the charitable sectors of the economy; all but one of the organisations were located in the West Midlands region of UK. Similarly, all but one of the members of the subsequent cohort of part time MBA interviewees was drawn from the same academic institution, which utilised the fairly standard teaching methods. These included lectures, case studies, delegate discussions, personal study and assignments. Accordingly this research study has utilised 'theoretical' generalisation (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 264) to make wider inferences of the more general applicability of the insights that have been obtained.

Finally, it may be appropriate to also consider whether the key discoveries of this research study are 'real' or whether they could be some kind of 'spurious artefact' that has arisen as a result of the particular methodology and methods that have been used.

In this regard the three most significant discoveries would appear to be (i) that the more formal, more academic theories and models play little, if any, direct part in determining how these interviewees approached their most significant managerial challenges; (ii) that management can be characterised as a 'conceptual discipline'; and (iii) that in its fundamental nature, management is at least as 'conceptual' as it is either 'theoretical', or 'practical'.

In relation to the first of these discoveries it needs to be reiterated that the semi - structured, recorded interviews were based upon the critical incident technique. As a result of this the interviewees were invited to discuss their key managerial challenges, the methods that they had utilised to deal with each of these challenges and the source for the approach that they had adopted. It was only at the very end of the interview, and in the light of the information that that they had already provided, that each participant was asked to identify the role that theory had played in their decision making. Since the interviewees had no prior knowledge of the overall interview structure, it is implausible that they could have tailored their interview replies in response to an agenda that was unknown to them.

In relation to the second and third of the key discoveries it is at least possible that the very fact of utilising the critical incident technique, with its particular format and structure, could have caused the interviewees to be more reflective than otherwise would have been the case. It is also possible that the detailed questioning, as to why they had gone about dealing with situations in the way that they had described, could have caused the interviewees to adopt 'conceptual' language which was untypical. However, the interview transcripts clearly show that the interviewees spend a very significant proportion of their time reflecting upon and 'mulling over' their organisational responsibilities. Indeed, an important discovery of this research study was that it was difficult to overstate the extent to which this kind of compulsive reflection intruded upon the social and domestic lives of the interviewees. Furthermore, the interview transcripts also demonstrate that, when the interviewees were unclear regarding the approach that they should adopt, their first recourse was to discuss the situation with trusted peers, bosses, subordinates, mentors, role models, confidential advisers and even friends and family, with relevant experience and expertise. Thus, for any potential challenge regarding 'spurious effects' to be sustainable, it would be necessary to demonstrate that, when discussing these matters during their interview, each of the interviewees had adopted a completely different form and type of language to that which they would normally use. This is regarded as implausible. In addition, were it to be true, that the use of the critical incident technique within the context of a semi - structured interview had caused the participants to conceptualise *per se;* then this would have affected all of the many thousands of research studies that have utilised this technique since 1954.

With the benefit of hindsight there were some practical arrangements that both worked less than smoothly and consumed far more time and energy than had been anticipated. The first of these issues involved gaining access to both the organisational sample and the sample of part time MBA senior managers. In order to organise the first it was necessary to utilise an extensive network of personal and institutional contacts and even then the response rate was poor. The second required personal contact with each of the cohorts at the University of Worcester and even then the response rate was mixed. Finally, it had been hoped that it might be possible to interview part time MBA students from other business schools. Unfortunately, although contact was made with a significant number of schools it proved impossible to recruit participants. The second issue concerned the use of data handling software. It seemed possible that this would assist with the indexing of the extracts from the verbatim interview transcripts and so training was obtained in the use of NVivo7 software. A significant amount of time was spent both in learning the key features of the software and in experimenting with how the software might be utilised. Ultimately it was decided that the software was more of a hindrance than a help and that, in some kind of strange and unexpected way, it acted as a barrier between the researcher and the data, which obstructed familiarisation. Accordingly usage of the software was discontinued and the indexing was done by hand.

6.6 Implications for professional practice

The key discoveries have been that management can be characterised as a ‘conceptual’ discipline and that at the heart of the management experience is the appropriation of ideas and concepts, rather than theories and models. These would appear to have significant implications for research, teaching, learning and practice.

Firstly, the continuing discussions regarding rigour versus relevance and theory versus practice would become less significant. Indeed, an implication of this research study is that the relevant image is not that of the extreme polarities of either rigour, or relevance; or even that of theory or practice; but rather that of a middle ground of abstraction and conceptualisation. A corollary of this is that researchers and educators would need to appreciate that their key task was not to impart knowledge of theory and models per se; but rather to facilitate the identification of the concepts and abstractions that underpin these theories and models. It is these abstractions and concepts that would form the more portable ‘ideas and concepts’ to which the practitioners would refer in the midst of their practice. Indeed, a related implication of these research discoveries is that business schools could choose to see ‘teaching’ the ability to ‘conceptualise’ as a key part of their role. However, this is to assume that ‘conceptualising’ is a ‘teachable’ competence?

In addition, the practitioners would need to appreciate that their key task was not to appropriate theory and models per se and that neither was to simply acquire a range of tools and techniques that would inevitably form an important aspect of their managerial competence. However, it would be to understand that a key aspect of their calling was to participate in the difficult, relentless, lifelong task of abstraction, elaboration, encoding and ‘chunking’ that would underpin the process of ‘building up a giant repertoire of concepts in the mind’ (Hofstadter, 2001: 500). In addition, academic teachers might seek to facilitate this essential, ruminative process; and business schools might be one of the venues in which such rumination could take place.

However, an implication of ‘systems theory’ (Ashby, 1956; Boulding, 1956) would appear to be that an organisations size could be an indicator of organisational complexity. In addition, a corollary of this would appear to be that any increase in organisational complexity would require an increasingly sophisticated management practitioner. This in turn would appear to place a premium upon a management practitioner’s ability to conceptualise?

Thus, from this perspective a management practitioner’s core competence would become that of absorbing ambiguous and equivocal environmental information and by ‘chunking’, elaboration and encoding to process this to a sufficiently ‘high level of abstraction’, that ‘dynamic groupings’ could be formed and the ‘strategic meanings’ detected. By this means ‘good moves’ would become almost instantaneously apparent (Hofstadter, 2001: 500). In addition, each experience would be organised and consolidated into the structure of an individual’s long term memory in the way most likely to facilitate its subsequent retrieval.

This would appear to make an individual’s ability to perform these operations a critical success factor for a career management. Indeed a corollary of this would appear to be that the more senior the managerial role and the larger and more complex the organisation; the more critical this competence would become. In effect this ‘natural selection’ in the face of environmental variations creates ‘an evolutionary theory of conceptual management’.

6.7 Further work

A clear implication of the recent Hodgkinson, Langan-Fox & Sadler-Smith (2008) journal article regarding ‘intuition’ is that, in the long term, a definitive and comprehensive understanding of the processes that lie behind the kind of ‘chunking’, ‘gisting’, encoding and elaboration that have been described; probably lies with social cognitive neuroscience and functional magnetic resonance imaging.

However, in the short term there are also ways in which this kind of qualitative or even quantitative research study can make an important contribution. Indeed, in view of the proposition made in the previous section that a critical success factor could be an individual's ability to 'chunk'', elaborate and encode experiences into an 'appropriately high level of abstraction' it would obviously be helpful if a means could be established to measure this. The most obvious way in which this could be attempted would be to examine the learning styles of management practitioners. This might reveal that some management practitioners are more adept at abstracting and conceptualising than others. However, learning styles is a contested body of research.

In this regard Reynolds (1997: 128 & 115) laments that the 'prominence of learning style theory in management development is in spite of the considerable lack of research support for the concept' and notes that 'the concept of learning style is virtually taken for granted in management development, in spite of considerable doubts about its validity from within cognitive psychology and education'. Furthermore, Reynolds (1997: 128) concludes both that 'clearly there is a case for learning styles and other versions of labelling to be discontinued' and that even as 'a convenient way of introducing the subject' they are 'hazardous because of the superficial attractions of labelling and categorising in a world suffused with uncertainties'. In addition, in a more recent study that seeks to 'sift the wheat from the chaff', Coffield, Moseley, Hall & Ecclestone (2004: 61 & 55) confirm that 'after more than 30 years research, no consensus has been reached about the most effective instrument for measuring learning styles'. Finally, after examining 'in considerable detail' 13 different models of learning style they conclude that there is 'marked variability in quality among them'; that 'they are not all alike nor of equal worth'; that 'it matters fundamentally which instrument is chosen'; that 'the field is bedevilled with vested interests' and that 'the status of research in this field is not helped by the overblown claims of the developers and their enthusiastic devotees'.

Finally, the key discoveries of this research study could be and perhaps should be enhanced, developed and clarified; or simply subjected to further scrutiny and verification. The most obvious way in which this could be achieved would be to replace the dependence upon retrospective explanations provided by managers with an appropriately designed ethnographic study. Another way in which this could be achieved would be to either expand the sample sizes, or to use different, perhaps quantitative methods. In this regard, the key areas in which any additional work might focus are (i) the notion that management is a 'conceptual discipline; (ii) the suggestion that very little, if any, formal theory is appropriate in a direct way; and (iii) the proposition that, in so far as theory is appropriated at all, it is appropriated in 'gist' form.

However, any further work might also seek to focus upon the somewhat chaotic, processes of personal reflection and the contribution that these may make towards sense - making, decision - making, the encoding of memories and the abstracting of concepts.

6.8 Conclusions

This chapter has highlighted the key discoveries that have been made and has shown the linkages between these discoveries and the existing scholarship. In addition, the resulting model has been described and discussed in detail, together with some of the implications for professional practice.

In relation to the methodology and methods, some final high level reflections have been made and this includes explicit consideration of the potential for the discoveries to be a ‘spurious artefact’ of the methodology and the methods that have been used.

Finally the chapter suggests how aspects of this research could be developed and taken forward.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

This conclusion will seek (i) to comment upon the progress that has been made in relation to the original research aims and objectives; (ii) to comment upon both ‘originality’ and the ‘contribution that has been made to knowledge’; and (iii) to provide some concluding reflections upon the experience as a whole (Evans & Gruba, 2002; Thompson, 2005).

However, Wolcott (2001: 120) urges writers to ‘give serious thought to dropping the idea that your final chapter must lead to a conclusion or that the account must build toward a dramatic climax’. Indeed, his ‘suggestion for anyone new to academic writing is to work toward a conservative closing statement that reviews succinctly what has been attempted, what has been learned, and what new questions have been raised’. Finally, he suggests that writers in the qualitative tradition should avoid ‘striving for closure’ and that instead they should leave their readers ‘pondering the essential issues’. The spirit of Wolcott’s opinions will guide the ‘concluding reflections’ that are the content of this final chapter.

7.2 Progress against aim and objectives

The overarching research question that this thesis is seeking to address is the extent to which the generality of management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management.

Accordingly, the overall Aim was as follows:

To develop a model of the appropriation of management ideas, theories, concepts and models by individual management practitioners.

The model that is presented in Section 6.3 of this thesis meets the requirements of this overall Aim. In essence, the model proposes that managers appropriate concepts and ideas rather than theories and models and that accordingly management can be regarded as a conceptual discipline.

However, within this overall field of enquiry there were a number of specific, subsidiary areas of interest and these were reflected in the specific research objectives that are listed below.

Specific Objectives:

1. To identify the work situations and circumstances in which management practitioners have experienced their most significant learning

2. To establish the resources that management practitioners draw upon when deciding how to approach their most significant challenges.

3. To describe the nature of the decision making processes that management practitioners utilise when deciding how to approach their most significant challenges.

4. To assess the influence exerted by the thinking of the 20^{th} century's 'management gurus' in the course of these decision making processes.

5. To determine the role that the more formal, more academic ideas about management play in influencing these decision making processes.

6. To explain the nature of the generic processes by which management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management.

The discoveries of Section 4.2.10 meet the requirements of the first objective. These discoveries confirmed that management practitioners learn the most in situations in times of 'professional discontinuity', when their recognition processes are rendered ineffective.

The requirements of the second objective are met by the discoveries of Section 4.2.1, Section 4.2.2, Section 4.2.4 and 4.2.7. These discoveries showed that the primary resources that managers draw upon when addressing their most significant challenges are their experience, their personal values and their network of trusted colleagues and personal advisers.

The discoveries of Section 4.2.1, Section 4.2.2, Section 4.2.3, Section 4.2.5 and Section 4.2.7 meet the requirements of the third objective. These discoveries showed that management practitioners make decisions by processes that involve expert recognition, emergent decision – building, extensive personal reflection, the deconstruction and reconstruction of previous experiences and the advice of trusted colleagues and personal advisers.

The requirements of the fourth objective are met by the discoveries of the content analysis that was discussed in Section 5.2. These discoveries showed that the influence of the thinking of the 20^{th} century's 'management gurus' over the decision making processes was weak.

These general discoveries, when combined with both the specific discoveries of Section 4.2.8 regarding the retrospective role of theory in confirming established practices and the intertextual analysis of Section 5.3 meets the requirements of the fifth objective. These discoveries showed that influence of the more formal, more academic ideas about management over the decision making processes was also weak.

The discoveries of the intertextual analysis that were discussed in Section 5.3 meets the requirements of the sixth objective. These discoveries showed that managers appropriate concepts and ideas, rather than theory and models.

7.3 'Originality in research' and 'contribution to knowledge'

Cryer (2000: 190 – 195) suggests a number of ways in which it may be possible to demonstrate 'originality in research' and this template has guided this section of the thesis.

The review of the extant literature suggested that both 'diffusion theory' and 'fashion theory' were important in terms of both setting the scene and providing the context for the overall research study. In addition, the critical evaluation of both sets of literature proved to be an important part of dispelling some important potential misunderstandings that are common in this field of enquiry. Furthermore, these two sets of literature were both indicative of the starting place for the more detailed and more specific enquiries that followed and of the kind of personal intellectual journey of exploration and discovery that has been a key feature of the author's experience. However, perhaps unsurprisingly, neither was able to provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models.

Furthermore, whilst the broader range of interdisciplinary scholarship that has been considered provided interesting and important insights regarding the processes that might be at work; the extent to which these may be found within the particular circumstances of management practitioners remained unclear.

Finally, it became clear that the 'absent voices' were those of practicing senior managers explaining the part that the more formal, more academic theory, ideas, concepts and models play in helping them to discharge their organisational responsibilities.

Accordingly by attempting to address these issues this research study is ‘exploring the unknown’ and thereby meets this particular definition of originality.

Equally, the use of the critical incident technique, to explore with management practitioners both their decision making processes and the core rationale for their decisions, is genuinely rare and possibly unique. Accordingly, this meets the requirement for demonstrating originality in ‘tools, techniques and procedures’.

Furthermore, the creation of a bespoke compendium of 450 managerial ‘terms’, together with its subsequent use to investigate the covert influence of management gurus, is equally rare and almost certainly unique. In addition, the use of ‘intertextual’ analysis to investigate the covert influence of ideas, theories, concepts and models is similarly rare and almost certainly unique. Hence, the use of both these data analysis techniques demonstrates originality in ‘the use of data’.

It also seems clear that the substantive discoveries regarding overt influence, covert influence, the indexing of practitioner discourse to four domains, the core insights regarding management as a conceptual discipline, together with the overarching model for the appropriation of ideas and concepts, rather than theories and models; all demonstrate originality in ‘outcomes’.

Finally, it seems clear that the thesis contains scholarship that could form the basis for two, or perhaps even three peer reviewed journal articles. Indeed a paper has recently been submitted to the British Academy of Management for consideration for inclusion in the ‘knowledge and learning’ track of the conference in September 2010. In addition, a practitioner orientated article has been submitted to the Chartered Management Institute for consideration for publication in the September 2010 edition of their ‘Professional Manager’ magazine. Copies of these are included as, respectively, Appendix 10 and Appendix 11. Although further advice and guidance will be sought regarding the submission of ‘peer reviewed’ journal articles, the progress that has been made to date would suggest the ability to demonstrate originality as ‘potentially publishable’.

Accordingly, this research study would appear to meet at least five of the criteria proposed by Cryer (2000) as a means of demonstrating ‘originality’ in research.

7.4 Concluding reflections

The discoveries of this research project speak to three main audiences. To those with responsibility for the personal development of managers it is saying that practitioners learn most in times of ‘professional discontinuity’; when they are in an environment in which both their ‘recognition’ processes and their ‘trustworthy recipes’ are rendered ineffective. To those with responsibility for the education of managers it is saying that your role is not to teach management theory per se; but rather to facilitate the identification of the concepts that are embedded within those theories. To the practitioners it is saying that your role is not to appropriate management theory; but to participate in the lifelong task of building a ‘repertoire of concepts’ within your long term memory via a process that involves ‘chunking’, abstraction, elaboration and encoding.

As well as both providing details of and commenting upon the discoveries of an academic research study, there have doubtless been occasions when this thesis has hinted at a very considerable intellectual journey. In the beginning the issue of the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models was seen through a lens shaped by notions of both technical rationality and scientific determinism. From these perspectives management was seen as a applied science that, much like medicine, was founded upon an accepted body of academic knowledge. Indeed early versions of the research proposal spoke of the need to “explore the processes that operate at the boundary between the ‘demand’ side and the ‘supply’ side of the appropriation process”. This was a view of appropriation that was both linear and binary. It is also an interpretation that the author would not now wish to propose.

In addition, during the course of this research study it became clear that the subject matter lay at the meeting place of a number of different disciplines, traditions and sources of insight. Accordingly the research has needed to draw upon a diverse range of scholarship that was much broader than was originally envisaged. Confronted with these realities there were two potential strategies. The first involved seeking to reach some fairly simple, fairly straightforward, theoretical conclusions that were relevant to a narrowly defined, very particular set of managerial circumstances. The alternative was to embrace both the breadth and the complexity of the overall situation and to attempt to provide that which a post graduate colleague described as ‘the theory of everything’. In the very beginning, this then was the ambition that provided the motivation for this research.

Over time it has become clear that whilst this ambition may have been noble; it was also unrealistic and in reality the overall goal became that of making an interesting, if fairly modest, contribution to the scholarship in this area. Certainly the author makes no claims to the effect that the discoveries of this research study are either a definitive or a complete answer to the very complex processes that are at work. However, this wholly necessary and totally appropriate adjustment in perspective should not be understood as either implying, or accepting that anything about this research study has not been worthwhile.

In addition, this adjustment in perspective neither suggests, nor implies that the intellectual journey has been anything other than stimulating, difficult and demanding and that overall the experience has been anything other than a wholly worthwhile and a completely absorbing privilege.

The concluding remarks are left to Weick, Sutcliffe & Obstfeld (2005: 419) who eloquently summarise the philosophical spirit which has underpinned the writing of this thesis :

> “To deal with ambiguity, interdependent people search for meaning, settle for plausibility, and move on”.

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Appendix 1

Case Study Qualitative Data Tables

Table 1

Evidence for recognition based decision – taking.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q4 Taking each of these challenges in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you are taking in relation to each of them?	
[O1I3]	A wing and a prayer, I'll be honest with you, looking back.
	Followed your gut instincts, an awful lot.
[O1I3]	When I look back, it was a bit sort of … um … this feels right, lets go for it, … you know.
[O5I4]	The honest answer is no, I don't think I did have a systematic approach.
Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O1I1]	If I look at it from a personal point of view, past experience has got to be a huge influence on me.
[O1I3]	I would say that over the last two years it's experiential.
	Essentially, it's been experiential, it's been learning as you've gone along.
[O1I4]	Been there, got the t-shirt.
	Scars on the back, teach you jolly well compared to a lot of other things.
	There's a gut feel about (pause) things we've worked hard to achieve, which I guess is about certain basic principles.
[O2I2]	I *[have]* experienced *[it]* myself.
	So I experienced it myself. I also saw other people embracing it and experiencing it.
	It seemed like common sense really.
	When I was working in *[name of city removed]*, I had a fantastic manager and she used to, before getting me to do anything, she used to run these almost mini marketing seminars. So she'd sit down and explain what the strategy was, before I then had to go away and write a small section of it or whatever. So she was, she was, a bit of a, kind of mentor really, in a way.
	It's become common sense.
	I can read about stuff and buy into it, but I would like to see that *[happen]*, and I, … yeah, … I, I would need to really, really buy into something, I'd like to see it happen.
[O2I3]	It seemed a very logical, very practical solution.
	I think that was experience.
	So I think it was about that change experience, that I'd been through before … that really, … you know, … um … gave me those insights.
	It seemed very obvious to do.
	I mean, that was my, you know, my gut instinct.
[O2I4]	In terms of what my approach might be. Um … (pause) just drawn on experiences, you know, from other situations.
	A lot of that is based on previous experienced, of where I've done things

	before, or approaches that have worked, or not worked and some direction from, … from my Director.
	I learn from doing you know.
	Instinct.
	Very subconscious.
[O2I5]	I suppose some of that's come through it just more and more experience. You just don't know that when you first start out as a manager.
	Some of that comes from understanding a bit about Myers Briggs and some of it comes from previous projects. So there's an experience element there, but Myers Briggs really helps.
[O3I1]	It's very intuitive.
	I saw how that didn't work.
[O3I2]	Partly it is instinct.
[O3I2]	I was using my instinct.
[O3I3]	I think its something to do with the fact that I've worked through … er … as I say, you know, my work experience.
	It's from observation, experience.
	Obviously there's usually some harsh lessons along the way as well because um… not everything you do is, is successful and but making sure that you learned from those lessons and that you adapt accordingly.
	[It] is not from any one … er … process, or situation, or attending any courses, or anything like that. It's just, in your own mind, so things are continually changing. That's what business is about and you know, being prepared to work with that.
[O3I4]	That is basically common sense.
[O3I5]	The approach, the way I've modified that, is based on experience in delivering other similar projects in the past.
	My approach to, … you know … staff management, … it's been developed over, … you know, … several years' experience.
	I'm actually probably explaining it in hindsight, of what we actually did, … um … and I'm not so sure that it was as much of conscious decision.
	It was the approach that I took from experience.
[O4I1]	It's a combination of experience and learning by observing and listening.
[O5I2]	I think its having been on the, the front line myself.
	Seeing it work when it has worked.
	Seeing when it hasn't.
	Isn't it awful, seeing something really bad is often so helpful.
[O5I5]	It is based upon my own personal experience.
[M1W7]	Um… instinct is a word, you know, some things just come naturally and it seems um… that sorting problems, um… I'm quite good a seeing solutions, rather than seeing problems.
	It just came… I'll go back to this was instinct, it just came naturally, at the time. Um… I think… I think, I think the, the… some of the experiences of working in the kitchens helped.
[M1W6]	Well, I think a lot of it is experience. I've been around the [name of organisation omitted] for a long time now.
	So I would say the biggest thing is experience.

	But I mean, I think that's about, you know, again, sort of personality and life experience really, isn't it, you know. Knowing well, when to be humble even though you want to knock somebody's block off.
[M1W5]	I think the first one, the pace of work, I think its intuition. It's not based any er… evidence base.
	It is, it is experience.
[M1W2]	Pragmatic, practical, well yeh, it was pragmatic and it was practical.
	I think, I think yeh, for that really, it was just my experience at my previous organisation … um … where it worked, which was a similar organisation albeit a lot larger, but that worked.
	That again, from a previous experience at my previous job.
[M1O1]	I'm not sure. It's not as easy as it sounds. I, I think it's just … er … experience".
	It is the same answer in a way, it's just from experience of just working with scientists for a long time.
	Well in a way, yeh, I was going to say, it seemed to be the right thing to do (laugh), to be honest.
[M2W1]	Right. What, basically, and blindingly obvious.
	I would actually say, to my mind, it should be common sense".
	So common sense definitely, um… my gut feeling, my intuition, um … about you know, where we should be going, what we want, is definitely another word that I would use.
[M2W2]	Um … well, really, initially, a just … it was just … seemed like the right thing to do.
	That is, is all experience-based, all of it.
	Well really just my life experience to be honest with you.
[M3W1]	Getting it wrong.
	I guess a lot of this is just by gut intuition.
	Experience.
[M2H1]	Um … probably experience on my part.
	Um… so there was no, there was no um… serious consideration around what would work best for them, it was, a lot of it was my gut instinct.
[M2H3]	Um … I think that's my own coping strategy. It's, it's from me. You know, this is how I'm managing it.
	Well, I suppose, whilst I've been managing in a much lesser role for a long time, most of that has been done on gut instinct. You know, you, your gut tells you this is the right thing to do.
	You use your previous experience.
	I suppose that, that comes from years of experience. It was about, you know, how am I going to manage this.
[M2H2]	Um… that is experience.
	Um… so it might be a bit chicken and egg. But its mostly come from experience.
Q6 In each case could you describe for me the decision making process that resulted in your decision to adopt the approach that you have described?	
[O1I1]	In terms of making the structure, we had that in place within a fortnight. It was quite clear that was needed.
[O2I1]	There are probably times when I'm not aware that I'm doing something, I'm just doing it every day.

[O2I4]	Certainly on the change management, it was definitely informal, very reactive, just almost subconscious
	I'll just rock up and do it.
	Very subconscious, very immediate and instinct I guess
[O2I5]	I've seen it working as I've done it. If I hadn't, I'd have lost quite a bit of confidence in it, I think.
	And now I feel like I've got a toolbox of stuff to have a go at. But that's only just built up over time and managing more and more people. And seeing how people do it differently and seeing different things, working different circumstances.
	I think the third's a combination of experience and also … (pause) … choosing who advises you carefully.
[O3I1]	I've watched and learned if you like.
[O3I3]	I've probably done it subconsciously before.
[O3I4]	So, I didn't read a great book last week which blew my mind. You know, *[the]* last time a read a management book was years and years ago. So it's a case of common sense.
[O3I5]	To some degree *[the decision was]* a no brainer.
[O4I3]	I get to a point where its no, now it's down to almost a feeling, and that is intuition.
	I think it was clear to me the way I needed to behave.
Q7 In each case could you describe for me the aspects of the situation that you subsequently used to monitor the effectiveness the approach that you have described?	
[O2I3]	I think the learning came out of managing that situation particularly badly.
Q14 Do you adopt a set approach to doing this?	
[O1I1]	Oh it's kind of running in the background, it's just automatic, it kicks in, you know.
Q8 In each case could you describe for me the adverse indicators might have caused you to abandon the approach that you have described?	
[O2I4]	A light bulb. It was a complete light bulb moment.
Q9 Were there any challenges where you were unable to readily identify an appropriate approach?	
[O1I2]	It's kind of intuition in a way.
[O2I5]	I suppose some of the training, some of the experience, some of the support I've got in place, I just kind of feel like I'm surrounded by lots of tools that if, if I don't know I'll go to someone and say "I don't know", and I'll find a way through that.
Q15 What resources and materials do you regularly draw upon to help sustain you in your managerial challenges?	
[O1I2]	At the moment, I'm drawing very much on my last role in my last organisation, … um … and the experiences I had there. And all of that builds on everything else that I've, I've done and people I've met over the years, and you know, people who I've felt have influenced my life, … and how they've managed difficult situations.
[O2I2]	It's a lot of practical experience. I draw a lot from, like, what we talk about in philosophy, other people's experiences, and what it triggers in my own mind when I'm hearing it, that kind of stuff.
	Some of the stuff I thought "Oh, that, I like that, that's practical, I can certainly do that, that looks like something I can try out". So I guess that's what it is, … I like to see what the practical application things.
	I'm more likely to try something if it's clear what the practical *[application is]*, how to do it, if I can see myself, "Oh, I could do that, in that situation", … then

	I'll try it out.
[O4I3]	Generally it's a lot of the same things, its common sense basically.
Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O2I3]	I would always say that my, … my style is more an intuitive one, as opposed to a, you know, an academic one, for sure.
[O2I5]	So, *[name omitted]*, he's got a huge amount of experience in other things, that's extremely helpful, for me to hear somebody who's been through similar things before.
[O4I4]	No matter what the issue is, that same thought process which is intuitive to me now because I've been doing it so long.
	It is intuitive now but it's based on sound practice that others have, have done extensive work to actually understand that's a good way of doing it.
[O5I2]	I'll be honest, it's probably more instinct.
	Experience, yeah, and what works and what doesn't work. What my mistakes have been, learning from those. Um … what I've seen other people do.

Table 2

Evidence for emergent decision – building rather than evaluative decision – making.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q4 Taking each of these challenges in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you are taking in relation to each of them?	
[O1I3]	So you spent an awful lot of time checking with people.
[O3I2]	I also … um … used my own line manager a great deal to help, to guide me.
	So, I would seek help wherever I could really.
[O4I2]	I tap into my network both internally within the company and also externally within the suppliers and within the customer base.
	I've really used that, that's very, that's probably one of my strengths.
[O4I4]	You have to have some data and some facts to support whatever it is.
[O4I5]	I went to him and said who could I go and talk to that would help me understand a little bit more about the culture, you know, the way people do business, and how things are done.
	So I met this gentleman *[to seek his advice]* but I also met a couple of other people.
	So really, this guy became almost my mentor.
	As we built our relationship, it became more open, in that I was able to discuss what my approach was and round my beliefs and my values.
	You kind of go in there with kind of a sense based on what you already know from past experience, benchmarking, to some extent with you know, doing a reality check, and then going forward.
[O5I4]	So my attitude has been very much sit, watch, observe, learn … obviously talk to people as well.
	My honest answer is I couldn't say that I'm the sort of person who comes in with big plans and a, a very thorough and comprehensive strategy.
	Again, I think that comes back down to … um … observing and listening as much as anything else.
	I see that *[the approach to be adopted]* as a gradual and an evolving process.
Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O1I1]	The second thing is, I've been lucky I've got two *[designations omitted]* colleagues, very experienced.
	[The] strength of colleagues.
	The Director needs people to advise him.
[O1I2]	We had action learning sets. And … um … I drew a lot of my um … support and help and ideas for, … um ... moving on and through this, through the action learning actually.
[O2I1]	I think, to a certain extent, my old line manager.
[O2I3]	This came out of … um … some 'Awaydays', when we were talking about the team. It came out of all of that, *[out of]* that dialogue.
	That's where we said, we felt we needed some help with it, because we weren't sure what to do with it.
	Well they helped us I think understand what the, what some of the issues were.
	I can remember going through quite a large discovering process.
	It evolved, I think, out of a quite, … a long couple of days.

	I talked to people such as my previous MD, who'd left, and sought his counsel and advice.
[O2I4]	Talking to other people, my peers, just other heads, about … (pause) … you know, what they might do in their approach.
[O3I4]	A lot of that comes from talking to people.
	I go away thinking … yeah, … you've got a point there.
	I've had time to start looking at how other people do things.
[05I1]	The learning comes from sort of conferencing and hearing about models of practice elsewhere. But it's also experience.
Q6 In each case could you describe for me the decision making process that resulted in your decision to adopt the approach that you have described?	
[O2I1]	I have … er … a coach and chatting over the approaches with the coach has defined my thinking.
	When you chat it over, you think, oh actually, this is, you know, this comes together in a nice neat package and that's a replicable thing to go forward with.
[O2I1]	So, I don't feel it's, *[that]* I'm entirely in isolation, just doing this with instinct … um … I do feel that you know, I'm bouncing ideas off people and getting their input into it as well.
[O2I1]	It's more emergent, I think actually, in terms of how I decide things.
[O2I3]	We knew, we all knew what the problem was before we went in, we discussed the problem, we really broke it down to all its elements, and then talking about solutions and they just naturally formed.
	We didn't go through that process of looking at different options, for different … it naturally evolved.
[O2I5]	The course came to me on good authority and I believe what they said when we tried it out, so there was some evidencing there.
[O3I1]	*[So if I]* want to try a new piece of work, for instance, or, … or put something new in the team, I would see what other people have done.
	If there's anything new we want to try, I'll take it to the team meeting, and we sort of throw it around a bit.
[O3I4]	I've got some great, really great, people working with me and especially my two *[designation omitted]*. I mean, I walk into town with one and I'll say, "What do you think we ought to do about this then?"
[O3I5]	I mean, it was fairly rapid dialogue because it was, … it was a high profile scheme that needed to be delivered.
[O4I3]	I think from that *[experience]* point of view, that's where I start to draw upon my career, … um … and the situations that I've been in.
	I draw as much from that as I do from the manager I had previous to that, who I totally and utterly respect and still utilise as a mentor.
[O5I1]	Because it's … um … cutting edge stuff, you know, you're not necessarily getting it right first time.
[O5I2]	I suppose it's evolved.
[O5I3]	I think the approach basically emerged.
	It's really something that did evolve rather than be something which was seeing an immediately problem and saying "Right, yes, we need to do it".
[O5I4]	I think to a large extent its through regular liaison, discussion with my line manager who I've found very helpful and supportive.
	I think my steer has been from him.
Q7 In each case could you describe for me the aspects of the situation that you subsequently used to monitor the effectiveness the approach that you have described?	
[O4I5]	It goes back to this sense checking all the time, both externally and internally, of the right thing to do and very much it's still this emergent learning process.

Q9 Were there any challenges where you were unable to readily identify an appropriate approach?	
[O1I2]	I think the approach we need to take there needs to be very much more considered.
[O2I3]	I think what we recognised is that we needed some expertise around that, somebody, as you say, that can really … um … help us shape what our approach should be.
[O2I5]	I suppose some of the training, some of the experience, some of the support I've got in place, I just kind of feel like I'm surrounded by lots of tools that if, if I don't know I'll go to someone and say "I don't know", and I'll find a way through that.
[O4I1]	So, the first time I went through it, I, you know I was like OK, I need, you know, I need some help, I need to go and talk to some people in the HRD department.
	I go and talk to someone.
	I find myself in a bit of pickle, I'll go and talk to someone that … er … that I trust, their judgement.
Q10 In each case, could you describe how you went about finding an appropriate approach?	
[O1I2]	I haven't had this aspect of the job role before, so I do have to look, go away and have a look at where those resources are out there, so I may be looking to other colleagues for their, for their help and support.
[O2I1]	For me, it was about … um … asking colleagues basically. It was about finding people who'd been similar situations and saying, "How have you handled this?"
	I also like to sense check not, what would you do if you were me, but what have you done in similar situations in the past, and what was good and bad about it.
	Sometimes it's previous colleagues and peers, sometimes, you know, it's the wider network. But essentially I like to, I often say, I think with my mouth open, so I like to talk things through with people. And sometimes that's about gaining their experience and sometimes it's just about working it through in my own mind. And working through where, where I need to go with that. But I think that's my, the approach that suits me.
[O4I4]	We go out and, and look for those who, who could offer a solution and if, from wherever we have connections.
Q11 When you consider the whole of your whole career to date could you identify for me the two or three <u>most</u> challenging managerial situations that you have experienced?	
[O3I4]	That's where networking came in. I know a lot of people, *[and it was]* worth its weight in gold, you know, it really was.
[O5I2]	In my profession you can, you can lift the phone.
	You know a lot of people and … um … so you can find out what other people have done.
Q13 How much time do you spend thinking about the organisation and your role and responsibilities within it?	
[O2I2]	I talk a lot about that sort of stuff … um … with predominantly my husband, but also friends.
Q15 What resources and materials do you regularly draw upon to help sustain you in your managerial challenges?	
[O3I1]	The people I work with are my biggest resource.
	I learn from the managers as well.
[O3I4]	The support of, you know, one or two of my, *[key staff]*. I've got two [designation omitted], both of them, but one in particular.
	People mostly.
[O3I5]	There's input from my manager and guidance as to … um … how I should be dealing with certain projects, or concerns.

[O4I4]	I go and talk to people that I know um … who I think might be able to help me on things, outside of work as well as inside of work.
[O4I5]	I have a coach and I went through sort of, a sort of an intensive process with the coach, over a thirteen week period, where I'd meet with him, you know, on a (pause) on a probably every three week basis. , I tend now to be… utilise him when I'm coming up with something new and again, going back to my sense check, saying *[name omitted]*, I'm thinking of doing this, and then he'll, you know, we'll talk that through.
[O5I1]	The resources are the team and the administrative support.
	My manager.
	Colleagues within my sort of professional area.
[O5I2]	I'm very lucky that the two people that report to me, they're sort of strategic managers.
Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O4I4]	So it's a base model but then I say OK, well, I think I could do that better or if I do this, then I can get that point, not through shortcutting, but I just find ways, with my experience in my actual situation I'm in, I can supplement that.

Table 3

Evidence for extensive personal reflection in unstructured ways.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q4 Taking each of these challenges in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you are taking in relation to each of them?	
[O3I2]	It was only when I discovered that, actually it didn't roll smooth, flow as smoothly as I expected it to, that I had to start thinking.
[O4I4]	You have to have some data and some facts to support whatever it is.
	So that's the sort of approach we would take, and that's coming out of just experience of our organisation.
	This is really driven by change management from my experience.
	There are many, many examples of both cases that, that have made me come to that conclusion.
[O4I5]	I went to him and said who could I go and talk to that would help me understand a little bit more about the culture, you know, the way people do business, and how things are done.
	So I met this gentleman *[to seek his advice]* but I also met a couple of other people.
	So really, this guy became almost my mentor.
	As we built our relationship, it became more open, in that I was able to discuss what my approach was and round my beliefs and my values.
	Then work through how I was going to come to terms with my, my values system based on what I needed to do there.
	You kind of go in there with kind of a sense based on what you already know from past experience, benchmarking, to some extent with you know, doing a reality check, and then going forward.
	Then saying OK, well what did we learn, well that didn't work did it, so let's go and do that.
[O5I4]	So my attitude has been very much sit, watch, observe, learn … obviously talk to people as well.
	Again, I think that comes back down to … um … observing and listening as much as anything else.
	I see that *[the approach to be adopted]* as a gradual and an evolving process.
Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O1I1]	If I look at it from a personal point of view, past experience has got to be a huge influence on me.
	I mean, the big influence for me is the ability to reflect.
[O1I2]	I've had life experience working with people, um… and I've learnt and made lots of mistakes obviously along the way, learnt from mistakes.
[O1I2]	But the key thing about that was, nobody really gave me the solutions, it was about, I had to search deep for the solutions myself and, … um … so that's what I had to do.
[O2I1]	There are things that you realise are just not within your control.
[01I3]	I would say that over the last two years it's experiential.
	Essentially, it's been experiential, its been learning as you've gone along.
[O1I4]	I think I'm a person who does tend to reflect on things, after the event.
	I think, I personally think, I learn more, sadly, (laugh) from the things that go wrong.

	Experience tells me, that it is, … it is useful to rewind the tape and think.
[O2I2]	I *[have]* experienced *[it]* myself.
	So I experienced it myself. I also saw other people embracing it and experiencing it.
	It seemed like common sense really.
	Now I understand more clearly about it and I think that, that probably slotted some gradual learning into place as well.
	When I was working in *[name of city removed]*, I had a fantastic manager and she used to, before getting me to do anything, she used to run these almost mini marketing seminars. So she'd sit down and explain what the strategy was, before I then had to go away and write a small section of it or whatever. So she was, she was, a bit of a, kind of mentor really, in a way.
[O2I3]	This came out of … um … some 'Awaydays', when we were talking about the team. It came out of all of that, *[out of]* that dialogue.
	It seemed a very logical, very practical solution.
	So I think it was about that change experience, that I'd been through before … that really, … you know, … um … gave me those insights.
	I talked to people such as my previous MD, who'd left, and sought his counsel and advice.
[O2I4]	In terms of what my approach might be. Um … (pause) just drawn on experiences, you know, from other situations.
	A lot of that is based on previous experienced, of where I've done things before, or approaches that have worked, or not worked and some direction from, … from my Director.
[O2I5]	I suppose some of that's come through it just more and more experience. You just don't know that when you first start out as a manager.
	Some of that comes from understanding a bit about Myers Briggs and some of it comes from previous projects. So there's an experience element there, but Myers Briggs really helps.
[O3I1]	I saw how that didn't work.
[O3I2]	The management training that I did do over the last couple of years has helped me because it, apart from reading around things … um … it, … what it does is it gives the opportunity to go away and reflect on your day to day practice.
	I learn by experience.
	It's a bit like osmosis I suppose, I mean, I may read round things … um … but I don't have … um … necessarily a terribly logical approach.
	I learn then gradually by doing.
	Where it particularly helped me were the modules where we did a, some work on theoretical frameworks and concepts *[e.g. managing diversity]* and then had to do an assignment on applying that to a particular area of work.
	We did a module on strategic management and leadership, but that was all theoretical and I have to say, I struggled with that a bit.
	Sometimes I have to experience it before I can understand it.
[O3I3]	I think its something to do with the fact that I've worked through … er … as I say, you know, my work experience.
	It's from observation, experience.
	[It] is not from any one … er … process, or situation, or attending any courses, or anything like that. It's just, in your own mind, so things are continually changing. That's what business is about and you know, being prepared to work with that.
[O3I4]	I've had time to start looking at how other people do things.

	It's thinking outside the box, about having the bloody time to think outside the box.
	I've got to try and understand why.
[O3I5]	The approach, the way I've modified that, is based on experience in delivering other similar projects in the past.
	My approach to, … you know … staff management, … it's been developed over, … you know, … several years' experience.
	It's the kind of approach that I like to take and generally has proved successful.
	I learned a lot from that kind of experience.
	It's also developed through … um … you know the managing of the individual team members and … er … seeing what's worked.
[O4I1]	It's a combination of experience and learning by observing and listening.
	Its only when you start being responsible for other people that you, you start to kind of understand the magnitude of the change that you have to go through to be able to start to become good at it.
	So experience, just literally age, kind of makes a bit wiser.
	In my case it *[experience]* made me more open to understanding what being a manager is about, if you like.
	There are some, some people with the organisation, that I have learned from.
	Talking to them.
	There have been, you know, three or four maybe discussions or moments in the last five years with different, completely different types of people, that I have, you know, its kind of like "Oh yeah!", the light's gone on in my head.
	They were trying to tell me, you know, and help educate me because I was still a little bit in the, in the tunnel, not really understanding, you know, why is this not happening.
	So that's why I'm saying it's a bit experience and age and becoming more, in my case, more open to understanding and to realising what some of these managers have done for me, through their advice, and then little by little it kind of sinks in and it kind of, it makes sense.
	I'm trying to just stick into my mind and say OK, try and practice this and give it, have a go.
	There were some tips that were given through that course, you know, kind of, its all very common sense but, you know, going through experiences and there were some tips that I took from that course that I've then tried to apply and its worked, its made me feel more confident, feeling that you know, I didn't have to fear these situations, and I can actually deal with them.
[O4I2]	I guess the easy answer is … um … it's what's worked for me.
	I would say at the basic level, it's, it's what has worked for me.
[O4I3]	It is something that I've seen working.
	I think this is just personal experience.
	You just can't beat getting out amongst the people and actually having to deal with the situations.
[O5I1]	The learning comes from sort of conferencing and hearing about models of practice elsewhere. But it's also experience.
[O5I2]	Isn't it awful, seeing something really bad is often so helpful.
	It helped very practically … um … being able to go through examples with, with other people in similar situations, as to what's worked and what hasn't.
	There was (sic) a lot of practical examples … um … and some shortcuts you could learn from that as well.

	It was as much about taking time out as well, just to you know, just to think about it, discuss it, and look afresh.
	Having a forum. That was very good … um … where you could trust the people that you were with, so you could be very honest.
[O5I5]	It helps to build teams if you involve them in what's going on and you, and you provide them with information so that they can understand the context of things and you also give them the opportunity to influence.
	It is based upon my own personal experience.
	So I guess it goes back to that experience.
	Well in the voluntary sector, what I would see is people who are successful at motivating people who weren't being paid.
	I had the benefit of some very good role models.
Q6 In each case could you describe for me the decision making process that resulted in your decision to adopt the approach that you have described?	
[O2I1]	I have … er … a coach and chatting over the approaches with the coach has defined my thinking.
	When you chat it over, you think, oh actually, this is, you know, this comes together in a nice neat package and that's a replicable thing to go forward with.
[O2I3]	We knew, we all knew what the problem was before we went in, we discussed the problem, we really broke it down to all its elements, and then talking about solutions and they just naturally formed.
	We didn't go through that process of looking at different options, for different … it naturally evolved.
[O2I5]	I've seen it working as I've done it. If I hadn't, I'd have lost quite a bit of confidence in it, I think.
	And now I feel like I've got a toolbox of stuff to have a go at. But that's only just built up over time and managing more and more people. And seeing how people do it differently and seeing different things, working different circumstances.
[O3I1]	I've watched and learned if you like.
[O3I4]	Trial and error.
	Trial and error is probably the first one, where you try something and its not being afraid to actually try something and make, … you know, … make mistakes.
	So, I didn't read a great book last week which blew my mind. You know, *[the]* last time a read a management book was years and years ago. So it's a case of common sense.
[O4I1]	The first answer that comes to mind is having seen things that I didn't like in others.
	Things that I've seen with some of my previous managers, or things I've seen other people do and I've thought no, I, I, in the same situation I would want to do it differently.
	You know, it's seeing, sometimes people take an approach that I personally don't like as an individual, or I've seen other people not liking.
[O4I3]	I think there's a point where you can read about certain things but experiencing them is a completely different scenario and it gives you that much more insight.
	I think from that *[experience]* point of view, that's where I start to draw upon my career, … um … and the situations that I've been in.
	I read the Harvard Business Review and sometimes I think, its very, almost, I don't want to say chintzy, but its very, for the moment, they speak about buzzwords and everything else … um … so I tend to take quite a bit of it with a pinch of salt.
	For me very much learning about what have I done, what have I been

	through, what do I think works and what I think is the best for the person I'm looking at.
	I'll pick something, well I think actually, that may be a very good line or I like that, where that's going to, … and it can just be a kick off point.
	I had an ex-boss who, he taught me an awful lot, but what he taught me was how not to do things.
	I draw as much from that as I do from the manager I had previous to that, who I totally and utterly respect and still utilise as a mentor.
	But I think peppered with some things like the Harvard Business Reviews, you, you can get, you can start going in the right direction.
	If it's something completely new, sometimes you've got to have the belief to say I've got to the point where I think OK, I'm going to go for this, I believe it to be right. And you have to trust your own judgement. You put enough science behind it to the point where you can, but you also get to the point where being a leader you have to take that risk and say "No, it's my decision, this is the way we're going to go". And you live and you die by those decisions.
[O5I1]	Because it's … um … cutting edge stuff, you know, you're not necessarily getting it right first time.
[O5I5]	Of course, anyone in my position is going to have to think, well how am I going to handle this.
	Q7 In each case could you describe for me the aspects of the situation that you subsequently used to monitor the effectiveness the approach that you have described?
[O2I3]	I think the learning came out of managing that situation particularly badly.
	So I'd actually, out of that adversity, learned a huge amount.
[O3I5]	*[That forum]* provides an opportunity for the team leaders to help themselves, help each other and share experiences.
[O5I2]	You can't beat you know, floor walking and being there and being visible, seeing the problems.
	Q8 In each case could you describe for me the adverse indicators might have caused you to abandon the approach that you have described?
[O2I3]	There comes a point where you have to, you know, you may well have to say well that's not the right approach.
[O4I1]	Sometimes I give up on some battles, absolutely, as well. When they are not, when I think they are not worth fighting. You have to pick your battles.
	Q9 Were there any challenges where you were unable to readily identify an appropriate approach?
[O2I5]	I suppose some of the training, some of the experience, some of the support I've got in place, I just kind of feel like I'm surrounded by lots of tools that if, if I don't know I'll go to someone and say "I don't know", and I'll find a way through that.
[O4I1]	So, the first time I went through it, I, you know I was like OK, I need, you know, I need some help, I need to go and talk to some people in the HRD department.
	I find myself in a bit of pickle, I'll go and talk to someone that … er … that I trust, their judgement.
	Q10 In each case, could you describe how you went about finding an appropriate approach?
[O2I1]	Sometimes it's previous colleagues and peers, sometimes, you know, it's the wider network. But essentially I like to, I often say, I think with my mouth open, so I like to talk things through with people. And sometimes that's about gaining their experience and sometimes it's just about working it through in my own mind. And working through where, where I need to go with that. But I think that's my, the approach that suits me.
[O4I4]	So people with great, great experiences in different businesses that are, that are more leading edge than what ours would be.
	Q11 When you consider the whole of your whole career to date could you identify for me the two or three most challenging managerial situations that you have experienced?

[O2I3]	So it was quite a difficult situation and our styles and values were enormously different and it caused me a lot of soul searching.
[O3I3]	He wasn't anybody who was directly involved with what I was doing then, he was just an ex colleague who's been a manager. And I went to see him a few times and just talked about it, and that was really, quite a bit turning point for me because you know, having someone else to talk to, to reflect on.
	A key thing, in actually handling and dealing with that change, *[was]* talking to somebody else about it, rather than just keeping it within myself. Because if I hadn't, I probably wouldn't have survived the experience I don't think.
[O3I4]	You know, you make mistakes and you think maybe I'll do it differently next time.
	Whether it was the right approach, I mean, I don't know, open to debate.
	We sort of did it properly, in that, we, for once in our lives, we did a clean up meeting at the end. And we learned an awful lot from that.
[O4I5]	So I've got my own cultural beliefs, I've got my own values system, and I've also got a *[organisation name omitted]* process. And then I had to go there and the biggest challenge for me was to understand what was the right thing to do for the region, and how that challenged my values system, which, which occasionally it did.
Q12 Taking each of these situations in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you took in relation to each of them?	
[O2I1]	So I could have done it entirely differently and it may not have made an iota of difference, but I'd like to have tried.
	I think looking back, I didn't know, I wasn't as clear. I think now I'd do it differently, but I think that's with the learning of the last couple of years.
Q13 How much time do you spend thinking about the organisation and your role and responsibilities within it?	
[O1I1]	Major.
[O1I2]	Too much.
	On Sunday I worked all day.
	So, by too much that's what I mean, you know, almost 24 hours a day at the moment.
[O1I3]	I think about it when I get up, … um … I think about it when I'm on my way to work, at work obviously. Sometimes you think less about it at work than when you're away from work. On the way home, you're thinking about it.
	It's not unusual to, maybe *[to]* reflect for an hour at home, as well in between doing other things.
	[The] news, or anything like that, triggers you off.
	The golf course is about the only place I forget about everything.
[O1I4]	I think my managerial actions are on my mind a lot.
	By and large, it doesn't go on during the working day, because we're just too busy. It might happen on the drive home, or it might happen at three in the morning.
	It's more likely to happen, … it's more likely to happen, in sort of, quiet moments really.
	By and large, people I think nowadays, don't have time for managerial thinking in the workplace.
[O2I1]	Recently, quite a lot.
	I've spent quite a lot of time actually away from the office, working at home, thinking about the bigger picture.
[O2I2]	I think about it in the shower.
	I talk a lot about that sort of stuff … um … with predominantly my husband,

	but also friends.
	On the way home from work, thinking about it, in the shower, thinking in the morning, … um … (pause) … yeah, … I think a lot about work.
[O2I3]	Oh blimey, phew, a huge amount.
	So I'm quite happy to just go and you know, take an hour out and have a coffee and sit in the lounge and you know, think about something, different approach or you know, a problem that we're looking at.
[O2I4]	A lot.
	I would say in the last three months work has dominated my head space in every sense.
	Actually the whole time.
	[At] my previous company, one of the reasons I left, was because it had become all-consuming and it was my life, and I proactively wanted to make that change. I think the last three months has felt like what it felt like before … where it just becomes too much.
	It gets to the point where it has an impact on my personal life and that's not, its not acceptable and not what I want.
[O2I5]	I spend quite a lot at the moment.
	An awful lot.
	I can't read any paper without relating something in it back to work, even when I'm relaxing at the weekend.
	[When I am reading a] newspaper, or magazine, or I often see something on the TV and *[I will]* think about it, relating *[it]* to work in some way or … um … or *[if I]* hear a conversation in a pub, or something *[I]* will relate back to work, most of the time.
	My train journey in, for example, is often a very good one for staring out the window and going, no-one can take this off me, I'm not in a meeting, I'm not timetabled to be anywhere, its seven o'clock in the morning, have a coffee and stare out of the window. Sometimes I get great thoughts then, and great, … er … great reflections of where am I actually at, what do I really think about, where I'm at right now, what do I really think about the project, how will people, how do I think people are really thinking about it, what are we missing. All those sorts of general, I suppose, dreamlike questions.
	Sometimes, they crowd your head so much, you've just got to put everything else down because it sure as hell won't go away.
[O3I1]	I do take work home.
	I'll take stuff home and think about it.
[O3I2]	I do spend a lot of time, when I'm not at work, thinking about it.
	When I'm swimming and whatnot, I'm sort of … er … I find myself thinking about particular issues, thinking how can I, how can I deal with that.
	Or something's going over and over in my mind that's been a problem.
	Sometimes *[if]* it's really bad, I wake up in the night with it as well.
	It feels like it's percolated sometimes, that's all really, and it comes out the other end with "Oh yes, I know now".
	It will be when I go home from work, it will be perhaps an hour, or so, I might need to wind myself down.
	I mean, it's an all-consuming job.
[O3I3]	Quite a bit I would say.
	So I don't think you could, you'd be doing this and not actually um … er … reflect on it and, you know, take it as being quite a bit responsibility.

	If you have that approach, then you are reflecting on it all the time.
	Certainly on the way to work.
	Very often when I'm out running, I think about something and I think, "Oh, you could sort that like that".
	I probably reflect on it and I think … yeah, … "Why don't I do that?"
[O3I4]	Lots.
	I was up at three o'clock this morning thinking about it.
	You know, three o'clock in the morning, wide awake.
	I'm often thinking about work and thinking about all the facets of it.
[O4I1]	I can have a 'bing' day, a light goes on and like ah, that could be, that could be at home, that could be at work, um… it goes in phases.
	I mean, I'm entering a phase right now where I'm big into linking certain dots and I'm, I'm building something in my head.
	It's *[reflecting]* completely haphazard.
[O4I2]	Probably on the way in and on the way home. I have a fairly long commute so I have quite a lot of time. I drive an hour each way to work.
[O4I3]	I'll be standing in the shower on a Saturday morning and I'll be thinking about things, as they come to you and just OK, we'll run through, maybe something happened in the week, did I handle that right, yeah I did … I'll do it that way again … or no, I could have done that better … um … it's always good to have a bit of reflection.
	So various things, kick certain things off. Somebody might say something when I'm down the pub with a friend, and it might be oh yeah, I hadn't thought of it like that, and you have a bit of reflection.
[O4I5]	I still do spend quite a bit of time outside of work reflecting on you know, what I need to do. That can be in the form of I need to get this done today to how that, something went or didn't go, how well it went or didn't, and what I would do in the future.
	Outside *[work]* I'm thinking about, got to get that done today, you know, I need to connect with that, there's a problem out there, I need to do this. Or you know, last week this happened, what can we do differently next time.
[O5I1]	All the time.
	I can't see it being sustainable.
	I work at not trying to think about it during the night because it's the sort of thing that's, it wakes… you know, it has woken me up this week.
	So it's that uncertainty, I think, that's probably on my mind at the moment, is how am I going to do things as I like to do them.
	I suppose it's the unfamiliarity.
	I tend to try and keep fit, which I think helps but even then sometimes I find, you find, I find myself sort of, just gently mulling it over.
[O5I2]	I never remember my journey to or from work.
	I think about it so much. I really, really do.
	It's always there.
	I spend a lot of time thinking about work and I sort of bed it down, I almost put it into geological strata.
	That's how the priorities sort of bubble to the top. They naturally sift themselves.
[05I3]	I think recently, you know, there's certainly been a large, larger proportion of time than you would normally have thinking about that kind of issue.

	I've probably had more conversations with my wife about my work over the past six months than I have before.
	She's become a sounding board.
	There've been times when yes, walking the dog comes into it.
[O5I4]	So it would be impossible for me not to be thinking about work when I'm outside the workplace environment.
	Quite often I think "Oh yes, I was planning to do that", I must you know … and I haven't progressed it, that's something I've got to do as part of my planning for next week or for the day or whatever it might be. Yeah, I mean, that can often happen when I'm outside the work environment.
	I usually use the sort of twenty minutes I've got when I've left work and I'm going home to sort of reflect on what's gone on during the course of the day.
	I try and focus my thoughts in terms of how well or not so well things might have gone.
	It could be as a result of a conversation with my wife, a result of something I see in the street, or something which went in your subconscious and then suddenly leaps back to the front again and you think "Oh yes, I was going to do that wasn't I"?
	Some of it is a case of things that have gone into the old subconscious coming back to the front of your mind at the strangest times, you know.
[O5I5]	I think the higher up you get in an organisation, you have to spend more time doing that *[reflecting]*.
	And probably at your peril if you fail to do it *[reflecting]*.
Q14 Do you adopt a set approach to doing this?	
[01I1]	Everything I'm asked to do I work out before I do it, how's it been done before, how I've done it before.
	I never just jump into something and not go through that process, first of all of where are we coming from, and where is it we want to get to with this task.
	You just think it through properly.
	Oh it's kind of running in the background, it's just automatic, it kicks in, you know.
	Constantly.
	Waking up at 4 o'clock in the morning because you've thought of something. Constantly.
[O1I2]	It's very random.
[O2I1]	Probably at least a day a week at you know, mulling that over and writing that up in some way.
[O3I3]	So I do have a fairly, again, a fairly reflective approach to thinking how I want to achieve something. And for me that's both the big picture things and the small things as well.
	I suppose, you could probably even call it a little meditation. I just think those things through, think about what do I want to.
	Probably, when I'm having my breakfast.
[O4I1]	It's like little lights that come on and they don't come on until you can actually see the link between them, if you see what I mean.
[O4I3]	I'd miss having an hour in the car, and I am lost without it, when I don't have my hour in the car, morning and night. It's my wind up, wind down time.
[O4I5]	I use the drive to and from work.
	Things do pop up in my mind over the weekend if something's not gone perhaps as well as I would have liked or if I've got something that's coming up that I know is fairly significant, then obviously that I will be preoccupied with that. And that can be whenever I'm sort of fairly inactive.

	It's usually when I'm sat in front of the television and not watching the TV, I think about it.
	It's a bit sort of haphazard.
[O5I5]	I think to be successful at this type of thinking, which is reflective thinking, it has to be done at a time when there aren't distractions.
	So the reflective thinking … er … is something which I do at home, or maybe, if I'm careless, on the drive back home.
	It is structured in that at the end of the day, I quite like to just sit down for half an hour or even just lie down and not necessarily go to sleep but just … um … empty my mind of immediate concerns, and with the express purpose of thinking well, just where are you at the moment Nick? You know, how are you relating to things … and this is genuine, I do, do this. Um … probably, probably about once a week. And seriously, just allow myself fifteen minutes to think about where I'm going with, you know, strategy at work and how that relates to me.
	Nice comfy chair, no distractions, quiet thinking.
	I use visual images for organising thoughts.
Q15 What resources and materials do you regularly draw upon to help sustain you in your managerial challenges?	
[O1I2]	At the moment, I'm drawing very much on my last role in my last organisation, … um … and the experiences I had there. And all of that builds on everything else that I've, I've done and people I've met over the years, and you know, people who I've felt have influenced my life, … and how they've managed difficult situations.
[O2I2]	It's a lot of practical experience. I draw a lot from, like, what we talk about in philosophy, other people's experiences, and what it triggers in my own mind when I'm hearing it, that kind of stuff.
	Some of the stuff I thought "Oh, that, I like that, that's practical, I can certainly do that, that looks like something I can try out". So I guess that's what it is, … I like to see what the practical application things.
	I'm more likely to try something if it's clear what the practical *[application is]*, how to do it, if I can see myself, "Oh, I could do that, in that situation", … then I'll try it out.
[O2I3]	I had a coach for about eighteen months so that was, that was really challenging, but that for me was great just in terms of challenging the way that we do things and challenging my grey matter, is hugely valuable.
[O2I5]	Apart from *[my]* action learning set, which is very helpful, I've got an excellent, … I've got an external mentor.
	I use my line manager also as a mentor.
[O3I5]	Those *[external academic]* courses are actually predominantly most useful in terms of giving time out to think about how you're managing things and learn from other people on the courses, as much as from … um … the actual course content.
[O4I1]	Observing the good and what I consider good and bad examples.
	Sometimes … um … asking people as well, you know, what they think about something. So asking people direct as well as observing.
[O4I2]	That experience of managing people, could you learn that from an academic standpoint? I'm not sure.
	I've made my own tools as I've developed in my managerial and leadership experience, and I've also been given tools from other people. I've learned from other people, I've learned from, from what I consider to be good leaders and good managers. … um … I've seen bad leaders and bad managers. And I've made my choices as to which tools I want to use and what I want to learn from those individuals.
[O4I3]	For me, it's *[the Harvard Business Review]* almost a debating tool with myself. I read it and think well, is that true, do I believe that, no I don't.

	I've got a very eclectic bunch of friends … um … from all walks of life, … um … and I certainly draw an awful lot from those.
[O4I4]	The most influential thing I ever did, and I still say this and this is like fifteen years later, is I went on a, the *[name of training organisation omitted]* programme out in *[location omitted]*.
	It *[the programme]* really opens up your mind towards … um … the way in which you behave.
	I constantly in my thinking, go back to that place and try to correct my behaviour in such a way that, that when I'm modelling the way.
	I go and talk to people that I know um … who I think might be able to help me on things, outside of work as well as inside of work.
	In the past I've had people that specifically were like mentors that I could go to on things.
	At the moment I'm not tending to do that an awful lot because I've got consultants I've been working with that have put a lot of input in. So that's really almost like been a big meal, you know. I need to digest that meal.
[O4I5]	I have a coach and I went through sort of, a sort of an intensive process with the coach, over a thirteen week period, where I'd meet with him, you know, on a (pause) on a probably every three week basis. , I tend now to be… utilise him when I'm coming up with something new and again, going back to my sense check, saying *[name omitted]*, I'm thinking of doing this, and then he'll, you know, we'll talk that through.
[O5I2]	We talk about a lot of issues together.
	I am guilty of picking their brains.
	That's a very useful resource actually.
	There's an awful lot of just sort of generally supporting and discussing things.
[O5I3]	There's people there *[in the unit]* that I can feel I can talk to quite openly about managerial issues and get reasonable, you know, get good feedback and so on.
	Plus fellow unit managers.
[M2H3]	A lot of it probably goes back to um… you know, reflecting at what you've done, looking at how you can do things better, um… and, and seeking advice from others if you don't know. And sometimes, its just about talking things through with them.
[M2H4]	Um… a lot of kind of self-reflection as well. You know, looking back on how you've done things before, what's gone well, what's not gone well.
Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O2I1]	I mean she's talked about things that they've done at *[organisation name omitted]* and I'll be like, "Oh yeah, whatever", and chat, chat, chat about something else. And about six months later we'll be doing something and I'll go … was that what you were speaking about when we talked about …. "Oh yeah, I see that now"!
[O2I5]	So, *[name omitted]*, he's got a huge amount of experience in other things, that's extremely helpful, for me to hear somebody who's been through similar things before.
	So I'd say that, that *[name of model omitted] [is]* a very good example of, from [name of institution omitted} that I, I think, it consciously lodges there, helps me go where are we at, what's real, what is the situation we're dealing with here. It will help me define the problem I suppose, in some ways.
[O3I5]	So the theories of the wave of change from being mega enthusiastic to the pit of depression, then being suddenly enthusiastic and getting to the … um … the ultimate goal, is something I recognise and it seems fairly obvious to me.
[O4I1]	I want to have the time to absorb and practice and reflect and then try something else.

[O4I4]	There's fundamentals that I've learned, I've built upon, I've found better ways of doing it.
	It is intuitive now but it's based on sound practice that others have, have done extensive work to actually understand that's a good way of doing it.
	What I've always done over the years is I've honestly tried to do things in the way people have laid them out and test them out for myself.
	So it's a base model but then I say OK, well, I think I could do that better or if I do this, then I can get that point, not through shortcutting, but I just find ways, with my experience in my actual situation I'm in, I can supplement that.
[O5I2]	Experience, yeah, and what works and what doesn't work. What my mistakes have been, learning from those. Um … what I've seen other people do.
[O5I4]	I think from, from my point of view, … um … and as with any job, … um … you learn from practical experience.
[O5I5]	There are plenty of management theories, and practices available. Um … and I would struggle to remember half a dozen of them. But the ones that you do remember are the ones that end up being useful, and you can actually apply.
Q17 Could you identify for me any formal management education and training that you have received?	
[O4I4]	I've been lucky to always been working with people who've taught me a lot, so I've learned loads along the way. I've always been lucky enough to work with some of the best people in the field, like the guy who taught me lean *[manufacturing]*.
	He was one of the core people out of the main *[organisation name omitted]* implementation team, you know. So I learned from him. I was lucky, in having that.
	All the way through my career I've been lucky to have some really good people that have, have, … I've been able to learn from and aspire to.
[O4I5]	So it's kind of the, the … um … internalisation of it *[the understanding]* and then saying OK, well if I'm going to, … I've got to get from here to here, these are the barriers that I've got, these are the challenges that I've got, and what's, what tools are out there that can help me get there.
[O5I1]	It *[the training programme]* gave to you time reflect.
Q18 Could you identify for me the two, or three occasions in your life as a whole when you feel that you have learnt the most?	
[O2I1]	The third one I've thought about was actually in the last year here, I feel like that through the strategy … um … work that I did with *[name omitted]* … that felt like a very intense period of coaching.
[O2I3]	Well, I often reflect back on it.
[O3I3]	I was having these … um … mentoring sessions with an external mentor … and we started talking about these kind of ideas.
[O3I4]	It *[the academic course]* was a structured way of meeting people with different ideas.
Q21 Have you any other comments, observations or contributions that you would like to make?	
[O4I1]	I think this management thing, its all about behaviours. It's difficult to learn in a book but you have to try different approaches, don't be afraid to try something.

Table 4

Evidence for the influence of personal values in managerial decisions.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q3 Could you identify for me the two, or three main managerial challenges that you are currently facing?	
[O3I2]	There are some fundamental issues which we have to resolve really about … um … how we work, what our values base is, and how we work together.
Q4 Taking each of these challenges in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you are taking in relation to each of them?	
[O4I4]	You have to have some data and some facts to support whatever it is.
	That's my insight. I built that based on my beliefs and experiences.
[O4I5]	I went to him and said who could I go and talk to that would help me understand a little bit more about the culture, you know, the way people do business, and how things are done.
	As we built our relationship, it became more open, in that I was able to discuss what my approach was and round my beliefs and my values.
	Then work through how I was going to come to terms with my, my values system based on what I needed to do there.
[O5I2]	That's *[a collaborative and consultative approach to management]* what I try and do and if I can manage that, you know, I can look in the mirror at night and say well you did your best really.
Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O1I4]	There's a gut feel about (pause) things we've worked hard to achieve, which I guess is about certain basic principles.
	I think some of that's just personal about, … about, I have a, … about my personal values.
[O2I2]	It actually resonated with my own, kind of, life philosophy I suppose.
[O3I1]	There are ethics between *[profession omitted]* and *[profession omitted]* that are historical.
	If somebody's struggling with someone, I have to unpick whether its because of the, … you know, … the way that they work together or whether its because their values aren't the same.
	I think the more you meet people and you realise you've got the same values, the better that you get along.
[O3I4]	I want this team to be the best team in the world.
[O3I5]	It's the kind of approach that I like to take and generally has proved successful.
[O4I3]	That probably stems from my father, to be honest with you. It's just in the beliefs that, that he's given me … um … and the way you treat people. I suppose, yeah, I suppose I've learned a lot from him.
[O5I2]	It's more personal I suppose, but it's from … um … my Mum and Dad in a way.
	So it goes deeper than I… it goes into your very soul, really, some of your beliefs, don't they?
[O5I3]	A lot of the approach comes from I guess, my personality.
	I mean, I think that is mostly my personality and my outlook on things.
[O5I4]	I think it, its easy to think that, as I'm the manager, I need to know it all or I should demonstrate to the rest of my team that I know it all.
	I see part of my responsibility as a manager is to look for some developmental opportunities, look to provide them, if I can, with some variety in terms of the work that they do, … um … and hopefully therefore, you know,

	give them some sort of stimulus and some interest so that they're not on a treadmill of oh, its another month, same process, at the same meeting. Um … so that's the sort of thought process which has gone through my head.
[O5I5]	That's my style.
	It helps to build teams if you involve them in what's going on and you, and you provide them with information so that they can understand the context of things and you also give them the opportunity to influence.
[M1W7]	I very much will treat people how I would be expected to be treated.
[M1O1]	Oh, I suppose, ethics, I don't know. That's … oh … I never thought about that. I guess everybody has values … um … and … um … everybody somehow knows what's right or wrong.
Q6 In each case could you describe for me the decision making process that resulted in your decision to adopt the approach that you have described?	
[O4I1]	The first answer that comes to mind is having seen things that I didn't like in others.
	You know, it's seeing, sometimes people take an approach that I personally don't like as an individual, or I've seen other people not liking.
[O4I3]	For me very much learning about what have I done, what have I been through, what do I think works and what I think is the best for the person I'm looking at.
Q7 In each case could you describe for me the aspects of the situation that you subsequently used to monitor the effectiveness the approach that you have described?	
[O2I2]	A lot of it is a personal value.
[O2I3]	I have *[a]* fairly … (pause) clear set of values. Things that are important to me. And some of those things are around, … you know, … integrity. They're around … um … you know, valuing people. um … and they were some of the things that I didn't see in the new way that I had been asked to work. um … so, you know, that, that for me was something that would have always been untenable. um … and it was.
[O3I1]	When they're working together on activities they understand that actually they've all got the same values.
Q8 In each case could you describe for me the adverse indicators might have caused you to abandon the approach that you have described?	
[O4I1]	Sometimes I give up on some battles, absolutely, as well. When they are not, when I think they are not worth fighting. You have to pick your battles.
Q11 When you consider the whole of your whole career to date could you identify for me the two or three <u>most</u> challenging managerial situations that you have experienced?	
[O2I3]	So it was quite a difficult situation and our styles and values were enormously different and it caused me a lot of soul searching.
[O4I5]	So I've got my own cultural beliefs, I've got my own values system, and I've also got a *[organisation name omitted]* process. And then I had to go there and the biggest challenge for me was to understand what was the right thing to do for the region, and how that challenged my values system, which, which occasionally it did.
Q12 Taking each of these situations in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you took in relation to each of them?	
[O2I1]	I think a real sense of you know, not wanting to hurt peoples' feelings, … um … not being a bad person.
Q13 How much time do you spend thinking about the organisation and your role and responsibilities within it?	
[O2I2]	I'll talk more about work when there's a, … er … something that's against my principles or values.
Q15 What resources and materials do you regularly draw upon to help sustain you in your managerial challenges?	
[O4I1]	Observing the good and what I consider good and bad examples.

Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O4I3]	I think courtesy, dignity and respect, those sort of four things, those three plus the doing what you say you're going to do, I think that for me covers basically everything that you need to cover as a manager.

Table 5

Evidence of 'hedge trimming' provided by continuous monitoring and evaluation.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q4 Taking each of these challenges in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you are taking in relation to each of them?	
[O1I3]	A lot of it was learning on the job, learning as we went along. … If things didn't work out, we'd adjust them, try them again, re-adjust, re-evaluate, that sort of thing really.
[O4I5]	You kind of go in there with kind of a sense based on what you already know from past experience, benchmarking, to some extent with you know, doing a reality check, and then going forward.
	Then saying OK, well what did we learn, well that didn't work did it, so let's go and do that.
Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O1I3]	I think some things were better than others, so you drop the ones that don't, don't *[work and]* you, and you sort of focus on the ones that do.
[O3I5]	It's also developed through … um … you know the managing of the individual team members and … er … seeing what's worked.
[O4I1]	I'm trying to just stick into my mind and say OK, try and practice this and give it, have a go.
[M1W5]	And it was a little bit of suck it and see, really.
Q6 In each case could you describe for me the decision making process that resulted in your decision to adopt the approach that you have described?	
[O2I1]	I think it is, I was going to say, it's more instinct, it's more OK, this is working for me lets replicate it. um … And I suspect that is, … um … my approach, it's like this, is working for me at the moment, I'll keep doing it until it stops working for me and then I'll think I need to, I need to try something different.
	I think … um … what I feel success is, in my, is my own levels of stress, frustration. If that is minimal, I think it's working for me. So if I go home at night and go, "Bloody hell!" (laugh) then I need a new approach.
[O2I2]	It was a case of testing stuff out, getting new information, making decisions based on that, trying it differently.
[O2I5]	The course came to me on good authority and I believe what they said when we tried it out, so there was some evidencing there.
[O3I4]	Trial and error.
	Trial and error is probably the first one, where you try something and its not being afraid to actually try something and make, … you know, … make mistakes.
[O4I3]	But I think peppered with some things like the Harvard Business Reviews, you, you can get, you can start going in the right direction.
	If it's something completely new, sometimes you've got to have the belief to say I've got to the point where I think OK, I'm going to go for this, I believe it to be right. And you have to trust your own judgement. You put enough science behind it to the point where you can, but you also get to the point where being a leader you have to take that risk and say "No, it's my decision, this is the way we're going to go". And you live and you die by those decisions.
[O5I1]	Because it's … um … cutting edge stuff, you know, you're not necessarily getting it right first time.
Q7 In each case could you describe for me the aspects of the situation that you subsequently used to monitor the effectiveness the approach that you have described?	
[O4I5]	It goes back to this sense checking all the time, both externally and internally, of the right thing to do and very much it's still this emergent learning process.
Q8 In each case could you describe for me the adverse indicators might have caused you to	

abandon the approach that you have described?	
[O2I2]	I would just do something else if it's not working.
[O2I3]	There comes a point where you have to, you know, you may well have to say well that's not the right approach.
	If one doesn't work you move to something else.
Q15 What resources and materials do you regularly draw upon to help sustain you in your managerial challenges?	
[O2I2]	I'll sort of try it out.
	Some of the stuff I thought "Oh, that, I like that, that's practical, I can certainly do that, that looks like something I can try out". So I guess that's what it is, … I like to see what the practical application things.
[O4I1]	I want to have the time to absorb and practice and reflect and then try something else.
Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O4I2]	I've made my own tools as I've developed in my managerial and leadership experience, and I've also been given tools from other people. I've learned from other people, I've learned from, from what I consider to be good leaders and good managers. … um … I've seen bad leaders and bad managers. And I've made my choices as to which tools I want to use and what I want to learn from those individuals.
[O4I4]	There's fundamentals that I've learned, I've built upon, I've found better ways of doing it.
	What I've always done over the years is I've honestly tried to do things in the way people have laid them out and test them out for myself.
	So it's a base model but then I say OK, well, I think I could do that better or if I do this, then I can get that point, not through shortcutting, but I just find ways, with my experience in my actual situation I'm in, I can supplement that.
Q21 Have you any other comments, observations or contributions that you would like to make?	
[O4I1]	I think this management thing, its all about behaviours. It's difficult to learn in a book but you have to try different approaches, don't be afraid to try something.

Table 6

Evidence for the utilisation of both hard and soft indicators of success criteria.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O3I1]	I mean, everything is target driven. I mean, we're target driven, we have targets to meet.
[O1I2]	I'm looking at their feedback … um … on that, to see if they feel that, that seems to be the right direction.
[O4I5]	It really came back from feedback and us keeping our finger on the pulse.
Q6 In each case could you describe for me the decision making process that resulted in your decision to adopt the approach that you have described?	
[O2I1]	I think … um … what I feel success is, in my, is my own levels of stress, frustration. If that is minimal, I think it's working for me. So if I go home at night and go, "Bloody hell!" (laugh) then I need a new approach.
	I'm not sure there's a deeper evaluation process than my own sense of OK, I'm happy with the things, the way things are going at the moment or I'm not.
[O2I5]	The course came to me on good authority and I believe what they said when we tried it out, so there was some evidencing there.
[O4I3]	Feedback from my boss.
Q7 In each case could you describe for me the aspects of the situation that you subsequently used to monitor the effectiveness the approach that you have described?	
[O1I1]	First and foremost, and the one that frustrates me the most at moment because its not happening as well, is my touching base with the troops.
	Talking to the troops is very important.
[O1I2]	Through the *[designations omitted]* will be one way to, to monitor how we're doing, so actually going out and asking people what they think of us.
[O1I3]	We monitor key performance indicators.
[O2I1]	We set a lot of evaluation criteria around fundraising. It's very pounds, shillings and pence.
[O2I2]	Almost always for me, it's, … it's around feedback.
	They've got evaluations forms they can tick how happy they are.
[O2I3]	It was more informal, I think, than formalised.
	We wanted to get some clear feedback from that group.
	We sought that feedback in formal ways and informal ways.
	The informal measurement was, you know, just how well they, *[were]* sort of, engaged in the process.
	I think you've just look at the small gains that you get.
[O2I4]	Am I getting more positive feedback?
[O2I5]	I suppose what I'm doing is I'm using the milestones of the programme to say I need to deliver this.
[O3I2]	We have got set targets that we need to meet.
	The softer stuff is also what your team managers are telling you.
	Certainly you'd be looking at your targets every month.
[O3I3]	One is achieving those *[project milestones]*, is really important.

	So I mean, achieving those objectives is pretty important.
	There's other more intangible things, are they comfy at work, do they like being at work.
	I'd say by the quality of my contacts with them when I go to see them, … and from that you get that kind of insight into how people are feeling.
[O3I4]	We've been collecting that data now for nearly three years, so I'm just about to sit down and look at that data and actually see.
[O3I5]	Progress against the plan.
	What the consultees have said about the proposals so far.
	Tracking whether there's been any improvement or not.
	Whether they're feeling worse or not.
[O4I1]	It tends to be informal.
	So my measure is, how does the individual look like at the end, again, the body language, do I get any hints that, you know, something's not OK.
	Half of their goals are about doing their job right or, or doing their job, and achieving some specific objectives for the business for the year, and the other part of their goals is achieving benchmark in certain behaviours that we set.
[O4I2]	We basically have a number of, of reporting and monitoring tools which look at.
	We also have a *[sales]* pipeline monitoring tool.
	I guess the easy answer to that is you measure to an extent. You measure what you can measure.
[O4I3]	The key for me about choosing indicators, is it's got to be relevant.
[O4I4]	Some of the key milestones are to get sign off on the various initiatives.
	But ultimately, the measure is in the performance of the business.
[O4I5]	It goes back to this sense checking all the time, both externally and internally, of the right thing to do and very much it's still this emergent learning process.
[O5I2]	I always ask the staff.
	So it's the old feedback.
	Being out and about to be honest.
	You can't beat you know, floor walking and being there and being visible, seeing the problems.
[O5I3]	There's not really any formal monitoring of it.
	The main benchmarker we've had is direct feedback from the *[organisation name omitted]* on how, how well they feel.
	But there's been no formal monitoring how it's, how it's managed, it's been informal.
	I suppose on a personal level there was the success of maintaining my relationship with my line manager.
	That things were maintained on a professional footing.
[O5I4]	Clearly I want to be satisfied that they're happy, you know, they don't feel they've been pushed into a corner.
[O5I5]	It's just down to feedback.
	Talk to members of the team and find out … er … what their concerns are. Also find out how much they understand about it.

Q8 In each case could you describe for me the adverse indicators might have caused you to abandon the approach that you have described?	
[O3I4]	So, if all of a sudden people are not satisfied with the service any more.
	We're ISO9001 accredited so we have auditors all, swarming over us.
Q11 When you consider the whole of your whole career to date could you identify for me the two or three most challenging managerial situations that you have experienced?	
[O3I4]	Being clear about what you want to achieve.

Table 7

Evidence for management being a 'craft' learnt via participation in a community of practice.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q4 Taking each of these challenges in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you are taking in relation to each of them?	
[O1I3]	So you spent an awful lot of time checking with people.
	When I look back, it was a bit sort of … um … this feels right, lets go for it, … you know.
[O3I2]	What I did was, I tended to model myself on … um … the previous manager.
	It was only when I discovered that, actually it didn't roll smooth, flow as smoothly as I expected it to, that I had to start thinking.
	I also … um … used my own line manager a great deal to help, to guide me.
	So, I would seek help wherever I could really.
	I did my first attempt at the management training course then, all those years ago, about fifteen years ago, ten years ago. And that was completely a dead loss. It didn't help me at all.
[O4I2]	I've been with the company for a very long time, and I've got relationships right the way across the global organisation at all levels.
	I tap into my network both internally within the company and also externally within the suppliers and within the customer base.
	I've really used that, that's very, that's probably one of my strengths.
[O4I4]	That's my insight. I built that based on my beliefs and experiences.
	So that's the sort of approach we would take, and that's coming out of just experience of our organisation.
	This is really driven by change management from my experience.
	There are many, many examples of both cases that, that have made me come to that conclusion.
[O4I5]	I went to him and said who could I go and talk to that would help me understand a little bit more about the culture, you know, the way people do business, and how things are done.
	So I met this gentleman *[to seek his advice]* but I also met a couple of other people.
	So really, this guy became almost my mentor.
	As we built our relationship, it became more open, in that I was able to discuss what my approach was and round my beliefs and my values.
	Then work through how I was going to come to terms with my, my values system based on what I needed to do there.
	You kind of go in there with kind of a sense based on what you already know from past experience, benchmarking, to some extent with you know, doing a reality check, and then going forward.
[O5I2]	Something I always, I learned many years ago on a leadership course is, try and tell a story.
[O5I4]	So my attitude has been very much sit, watch, observe, learn … obviously talk to people as well.
	My honest answer is I couldn't say that I'm the sort of person who comes in with big plans and a, a very thorough and comprehensive strategy.
	Again, I think that comes back down to … um … observing and listening as much as anything else.
	I see that *[the approach to be adopted]* as a gradual and an evolving process.

Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O1I1]	The second thing is, I've been lucky I've got two *[designations omitted]* colleagues, very experienced.
	[The] strength of colleagues.
	The Director needs people to advise him.
[O1I2]	I've had life experience working with people, um… and I've learnt and made lots of mistakes obviously along the way, learnt from mistakes.
	We had action learning sets. And … um … I drew a lot of my um … support and help and ideas for, … um ... moving on and through this, through the action learning actually.
[O2I1]	I think, to a certain extent, my old line manager.
	We had a very good relationship, and I think he, … I used to come into his office and go, "Oh, I can't believe blah, blah, blah" and he would just challenge me and say "Well what are you going to do about it?"
[O2I2]	A lot of that environment stuff I picked up from having been on *[details of training course omitted]* training.
	So I experienced it myself. I also saw other people embracing it and experiencing it.
	I'm quite an experiential learner.
	She introduced me to some formulas, or ways of doing things and, and I then used that on a different session for something else, … um … to great success.
	When I was working in *[name of city removed]*, I had a fantastic manager and she used to, before getting me to do anything, she used to run these almost mini marketing seminars. So she'd sit down and explain what the strategy was, before I then had to go away and write a small section of it or whatever. So she was, she was, a bit of a, kind of mentor really, in a way.
	That comes from people telling me that there's a way of doing these things.
	I can read about stuff and buy into it, but I would like to see that *[happen]*, and I, … yeah, … I, I would need to really, really buy into something, I'd like to see it happen.
[O2I3]	This came out of … um … some 'Awaydays', when we were talking about the team. It came out of all of that, *[out of]* that dialogue.
	That's where we said, we felt we needed some help with it, because we weren't sure what to do with it.
	Well they helped us I think understand what the, what some of the issues were.
	I can remember going through quite a large discovering process.
	I talked to people such as my previous MD, who'd left, and sought his counsel and advice.
[O2I4]	A lot of that is based on previous experienced, of where I've done things before, or approaches that have worked, or not worked and some direction from, … from my Director.
	I don't learn very well from reading.
	I learn from doing you know.
	Talking to other people, my peers, just other heads, about … (pause) … you know, what they might do in their approach.
	Certainly, on the change management, it was definitely informal, very reactive, … (pause) … just almost subconscious.
	Very subconscious, very immediate and instinct I guess.
[O3I1]	I saw how that didn't work.

	I've watched and learned if you like.
[O3I2]	It helps also talking with … um … other people who are doing the training who come from other parts of the *[type of organisation omitted]*.
	I learn by experience.
	I learn then gradually by doing.
	Where it particularly helped me were the modules where we did a, some work on theoretical frameworks and concepts *[e.g. managing diversity]* and then had to do an assignment on applying that to a particular area of work.
	I'm a very practical person and … er … tend to be very hands on with things … um … and so I find it easier to learn in that application way.
	We did a module on strategic management and leadership, but that was all theoretical and I have to say, I struggled with that a bit.
	Sometimes I have to experience it before I can understand it.
[O3I3]	Obviously there's usually some harsh lessons along the way as well because um… not everything you do is, is successful and but making sure that you learned from those lessons and that you adapt accordingly.
[O3I4]	A lot of that comes from talking to people.
	I go away thinking … yeah, … you've got a point there.
	I've had time to start looking at how other people do things.
[O3I5]	The approach, the way I've modified that, is based on experience in delivering other similar projects in the past.
	It's the kind of approach that I like to take and generally has proved successful.
	I learned a lot from that kind of experience.
[O4I1]	It's a combination of experience and learning by observing and listening.
	So experience, just literally age, kind of makes a bit wiser.
	In my case it *[experience]* made me more open to understanding what being a manager is about, if you like.
	There are some, some people with the organisation, that I have learned from.
	Talking to them.
	There have been, you know, three or four maybe discussions or moments in the last five years with different, completely different types of people, that I have, you know, its kind of like "Oh yeah!", the light's gone on in my head.
	They were trying to tell me, you know, and help educate me because I was still a little bit in the, in the tunnel, not really understanding, you know, why is this not happening.
	So that's why I'm saying it's a bit experience and age and becoming more, in my case, more open to understanding and to realising what some of these managers have done for me, through their advice, and then little by little it kind of sinks in and it kind of, it makes sense.
	I'm trying to just stick into my mind and say OK, try and practice this and give it, have a go.
	There were some tips that were given through that course, you know, kind of, its all very common sense but, you know, going through experiences and there were some tips that I took from that course that I've then tried to apply and its worked, its made me feel more confident, feeling that you know, I didn't have to fear these situations, and I can actually deal with them.
	Its just trying to keep some of these tips in my head … um … has helped me.
[O4I2]	I guess the easy answer is … um … it's what's worked for me.

	I would say at the basic level, it's, it's what has worked for me.
[O4I3]	It is something that I've seen working.
	I think this is just personal experience.
	You just can't beat getting out amongst the people and actually having to deal with the situations.
[O5I1]	The learning comes from sort of conferencing and hearing about models of practice elsewhere. But it's also experience.
[O5I2]	It helped very practically … um … being able to go through examples with, with other people in similar situations, as to what's worked and what hasn't.
	There was (sic) a lot of practical examples … um … and some shortcuts you could learn from that as well.
	It was as much about taking time out as well, just to you know, just to think about it, discuss it, and look afresh.
	Having a forum. That was very good … um … where you could trust the people that you were with, so you could be very honest.
[O5I3]	Being pragmatic.
[O5I5]	It helps to build teams if you involve them in what's going on and you, and you provide them with information so that they can understand the context of things and you also give them the opportunity to influence.
	It is based upon my own personal experience.
	So I guess it goes back to that experience.
	Well in the voluntary sector, what I would see is people who are successful at motivating people who weren't being paid.
	I had the benefit of some very good role models.
[M1W1]	There wasn't any great um… research and development. I needed to actually make a change um… for myself and for the team, um… and it, it was one of the opportunist times I guess. It came along, something I saw I could relate to and implement, so I did. And we just got on well and, and he did a bit of mentoring with myself and, and pointed me in that direction.
[M1W2]	Um… so yeah, shared experience with peers and colleagues.
[M2W1]	No, I mean that is, no, that was through a basic … that was through a, er… a friend that … um … actually worked (laugh) for the British … um … Embassy there and I had a friend that worked for the British Embassy and I just got talking about the sort of the cultural type issues.
[M2W2]	Um … and as my old … my father's advice.
[M2H1]	That was very a conversation between me and the senior managers.
	So that, that very much was, was me and the heads of professions working through what's going to work best.
Q6 In each case could you describe for me the decision making process that resulted in your decision to adopt the approach that you have described?	
[O1I1]	Well, experience, yes, of how I had seen other places.
[O2I1]	So, I don't feel it's, *[that]* I'm entirely in isolation, just doing this with instinct … um … I do feel that you know, I'm bouncing ideas off people and getting their input into it as well.
	There are probably times when I'm not aware that I'm doing something, I'm just doing it every day.
[O2I3]	We knew, we all knew what the problem was before we went in, we discussed the problem, we really broke it down to all its elements, and then talking about solutions and they just naturally formed.
	We didn't go through that process of looking at different options, for different … it naturally evolved.

[O2I5]	And now I feel like I've got a toolbox of stuff to have a go at. But that's only just built up over time and managing more and more people. And seeing how people do it differently and seeing different things, working different circumstances.
	I think the third's a combination of experience and also … (pause) … choosing who advises you carefully.
[O3I1]	I've watched and learned if you like.
	[So if I] want to try a new piece of work, for instance, or, … or put something new in the team, I would see what other people have done.
	If there's anything new we want to try, I'll take it to the team meeting, and we sort of throw it around a bit.
	I don't think management is something static.
	I think if you're not learning and developing then you're not doing your job.
[O3I4]	Trial and error.
	Trial and error is probably the first one, where you try something and its not being afraid to actually try something and make, … you know, … make mistakes.
	I've got some great, really great, people working with me and especially my two *[designation omitted]*. I mean, I walk into town with one and I'll say, "What do you think we ought to do about this then?"
[O3I5]	I mean, it was fairly rapid dialogue because it was, … it was a high profile scheme that needed to be delivered.
[O4I1]	The first answer that comes to mind is having seen things that I didn't like in others.
	Things that I've seen with some of my previous managers, or things I've seen other people do and I've thought no, I, I, in the same situation I would want to do it differently.
	You know, it's seeing, sometimes people take an approach that I personally don't like as an individual, or I've seen other people not liking.
[O4I3]	I think there's a point where you can read about certain things but experiencing them is a completely different scenario and it gives you that much more insight.
	I think from that *[experience]* point of view, that's where I start to draw upon my career, … um … and the situations that I've been in.
	I read the Harvard Business Review and sometimes I think, its very, almost, I don't want to say chintzy, but its very, for the moment, they speak about buzzwords and everything else … um … so I tend to take quite a bit of it with a pinch of salt.
	For me very much learning about what have I done, what have I been through, what do I think works and what I think is the best for the person I'm looking at.
	I'll pick something, well I think actually, that may be a very good line or I like that, where that's going to, … and it can just be a kick off point.
	I had an ex-boss who, he taught me an awful lot, but what he taught me was how not to do things.
	I draw as much from that as I do from the manager I had previous to that, who I totally and utterly respect and still utilise as a mentor.
	But I think peppered with some things like the Harvard Business Reviews, you, you can get, you can start going in the right direction.
	If it's something completely new, sometimes you've got to have the belief to say I've got to the point where I think OK, I'm going to go for this, I believe it to be right. And you have to trust your own judgement. You put enough science behind it to the point where you can, but you also get to the point where being a leader you have to take that risk and say "No, it's my decision, this is the way we're going to go". And you live and you die by those decisions.

[O5I1]	Because it's … um … cutting edge stuff, you know, you're not necessarily getting it right first time.
[O5I4]	I think to a large extent its through regular liaison, discussion with my line manager who I've found very helpful and supportive.
	I think my steer has been from him.
[O5I5]	Of course, anyone in my position is going to have to think, well how am I going to handle this.
Q7 In each case could you describe for me the aspects of the situation that you subsequently used to monitor the effectiveness the approach that you have described?	
[O2I3]	So I'd actually, out of that adversity, learned a huge amount.
[O3I5]	*[That forum]* provides an opportunity for the team leaders to help themselves, help each other and share experiences.
[O4I5]	It goes back to this sense checking all the time, both externally and internally, of the right thing to do and very much it's still this emergent learning process.
[O5I2]	You can't beat you know, floor walking and being there and being visible, seeing the problems.
Q8 In each case could you describe for me the adverse indicators might have caused you to abandon the approach that you have described?	
[O4I1]	Sometimes I give up on some battles, absolutely, as well. When they are not, when I think they are not worth fighting. You have to pick your battles.
Q9 Were there any challenges where you were unable to readily identify an appropriate approach?	
[O1I2]	It's kind of intuition in a way.
[O2I3]	I think what we recognised is that we needed some expertise around that, somebody, as you say, that can really … um … help us shape what our approach should be.
[O2I5]	I suppose some of the training, some of the experience, some of the support I've got in place, I just kind of feel like I'm surrounded by lots of tools that if, if I don't know I'll go to someone and say "I don't know", and I'll find a way through that.
[O4I1]	So, the first time I went through it, I, you know I was like OK, I need, you know, I need some help, I need to go and talk to some people in the HRD department.
	I go and talk to someone.
	I find myself in a bit of pickle, I'll go and talk to someone that … er … that I trust, their judgement.
Q10 In each case, could you describe how you went about finding an appropriate approach?	
[O1I2]	I haven't had this aspect of the job role before, so I do have to look, go away and have a look at where those resources are out there, so I may be looking to other colleagues for their, for their help and support.
[O2I1]	For me, it was about … um … asking colleagues basically. It was about finding people who'd been similar situations and saying, "How have you handled this?"
	I also like to sense check not, what would you do if you were me, but what have you done in similar situations in the past, and what was good and bad about it.
	Sometimes it's previous colleagues and peers, sometimes, you know, it's the wider network. But essentially I like to, I often say, I think with my mouth open, so I like to talk things through with people. And sometimes that's about gaining their experience and sometimes it's just about working it through in my own mind. And working through where, where I need to go with that. But I think that's my, the approach that suits me.
[O4I4]	We go out and, and look for those who, who could offer a solution and if, from wherever we have connections.
	So people with great, great experiences in different businesses that are, that

	are more leading edge than what ours would be.
Q11 When you consider the whole of your whole career to date could you identify for me the two or three <u>most</u> challenging managerial situations that you have experienced?	
[O3I3]	He wasn't anybody who was directly involved with what I was doing then, he was just an ex colleague who's been a manager. And I went to see him a few times and just talked about it, and that was really, quite a bit turning point for me because you know, having someone else to talk to, to reflect on.
	A key thing, in actually handling and dealing with that change, *[was]* talking to somebody else about it, rather than just keeping it within myself. Because if I hadn't, I probably wouldn't have survived the experience I don't think.
[O3I4]	You know, you make mistakes and you think maybe I'll do it differently next time.
	Whether it was the right approach, I mean, I don't know, open to debate.
	We sort of did it properly, in that, we, for once in our lives, we did a clean up meeting at the end. And we learned an awful lot from that.
[O4I4]	The job at *[organisation name omitted]* has been relatively straightforward and has been very rewarding in as much as I've been able to take the tools that I'd learned in a lot of different environments, and just get on with applying them.
[O5I2]	In my profession you can, you can lift the phone.
	You know a lot of people and … um … so you can find out what other people have done.
Q12 Taking each of these situations in turn, could you describe for me the approach that you took in relation to each of them?	
[O2I1]	So I could have done it entirely differently and it may not have made an iota of difference, but I'd like to have tried.
	I think looking back, I didn't know, I wasn't as clear. I think now I'd do it differently, but I think that's with the learning of the last couple of years.
Q13 How much time do you spend thinking about the organisation and your role and responsibilities within it?	
[O2I2]	I talk a lot about that sort of stuff … um … with predominantly my husband, but also friends.
[O4I5]	I still do spend quite a bit of time outside of work reflecting on you know, what I need to do. That can be in the form of I need to get this done today to how that, something went or didn't go, how well it went or didn't, and what I would do in the future.
	Outside *[work]* I'm thinking about, got to get that done today, you know, I need to connect with that, there's a problem out there, I need to do this. Or you know, last week this happened, what can we do differently next time.
Q15 What resources and materials do you regularly draw upon to help sustain you in your managerial challenges?	
[O1I1]	I've come to terms with maintaining my sanity, and there's people, you know, there's some really good people around who are equally as committed and equally want to learn and develop and it's finding them and working with them.
[O1I3]	Well, people obviously, … um … people at work, people outside of work.
[O2I1]	For me it's all about people.
	I always think I'm going to read lots of amazing management books and, you know, buy lots of management magazines, and really get into it, and I never do.
	It's an interactive, two-way process. Somebody will say, you know, I've got a real issue with this and you'll start talking through what you would do, and you realise maybe, that you've got a tool that you didn't realise you had.
[O2I2]	If other people have said that they've used it and it's worked, then I'd be more likely to use it.

	[If] somebody's tried and tested it, then I'll do it.
[O2I3]	I had a coach for about eighteen months so that was, that was really challenging, but that for me was great just in terms of challenging the way that we do things and challenging my grey matter, is hugely valuable.
[O2I4]	Reading matter, of any kind, just doesn't push my buttons.
[O2I5]	Apart from *[my]* action learning set, which is very helpful, I've got an excellent, … I've got an external mentor.
	I use my line manager also as a mentor.
[O3I1]	The people I work with are my biggest resource.
	I learn from the managers as well.
	So people are a main resource, but I also read. I read enormously. I read around work all the time. I'm always reading articles and things. I pass things on. I share ideas with people.
[O3I2]	It's primarily people and talking with people, talking problems through with people.
	[The internet is a] way of finding out who's doing what, somewhere else, that you can go and talk to about.
[O3I3]	More than anything it's the teams you're working with.
[O3I4]	The support of, you know, one or two of my, *[key staff]*. I've got two [designation omitted], both of them, but one in particular.
	People mostly.
[O3I5]	There's input from my manager and guidance as to … um … how I should be dealing with certain projects, or concerns.
	Those *[external academic]* courses are actually predominantly most useful in terms of giving time out to think about how you're managing things and learn from other people on the courses, as much as from … um … the actual course content.
[O4I1]	People still, a lot.
	Observing the good and what I consider good and bad examples.
	Sometimes … um … asking people as well, you know, what they think about something. So asking people direct as well as observing.
	I want to have the time to absorb and practice and reflect and then try something else.
[O4I2]	From a resource standpoint, that's really the team.
[O4I3]	For me, it's *[the Harvard Business Review]* almost a debating tool with myself. I read it and think well, is that true, do I believe that, no I don't.
	I've got a very eclectic bunch of friends … um … from all walks of life, … um … and I certainly draw an awful lot from those.
[O4I4]	The most influential thing I ever did, and I still say this and this is like fifteen years later, is I went on a, the *[name of training organisation omitted]* programme out in *[location omitted]*.
	It *[the programme]* really opens up your mind towards … um … the way in which you behave.
	I constantly in my thinking, go back to that place and try to correct my behaviour in such a way that, that when I'm modelling the way.
	I go and talk to people that I know um … who I think might be able to help me on things, outside of work as well as inside of work.
	In the past I've had people that specifically were like mentors that I could go to on things.
	At the moment I'm not tending to do that an awful lot because I've got consultants I've been working with that have put a lot of input in. So that's really almost like been a big meal, you know. I need to digest that meal.

[O4I5]	I have a coach and I went through sort of, a sort of an intensive process with the coach, over a thirteen week period, where I'd meet with him, you know, on a (pause) on a probably every three week basis. , I tend now to be… utilise him when I'm coming up with something new and again, going back to my sense check, saying *[name omitted]*, I'm thinking of doing this, and then he'll, you know, we'll talk that through.
[O5I1]	The resources are the team and the administrative support.
	My manager.
	Colleagues within my sort of professional area.
[O5I2]	I'm very lucky that the two people that report to me, they're sort of strategic managers.
	We talk about a lot of issues together.
	I am guilty of picking their brains.
	That's a very useful resource actually.
	There's an awful lot of just sort of generally supporting and discussing things.
[O5I3]	There's people there *[in the unit]* that I can feel I can talk to quite openly about managerial issues and get reasonable, you know, get good feedback and so on.
	Plus fellow unit managers.
[O5I5]	Well the key one is resources, that's people.
	I have got … um … some extremely good team leaders. Fantastic. I couldn't ask for better and I rely on them really heavily … um … when we're dealing with problems in the unit.
	People first.
[M1W4]	Actually having a line manager, um… because when I first went into a senior position I was, you know, I had a good line manager then and I think it gave me the confidence and the experience, you know, to develop as a manager within the organisation. So I think, I think it is really important to have that, otherwise you can be a bit exposed.
[M1W7]	Well, peer support, so other team leaders. Manager support, so I'd go to my line manager.
[M1W6]	Well clearly, there's lots of human beings in my resources.
	I mean, man management… humans are the biggest resources I would use.
[M1W5]	I think the first one is people. I haven't got a formal mentor but I'd love one. And I have a network of people that I use for different things. So, you know, if I've got a challenge in the day, or in the evening, you know, I want to have a chance to reflect on it, there's a few people, certainly, I would think, there's probably three or four, that I would think about giving a call to and saying, have you encountered this, how did you deal with it, what worked, what didn't.
	I used informal … um … relationship with my brother to couch his advice.
[M1W3]	Well I have a, a person, yeh, is that … who works as one of our external supervisors … Um … she's um … a psychotherapist and very astute, … um … experienced person, who I find very helpful in considering relational impact of the work that I'm doing.
[M1W2]	I mean I touched on it earlier, but we also have … er … quite a large support network for managers of [organisational details omitted].
	Um … and we have regular kind of regional meetings for general managers where we share, you know, share common problems and stuff like that.

	Yep. I would, I would say that … um … its not an obvious drawing from the academic text and that experience um… and its more from peer to peer and, and kind of … um … practice from, you know, advisory organisations linked to the [organisational details omitted] but then, what I am aware of, is, is that a lot of that thinking probably stemmed from the academic side. So it's almost that I, you know, probably a lot of it is second hand academic, I don't know, information. Does that, does that make sense?
[M1O1]	I have some sort of informal mentor who, its interesting, it was my boss in my previous job, he wasn't my … she was one of my line managers on my previous job in a company. Um … and I, even at the time, I knew she was an excellent manager. And so even when I was at the company and she wasn't managing me any more, I would go and ask for advice, and I still do today.
[M2W2]	Listening to the other people that are on the course with me, I mean, there's only a couple of us from manufacturing, there's a lot of other people from the private sector, and there's a huge difference there. So its been quite interesting to bounce a few things around and it has been an eye opener to actually, some of the public sector actually say oh, 'cos we don't get any of that in the public sector, its much better what you guys have.
[M2H3]	A lot of it probably goes back to … um … you know, reflecting at what you've done, looking at how you can do things better, … um … and, and seeking advice from others if you don't know. And sometimes, its just about talking things through with them.
[M2H2]	Other people is the biggest one. Um … other people at my level but also … um … knowing … people is the biggest resource, and knowing who to ask … and not being frightened to speak to those people. Um … so one problem might be one particular person and another problem might be another person.
	I think people is the biggest resource in, … um … management.
[M2H4]	Right. Um … certainly colleagues.
	Staff are a great resource 'cos staff come up with great ideas and sometimes they just need you to look at how to help them develop those ideas.
	There are obviously kind of external people, external organisations, and obviously, if you're looking at implementing something, you know, somebody's done it before, approaching that organisation and seeing how they've done it and what they've learned from it.
Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O1I1]	Whilst pursing an academic anything, as you know, research is important. So you learn and you're taught how to look for evidence, and that's extremely important and then once you can find the evidence, it's how you apply it.
[O1I4]	Colleagues (pause), … um … (pause), … yeah, there are, I guess, I guess, occasionally senior management, managers senior to me, peers.
[O2I1]	I mean she's talked about things that they've done at *[organisation name omitted]* and I'll be like, "Oh yeah, whatever", and chat, chat, chat about something else. And about six months later we'll be doing something and I'll go … was that what you were speaking about when we talked about …. "Oh yeah, I see that now"!
	For me I think it needs to be put into the practical before I … um … probably get it.
[O2I5]	So, *[name omitted]*, he's got a huge amount of experience in other things, that's extremely helpful, for me to hear somebody who's been through similar things before.
[O3I1]	So I'm looking for new tools, I'm not looking for theory to hang the stuff I'm doing *[on]*, I'm looking for tools to, to work with.
	What I'm looking for all the time is new ways. I'm a seeker. I'm looking for new angles, new ways of doing things.

[O3I5]	So the theories of the wave of change from being mega enthusiastic to the pit of depression, then being suddenly enthusiastic and getting to the … um … the ultimate goal, is something I recognise and it seems fairly obvious to me.
[O4I1]	It's through the training provided by *[organisation name omitted]* that I've come into contact with some management theories … um … that I, I then try to, to make relevant to me and then make pragmatic as well. I'll kind of forget some of the words and some of the names because I'm trying more to remember some kind of examples or some tips that then I can practice.
[O4I2]	I get books to read, … um … that I will sometimes read and sometimes won't.
	That experience of managing people, could you learn that from an academic standpoint? I'm not sure.
[O4I2]	I've made my own tools as I've developed in my managerial and leadership experience, and I've also been given tools from other people. I've learned from other people, I've learned from, from what I consider to be good leaders and good managers. … um … I've seen bad leaders and bad managers. And I've made my choices as to which tools I want to use and what I want to learn from those individuals.
[O4I3]	I wouldn't say it's *[management education]* played a huge part.
	I'd say its far more, for me, far more practical based.
[O4I4]	There's fundamentals that I've learned, I've built upon, I've found better ways of doing it.
	It is intuitive now but it's based on sound practice that others have, have done extensive work to actually understand that's a good way of doing it.
	What I've always done over the years is I've honestly tried to do things in the way people have laid them out and test them out for myself.
	So it's a base model but then I say OK, well, I think I could do that better or if I do this, then I can get that point, not through shortcutting, but I just find ways, with my experience in my actual situation I'm in, I can supplement that.
[O5I2]	Experience, yeah, and what works and what doesn't work. What my mistakes have been, learning from those. Um … what I've seen other people do.
[O5I4]	I think from, from my point of view, … um … and as with any job, … um … you learn from practical experience.
[O5I5]	There are plenty of management theories, and practices available. Um … and I would struggle to remember half a dozen of them. But the ones that you do remember are the ones that end up being useful, and you can actually apply.
Q17 Could you identify for me any formal management education and training that you have received?	
[O4I4]	I've been lucky to always been working with people who've taught me a lot, so I've learned loads along the way. I've always been lucky enough to work with some of the best people in the field, like the guy who taught me lean *[manufacturing]*.
	He was one of the core people out of the main *[organisation name omitted]* implementation team, you know. So I learned from him. I was lucky, in having that.
	All the way through my career I've been lucky to have some really good people that have, have, … I've been able to learn from and aspire to.
[O4I5]	So it's kind of the, the … um … internalisation of it *[the understanding]* and then saying OK, well if I'm going to, … I've got to get from here to here, these are the barriers that I've got, these are the challenges that I've got, and what's, what tools are out there that can help me get there.
Q18 Could you identify for me the two, or three occasions in your life as a whole when you feel that you have learnt the most?	
[O2I1]	The third one I've thought about was actually in the last year here, I feel like that through the strategy … um … work that I did with *[name omitted]* … that felt like a very intense period of coaching.

	I'm slightly sceptical about management tomes.
[O3I3]	I was having these … um … mentoring sessions with an external mentor … and we started talking about these kind of ideas.
[O3I4]	It *[the academic course]* was a structured way of meeting people with different ideas.
[O5I3]	I think that *[my current appointment]* was a very steep learning curve and I probably learned more from the hands on stuff there which will be of benefit to me in my future professional career, … er … than I would from attending quite a lot of courses.
Q21 Have you any other comments, observations or contributions that you would like to make?	
[O3I4]	I am a product of somebody who's been somewhere and learned some theory and then realised in the real world that, forget all the theory.
[O4I1]	I think this management thing, its all about behaviours. It's difficult to learn in a book but you have to try different approaches, don't be afraid to try something.
[O5I1]	We all need to learn, we all continually should learn and there's always new practice.

Table 8

Evidence for the occasional, frequently time delayed, confirmatory role of ideas, theories, concepts and models.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q2 Could you give me a very brief overview of your career to date, and the kind of roles you have previously held?	
[O1I1]	It was therefore then being able to match to *[details of technical role omitted]* experience with the managerial experience and then using the academic thing to consolidate that.
Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O3I2]	Sometimes I have to experience it before I can understand it.
[O2I2]	Now I understand more clearly about it and I think that, that probably slotted some gradual learning into place as well.
Q9 Were there any challenges where you were unable to readily identify an appropriate approach?	
[O2I4]	I guess, I actively went out to source some, … some information to, … to almost sense check my approach.
Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O1I1]	Recently this idea, of my view of where the organisation finds itself at this moment in time, in terms of merger, took me back to some of my books and I went through what so and so said about it, to see if it reinforced my thinking about that.
	I won't use the theory to beat other people up, in obviously I'm right or whatever. I just use it as a checking process to make sure I'm on the right lines, that I understand where I'm at.
[O3I1]	I did the *[name of academic course omitted]*, many years ago, and thought "Oh yeah, I understand that now".
	I said about *[name of business celebrity omitted]*. And I think his intuition is not hung around by theory at all, but some of the theorists will say that's what he's doing.
[O3I5]	I think the theories are, I think they've been useful in confirming what a lot of my ideas are.
[O5I1]	I quite like them *[models etc]*, but it's sometimes, it's having the time to sort of refer back to them really.
Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O2I5]	So I'd say that, that *[name of model omitted] [is]* a very good example of, from [name of institution omitted] that I, I think, it consciously lodges there, helps me go where are we at, what's real, what is the situation we're dealing with here. It will help me define the problem I suppose, in some ways.
[O3I4]	I am a product, I suppose, of academic stuff which was very interesting and it didn't really teach me an awful lot, but you think, "Ah yeah, … right, … yeah, … Oh that makes sense now" ... and I've always sort of thought that, but now there's like a confirmatory science behind it.
	When you see it working and going, "You know, there's a realistic example there of what so and so said". I can't even remember who the so and so's are any more.
[O3I5]	So the theories of the wave of change from being mega enthusiastic to the pit of depression, then being suddenly enthusiastic and getting to the … um … the ultimate goal, is something I recognise and it seems fairly obvious to me.

Table 9

Evidence of the indirect, subconscious and even subliminal influence of ideas, theories, concepts and models about management.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q5 In each case could you identify where the approach that you are taking has come from?	
[O1I2]	I suppose it is a bit amorphous, … um … It is a bit, kind of, pick and mix-ish, really.
[O3I2]	It's a bit like osmosis I suppose, I mean, I may read round things … um … but I don't have … um … necessarily a terribly logical approach.
Q14 Do you adopt a set approach to doing this?	
[O1I1]	Oh it's kind of running in the background, it's just automatic, it kicks in, you know.
Q15 What resources and materials do you regularly draw upon to help sustain you in your managerial challenges?	
[O2I2]	I don't know, it's always subconscious.
Q16 How would you describe the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models about management play in helping you to discharge your responsibilities?	
[O1I2]	I think, yeah, it is very indirect.
	So yes, it is very indirect.
[O2I1]	I suspect that the theory side of it is fairly minimal for me. … um … It probably gets in there by stealth.
[O2I3]	I would always say that my, … my style is more an intuitive one, as opposed to a, you know, an academic one, for sure.
[O2I4]	What happens, with those kinds of things, is they then just go into my general mush of how I do things and what I learn.
[O3I1]	I mean what I'm doing this *[study]* for is my brain.
	It sits in the back of your mind and helps your work.
[O4I1]	It's through the training provided by *[organisation name omitted]* that I've come into contact with some management theories … um … that I, I then try to, to make relevant to me and then make pragmatic as well. I'll kind of forget some of the words and some of the names because I'm trying more to remember some kind of examples or some tips that then I can practice.
[O4I5]	It *[referring to models]* helps me to internalise it *[the understanding]*, I suppose.
Q17 Could you identify for me any formal management education and training that you have received?	
[O4I5]	I like models because they help me to internalise things and understand why people do things.
	So it's kind of the, the … um … internalisation of it *[the understanding]* and then saying OK, well if I'm going to, … I've got to get from here to here, these are the barriers that I've got, these are the challenges that I've got, and what's, what tools are out there that can help me get there.
[O5I1]	Unconsciously I'm sure it's *[management education]* there.
	I'm sure it's *[management education]* embedded.
	It has informed the style in which I work as a manager.
	I don't use it in a prescriptive way, I suppose is what I'm saying.
Q18 Could you identify for me the two, or three occasions in your life as a whole when you feel that you have learnt the most?	

[O2I1]	I’m slightly sceptical about management tomes.

Table 10

Evidence for transformational adult learning being prompted by 'rites of passage' and changes in 'meaning – perspective'.	
Source	**Evidence**
Q18 Could you identify for me the two, or three occasions in your life as a whole when you feel that you have learnt the most?	
[O1I1]	One of the biggest has got to be the birth of my daughter.
[O1I3]	You learn a lot at school and I'd have to say it's got to be one of the two or three occasions in my life, where I've felt I've learned the most.
	The second one for me was being a parent.
	I think the biggest one is the current role and responsibilities.
[O2I1]	In *[name of country omitted]* when, … um … I was working for two separate NGOs and was very young.
	When my line manager was on maternity leave at *[organisation name omitted]*, … um… I was suddenly thrust into a position with an awful lot more exposure, with, … um … and just had to do a huge amount and sort of, step up to the plate.
[O2I2]	I, … um … didn't get into *[University name omitted]* after school, which was kind of, there'd been a bit of an expectation of me since the age of about nine.
[O2I3]	So I think becoming a father was a great (laugh), was a great learning experience and great … um … life changing experience.
[O2I4]	I've had quite a lot of grief and I, ... I've learned a lot.
	It's a long time ago now, but I set up a whole new department from scratch and it was completely and utterly outside of my comfort zone. And I learned so much in such a short period of time and I completely and utterly got chucked in at the deep end, and I loved every single minute of it.
[O2I5]	The first is moving away from *[name of home city removed]*, and coming to *[name of work city removed]*.
	The second was probably travelling, … um… *[for]* eighteen, eighteen months.
[O3I1]	I went to boarding school at twelve.
	My first job was a huge learning curve.
[O3I2]	Becoming a parent.
	My own parents becoming ill and needing me to look after them.
	This job that I'm doing now.
[O3I3]	There's the kind of rights of passage thing when you go, you know, you got to university and suddenly you're exposed to things.
	I was having these … um … mentoring sessions with an external mentor … and we started talking about these kind of ideas.
[O3I4]	Going on the *[details of academic course omitted]* was I think.
	I was thirty at the time.
	It was the first time I'd been back to school for a long time and it wasn't like school, it was all experiential learning.
	It was a major bump, shock, bang, you know.
	I know it sounds corny, but birth of our first child.
[O3I5]	The experience of being at University, being away from home, mixing with other people.

	My first job.
[O4I1]	Personal tragedy, when I was young.
	The whole cultural thing *[of living and working abroad]*.
	It is fascinating if you have that kind of experience to go and live abroad.
	It's been fifteen years since I've been in the UK, … um … so I'm kind of very used to it now. But … er … yeah, that was a big experience.
[O4I2]	I would say probably my field sales experience.
	I was an engineer. I was a guy that designed. At the time I was designing and building assembly equipment. I'd never talked to a customer. The next day I'd jump in a car and my responsibility was to go and service this huge customer base and grow the business. And that was really tough.
[O4I3]	The first one was the day my son was born.
	The day I returned from travelling for year.
	The third one was when my dad told me what it meant to live by your beliefs.
[O4I4]	I was made redundant in a company I joined.
	Our kids were ill, all the way through, they had serious allergies.
	We had foster children, two damaged children for five years as foster children.
[O4I5]	Obviously my *[working]* trip to Hong Kong
[O5I1]	I think doing the OU, was one key time.
[O5I2]	Well, obviously having my son.
	Losing my Dad … um … suddenly about eleven years ago.
[O5I3]	Uprooting from what had developed into a bit of a comfort zone for both of us I think in Scotland. And then coming down to this area.
[O5I4]	The birth of my children would be the biggest. Er … I've got twin children who were born prematurely … um… so you know, you face a life or death situation and having to learn very, a lot of things very quickly. Um … that's the biggest challenge and learning experience I've gone through in my life.
[O5I5]	I came very close to … um … er … a nervous breakdown. I ended up with nervous exhaustion which is sort of the next stage down. And that was a, that was a smart lesson.

Appendix 2

Bespoke Compendium of Managerial Terms

Accountability
Action centred leadership
Action learning
Activity
Activity accounting
Activity based costing
Activity based management
Adaptive enterprises
Added value
Adhocracy
Appraisal
Arbitration
Artificial intelligence
Assembly lines
Assertiveness
Attention management
Automate and infomate
Baan
Balance
Balanced scorecard
Benchmark(ing)
Benefits realisation
Best practice
Best value
Blur
Body language
Bonus
Boundaryless corporation
Brainstorming
Brand
Broken careers
Budget abounded
Budget(ing)
Bureaucracy
Business process reengineering
Business to business
Buy backs
CAPM
Career anchors
Cellular manufacturing
Centralised administration
Centre(s) of excellence
Change
Change agent
Change management programs
Chaos theory
Charter mark
Clans
Clustering
Coach(ing)
Code of practice
Cognition
Collective agreement
Collective bargaining
Comfort zone
Command and control
Community of practice
Company man
Competitive advantage
Competition
Complementary team roles
Complexity theory
Computer-aided manufacturing
Conciliation
Concurrent engineering
Confrontational strategy
Conglomeration
Connected organisations
Connectivity
Constraints theory
Contingency planning
Continuous improvement
Control cybernetics
Convergence
Co-opetition
Core competence
Core rigidity
Corporate board
Corporate code of ethics
Corporate governance
Corporate social responsibility
Corporate venturing
Cost accounting
Cost centre
Cost-benefit analysis
Creative destruction
Creativity
Critical incident analysis
Critical path analysis
Culture
Customer
Customer focus
Customer loyalty
Customer relationship management (CRM)
Customer retention
Customer satisfaction measurement
Customer segmentation
Customer surveys
Cycle time reduction
Data mining
Data warehouse
Decentralisation
Decision tree
Delayering
Delegation
Derivatives
Differentiation
Discounted cash flow
Dismissal

Dissatisfiers
Distributed work arrangement
Diversity
Divisionalisation, product divisions, M-form
Double loop learning
Downsizing
E-commerce
Economic value added
Edge of chaos
Efficient consumer response
EFQM business excellence model
Either or and both of
Electronic data interchange
Emerging markets
Emotional intelligence
Employability
Employee stock-ownership plans
Employment benefits
Empower(ment)
EMU
End-user computing
Enterprise resource planning
Entrepreneurship
Equal opportunities
Equity theory
Euro
Evaluation
Evolutionary modelling
Excellence
Expectancy theory
Experience curve
Experimentation
Expert systems
Explicit knowledge
Fashion theory
Federal organisation
Feedback
Fin de sicle
First line growth
Flat organizations
Flexibility
Flexible working
Flexitime
Focused factory
Franchising
Game theory
Generic strategy
Geographic divisionalisation
Glass ceiling
Global manager
Globalisation
Go slow
Grapevine
Grievance
Groupthink
Growth strategies
Halo effect
Hawthorne effect
Head hunter
Health and safety
Heterarchy
Hierarchy of needs
Holistic perspective
Horizontal organisation
Human capital
Hyper competition
Imaginary organisations
Incentives
Incremental change
Induction
Information centre
Information ecology
Innovation
Integrated network
Intellectual capital
Intellectual property
Interchangeable parts
Internal customer (chains)
Internal market
Internet
Interorganisational systems
Interrelationships
Intranet
Intrapreneuring
Intrinsic motivation
Investors in people
ISO certification / accreditation
Isomorphism
Jamming
Job enlargement
Job enrichment
Job evaluation
Jobless economy
Joint ventures
Just in time
Kanban
Keiretsu
Knowledge management
Knowledge society
Knowledge worker
KPI's
Lateral thinking
Lay offs
Lead user analysis
Leadership
Lean operations etc
Lean enterprise
Lean manufacturing
Lean(er) and mean(er)
Learning curve
Learning cycle
Learning organisation
Learning style
Leveraged buyout
Life cycle costing
Lifetime customer value
Linear programming
Local pay bargaining
Locus of control
Low cost(s)

Loyalty
Management by objectives
Management consultants
Management development
Management information systems
Management training
Managerial grid
Manpower planning
Market disruption analysis
Market share
Marketing mix
Marketing myopia
Mass customisation
Materials requirement planning
Matrix environment etc
Matrix management
Matrix organisation
MBWA
Mechanical scheduling system
Mediation
Mentor(ing)
Merger
Merger integration team
Metcalf's law
Method study
Micro profit centre
Middle manager
Mind map
Mission statement
Moore's law
Motivation
Motivator and hygiene factors
Network analysis
Network organisation
New economy
New venture teams
NLP
Non-linearity
Non-value added
Norms
Objective knowledge
Objective(s)
One minute managing
One to one
One to one marketing
Open book accounting
Operations management
Operations research
Organisation man
Organisational development
Organisational memory
Organization charts
Organizational ecology
Organogram
Outplacement
Outside of the box
Outsourcing
Overtime
Paradox
Participative management
Partner(ship)
Partnership contracting
Partnership sourcing
Path - goal theory
Pension plans
Performance
Performance indicator(s)
Performance management
Performance measurement
Performance related pay
Performance targets
Permission marketing
Personal development
Personal development plan
PFI
Picketing
Policy deployment
Portfolio management
Post-investment appraisal
Post-modern organisation
Procedural agreement
Process orientation
Product life cycle
Product life cycles
Product portfolio analysis
Productivity paradox
Profession(al)
Profit centre
Profit pools
Project management
Project organisation
Psychological contract
Quality
Quality assurance
Quality circles
Quality control
Rapid prototyping
Real options analysis
Recognition
Redundancy
Relationship marketing
Research and development (R & D)
Resource based strategy
Restructuring
Return map
Return on capital
Reward
Risk management
Risk society
Robotics
ROI
SAP
Satisficing
Satisfiers
Scale and scope
Scenario planning
Scenario(s)
Scientific management
Scientific retailing
S - curves

Secondary picketing
Self managing team
Self organising system
Sense - making
Seven 'S' model
Shamrock organisation
Shared service centre
Shareholder value analysis
Simulation
Single loop learning
Situational leadership
Six sigma
Skunkworks
Small is beautiful
Social capital
Social loafing
Socio-biology
Sociotechnical systems
Software application
Spans of control
Spin-off
Spiritual intelligence
Stability and change
Stage gate product development
Stakeholder(s)
Stereotyping
Stock buybacks
Strategic alignment
Strategic alliance
Strategic business units
Strategic cost management
Strategic intent
Strategic planning
Strategic vision
Strategy as revolution
Strategy drives structure
Substantive agreement
Succession planning
Supply chain (management)
Supply chain integration
Supply management
Support function
SWOT analysis
Symbolic analyst
Synergy
Synthetic option
Systems dynamics
Systems thinking
T groups
Tacit knowledge
Target
Target cost
Target costing
Target price
Team briefing
Team working
Team(s)
Technocracy
Technology transfer
Theory X and Theory Y
Theory Z
Time based competition
Tobin's Tax
Total quality management (TQM)
Trade union
Transactional analysis
Transactional leadership
Transfer pricing
Transformation
Transformational leadership
Transnational organizations
Triad
T-shaped competence
Unbundling
Unique selling point (USP)
Unlearning
Valuation
Value
Value proposition
Value analysis
Value chain
Value disciplines
Value drivers
Value engineering
Value migration
Value system
Values
Vertical integration
Virtual organisation
Wage maximization
War for talent
Wellness
Win - win
Work - life balance
Work to rule
Y2000
Yield management
Zero based budgeting
Zone of indifference

Appendix 3

Complete Compendium of Interview Extracts

360 review(s) / feedback / appraisals
abandon(ed) / abandon(ing) / abandonment
abdicate / abdication
ability
above my head / over their heads
absorb
abuse / abusive
acceptance / acceptable
accommodate / accommodation
accountable / accountability
accuracy / accurate
achieve(d) / achievement
across the board
action centred leadership
action learning set(s)
action plan
adapt / adaptation
add(ed) value
address(ed) / addressing
adult
advancement
advantage / advantageous / competitive advantage
adversity
advice / advisory
advocate(s)
affinity
afford(ed) / affordable
agenda(s)
aggressive(ly) / aggression
agile / agility
agony uncle / agony aunt
agree(d) / agreement
align(ed) / alignment(s)
all hells broken loose
allege / allegations
allocate / allocation
amalgamation
ambition / ambitious
amenable
amicable
amorphous
an eye opener
analogy
analyse / analysis / analyst
anchor(s)
angle(s) / new angle(s)
angry
announcement
anonymous
answer(s) / right answer
anticipate / anticipation
anxious / anxiety
application(s)
appointment(s)
appraisal
appreciation
appreciative enquiry
apprenticeship
approval
argument
arrogant
articulate
as long as your arm
aspire / aspiration(s)
assertive(ness)
assess(ment) / assessed
assign / assignment(s)
assumption
astronomical
at my fingertips
at the table
atmosphere
attack(ing)
attainment
attendance
audience(s)
audit / auditors
authority / authoritarian
autocratic
autonomy / autonomous
available
avenue(s)
avoid / avoidance
aware(ness)
awayday(s)
awkward
awry
back door
back on track
back(ed) off
backdrop
background
background reading
bad news
bad old days
baggage
balance(d) / balancing / balancing act / balanced view
banana skins
bang(s) on the door
barren ground
barrier(s)
baseline
basic / basic level
basic principles
battle / battling
bee in their bonnet

been there and got the t - shirt / been there and done it
behaviour(s) / behavioural(ly)
belief(s)
belly up
benchmark(s) / benchmarking
benchstrength
benefit
best in class
best match fit
best practice
best value
bid / bidding
big deal
big fish in a small pond
big stick
big(ger) picture
bit of a pickle
bite the bullet / bitten the bullet
bits and pieces
bitter
black and white
black hats
blackmail
blame / blame culture
blanket approach
blend
blew my mind
blind leading the blind
blindingly obvious
blip
blocking points
blow(n) our own trumpet(s)
blown out of all proportion
blue arsed flies
blue sky
blueprint
blunt
bodge it
body language
boil it down
boring
bother(ed)
bottom line
bottom of the heap
bottom up
bouncing around
bouncing ideas off people
boundary / boundaries
brand / branding
brave
bread and butter
break out
breathing down your neck
brief / briefing
bring(ing) people together
broad spectrum
broadly speaking
broke it down
bucket loads
budget(ting)
buffer(ing)
bugbears
build / building / built up
building blocks
bull in a china shop
bullshit bingo
bullying / bullying tactic / bully boy
burden
bureaucracy
burn out
business case
business plan
business studies
business to business
business unit
busking
buy into
buzzwords
by the book / play(ed) it by the book
calendar
calibration
calibre
calm(er)
campaign(ed / campaigning / campaign(s)
candour
capability / capabilities / capable
capacity
capital / capital expenditure / capital project(s)
capture
cards on the table / put things on the table / put onto the table
career
career development
careful / care
carpet's (getting) a bit thin
carrot
carry that forward
carte blanche
carve up
cascade
case load management / workload management
cast that aside
catalyst
catch you out
catchment(s)
celebrate / celebration
centrally driven
centre of gravity
centre(s) of excellence
chain / supply chain
challenge(s) / challenging
champion(s) / championed
change agent
change management
change(s) / changed / changing
character
charisma / charismatic

chasing rainbows
chasing their tails
cheap and cheerful
cheat(ed)
check(ed) / checking / check over
checklist
cherish(ed)
chicken and egg
choice / choosing / chosen
chugging along
churn
circulation / circulate
circumstances
clarification
clarity
clarity of purpose
clash
coach(ing)
coal face
cocooned
code of practice
collaborate / collaboration / collaborating / collaborative
colleague(s)
combination / combine
comfort zone
comfortable / uncomfortable
coming clean
coming on board / jump on board / get on board
comment(s)
commission(ing) / commissioner(s)
commit(ed) / commitment
common ground
common sense
communicate / communication(s) / communicator / communicating
communication style
compensate / compensation
competence / competency
competitor(s) / compete / competition / competitive spirit
complain(ed) / complaining
completer - finisher
complex / complexity
compliant / compliance
component parts
comprehensive
compromise(s) / compromised
concentration / concentrate(d)
conceptualise / conceptualising / concept
concern(s) / concerning
concord
conference / confer / conferencing
confident /confidence
confidentiality / confidential
confine(s) / confinement
conflict(s)
conform / conformance
conjecture
connect(ion)
connotation(s)
cornerstone(s)
conscious(ly) / subconscious(ly)
consensus
consequence
consistency
constrain(ed) / constraint(s)
constructive
consult(ed) / consultation / consultative
consultant(s) / consultancy
contain(ed)
contentment
context / adjusting the context
contingency
contract(s) / contracting
contrast
contribute / contribution
control(led) / take control
conversation(s)
co-ordinate / co-ordination
core business
correlation / correlate
counsel
counter productive
courage
course of action
courtesy
cover(ing)
crack the whip
create(s) / creating / creative / creativity
credibility
crisis / crisis managers / crisis management
criteria
critical mass
criticise / criticism / critical
cross cutting
cross-fertilise / cross-fertilisation
crunch
crunch point
crystallised
culture(s) / cultural difference / culture shock
curriculum
cusp / on the cusp of
customer(s)
cut through the crap
cutbacks
cutting edge
cynicism / cynical(ly)
damage control
dark(ened) room
data / data collection / database / data gathering
dawn(s)
day to day
dead loss
deadlines
deal breaker(s)

deal(ing) with / dealings
debate
decide / decision(s) / decision making / deciding
decision tree
dedicated
deficiencies
define / definition(s)
delegate / delegating / delegation
deliver(y) / delivering / deliverables
demographic(s)
demonstrate(s) / demonstration
denial
department(s)
deploy(ment)
depression / depressive
deserve
design(s) / designed / designing / redesign
destination
destroy
detail
determine(d) / determination
detriment(al)
develop(ment) / developing
devolve(d) / devolution
diagnose / diagnosing / diagnosis
dialogue
diametrically opposed
dictat / dictating / dictatorial
difference / huge difference
different planet
digging heels in
dignity
dip in(to)
diplomatic / diplomacy
direct report(s)
direction of travel
directive / direct
disappoint(ed) / disappointment
disciplinary / discipline(d)
disconnect / reconnect
discover(y) / discover(ing)
discuss(ing) / discussion
disillusioned
dislodge
disparate
displeasure
dissemble
distribution
diverse / diversity
division(s)
divisive
document(s)
dominate(d)
doomsday
dotted line / dotted line boss
down to earth
downgrade(d)
download
draft / drafting
drag(ged) / drag(ging) on
dramatically
drastic action
dream
dreamlike
drift / drifting
drilling down
drive me mad
drive(n) / driving it
driver
duck(ed) it
dump(ed) on
duty
dynamic
dysfunctional
earmark(ed)
eclectic approach
downturn / economic downturn
educate / education / educating
effective(ly) / effectiveness
efficient / efficiently / efficiency
ego
elements
elite / elitist
embark(ation) / embarked
embedded
embrace / embracing
emerge / emerging / emergent
emerging markets
emotion(al)
emotional attachment
emotional baggage
emotional blackmail
emotional intelligence
empathy / empathetic
emphasis / emphasise
empirical(ly)
employees
empower(ment) / empowered
enabling / enable / enablers
encountered
encourage(s) / encouraging / encouraged
encroach
energy
engage(d) / engagement / engaging
engender
enrich(ment)
enthusiasm / enthusiastic
entitlement
entrepreneur(ial)
envelope
environment(s)
equal / equality / equal opportunities
equip / equipped
erosion of authority
essence
ethics / ethical
ethos
evaluate / evaluating / evaluation
even handed

evidence / evidence base(d) / evidentially / evidencing
evolve(d) / evolution / evolving
exacerbated
exaggerating
excellence / excellent
exception / managing by exception
exchange
exclude(d)
exclusive(ly)
excuse(s)
executive team
exit
expand my / your horizon(s)
expand(ed) / expand(ing)
expect(ed) / expect(ations)
expedient
expenditure
experience(s) / experienced / experiential
experiential learning
expert(s)
expertise
explicit(ness)
explore / exploration
expose(d) / exposure
extend / extension
externally focussed
extrovert
eye opener
face - to - face
face them head on
face value
facilitate / facilitation / facilitator / facilitating
facilities
factor(s)
fail(ed) / failure / failing
fall into a / that trap
fall into place
fallout
familiarisation
fannying around
fatal
fear(ful)
feedback
feedstock
feeling their way
field based
fieldwork
financial return
finding out
finger on the button
finger on the pulse
fire fighting
first among equals
first step
flag up / flagging up / flagged
flexible / flexibility
flexible working
flippant
float it past people
float(ed) / floating / floatation
floodgates
floods of tears
flow(s)
focal point
focus / focussing / focussed
foibles
footprint / global footprint
forces at play
foresight
forge(d)
formal(ly) / formalise(d) / formality
format(s)
forum(s)
foundation(s)
fragile / fragility
framework(s)
free rein
freedom
frenetic
fresh start
front end
front line
frustrate(s) / frustrating / frustrated / frustration
fudge
fulfilment
full on
full steam ahead
function(s) / functional
fundamental(ly) / fundamental issues
funnel
future
game(s) / play the game
gap(s) / gap analysis / closing the gap
gathers no moss
gauge
general manager(s) / general management
get a grip
get to the bottom of it
get your finger out
get your head round it / getting my head around
get(s) peoples backs up
global / globalisation
glory / glory hunting
goal(s) / goal setting / goal posts
goes in the pot
good practice
goodwill
governance
grand scale
grass roots
grease the wheels
green behind the ears
green field site
grey hair
grievance(s) / grievance procedure

ground rules
grounded
group dynamics
group(s)
growth
guide / guidance
guinea pig
gulf
gut instinct(s) / gut feel(ing)
guts
gutted
habit / habitually
hair-raising
hamper(ed)
handbook(s)
handle / handle it
hands on
haphazard
hard core
hard line
hardnosed
harmony / harmonious
harsh
hassle
hatchet(ed)
hate(d)
haven't got a clue / didn't have a clue
head above water
head space
headhunt(ed)
hear
heart to heart
hearts and minds
hectic
hibernate
hide behind
hierarchy / hierarchical
hierarchy of needs
hindsight
hiring
hit the buttons
hit the ground running
hit the nail on the head
hitting your head against a brick wall
holistic
hone
honest(y)
hopeless
horizon
hormonal
horse for courses
hothead
human dynamic(s)
hypothesis
ideal world
identify / identified
ignore(d)
immediacy
impact
imperative
implement(ation) / implementing
implementation plan
implication(s)
important / importance
improve / improvement(s) / improving
improvement plan
in at the deep end
in the loop
in the same boat
in the tunnel
inadequate / inadequacies
inbred
incidence / incident / critical incident
inclusive / inclusivity / inclusion
incredible
incremental change
indicative
indirect
induction programme
inertia
influence(s) / influencing / influential / influenced
inform(ing) / information / informative
infrastructure(s)
ingest
ingredient(s)
inherent
inherit(ed)
initiative(s) / initiated
inner strengths
innovate / innovation / innovative
input
insecure / insecurity
insight(ful)
inspect(ion) / inspectorate / inspector
inspiration(al) / inspire(ed)
instil
instinct / instinctive(ly)
institution(al)
instruct(ion)
instrumental
insular
intangible
integrate / integration
integrity
intellectual capital
intellectual(ise)
intelligence
intent(s) / intention(s)
interact(ion) / interacting / interactive
interest(ed) / interest(ing)
interesting dynamic
interfere / interfering / interference
internalise(d)
interpret(ing) / interpretation
intervene / intervention
interview(ed) / interviewing
introduce(d) / introducing / introduction
introvert
intuitive / intuition

inventory
investment(s) / invest
involve(d) / involvement / involving
ISO 9001 accredited / accreditation / accredited
isolate / isolated / isolation
issue(s)
itinerant
ivory tower
job description
job satisfaction
joined up
journey
judge(ment) / misjudgement
juggle
keeps me honest
key(s)
kick off point
killer line
kit
kitchen cabinet
knock on / knock on effect
knocking on doors
knowledge / knowledge base
kpi(s) / key performance indicator(s)
kudos
labour intensive
laissez faire
landscape
language
law unto themselves
lead time
lead(er) / leadership
leading edge
lean operations / production / processes / enterprise / activities / organisation / thinking
lean(er) and mean(er)
leap of faith
learn(ing)
learning as you go
learning curve
learning process
learning styles
left field
legacy
legwork
letter of the law
level headed
level(s)
liaise / liaising / liaison
light bulb moment
light touch
lights gone on in my head
line manager
link the dots
list
listen(ing)
literature
live with it
logic(al)
logistics
logjam
long hard look
loneliest man in the world
lucky
luxury
magic answer(s) / magic formula
magnitude
mainstream
maintain(ing) / maintained / maintenance
major
make sense / making sense
making links
manage(rs) / management / managing
management information
management team
managing up
mandate / mandated
manifestations
manipulate
manpower planning
manufacture(d) / manufacturing
mark them down
marketing
marketplace
match(ing)
matrix / matrix environment / structure / organisation
maturity
maverick(s) / wild mavericks
meaningful
measure(ment) / measuring
mechanism / mechanistic
meddle
mediation
meeting(s)
memory
mentor(ing)
mercenary
merge / merger / merged
message(s) / messaging
method(ical) / methodically / methodology / methodologies
micro-management
milestone(s)
military
mindful
mindset
minimal / minimising
minions
mirrored back to me
missing
mistakes
model(s)
modelling behaviours
modern / modernise / modernisation
modify(ing) / modification
module(s) / modular
momentum

monitor(ing)
moral
morale
motivate(d) / motivating / motivator / motivation(s)
move on
move things forward / moving things forward
move(d) / moving forward
mulling that / it over
multi - disciplinary
multi-agency
multi-national
mumbo jumbo
muster(ing)
mutual understanding
Myers Briggs / Myers Briggs type indicator
mystery shopping
naïve
natural / a natural thing
navel gazing
needle / to needle
needs analysis
negative / negativity / negative messages
neglect(ed)
negotiate / negotiating / negotiable / negotiation(s)
network(ing)
new horizon
niche
NLP
no brainer
no win situation
nodding
non-conformance report
notion
novice
nuance
nuisance
numbers game
numerical / numeracy
nurture
nutty problem
objection(s)
objective(s) / objective setting
obligation
obscure / obscuring
obsequious(ness)
observation
obstacles
obvious
off colour / a bit off colour
off line
off the record
off the top of my head
off to the races
off-shore
old fashioned
on board
on our hands
on the hook
on the right lines
one liner
one size fits all
one stop shop
one to one(s)
open
open forum
opening gambit
operating plan
operation(s) / operate / operating / operational
operations manual
opinion(s)
opportunity / opportunities
opt out
opt(ed)
optimistic / optimism
option(s)
order(s)
organisation of choice
organisation(al)
organisational development
organisational improvement(s)
organise(d) / organising
osmosis
out of the ark
outcome(s)
outfit(s)
outline
outlook
outsider
overarching
overlap(ped)
overloaded
overstepping the mark
overview
overwhelm(ing)
own(ed) / ownership
pace / pacing / pace yourself
pace of change
package
pain in the arse
panel
panic / sense of panic
parallel(s)
paralyse
part of the jig saw
participate / participation
partner(s) / partnership(s)
pass the parcel
pass(ing) on
pathetic
pathfinder
pay and conditions
payroll
pear-shaped
peer(s)
pen and paper
penny dropped / penny to drop

people centric
perceive(d) / perceiving / perception(s)
percolate(d)
perfect(ionist) / perfecting
perform / performance(s)
performance indicators
performance levels
performance manage(ment) / performance managing
permission
perpetual(ly)
persevere / perseverance
persist(ent)
personal development
personality / personalities
perspective
persuade / persuading / persuasive
pertinent
physical evidence
pick and mix
pick your battles
pick your brains / picking their brains
pick(ed) up / pick(ed) up on / picking up
picture / clear picture / paint a picture
pig headed
pilot(s)
pin(ned) down
pinch of salt
pinch yourself
piss about
pitch / pitching
pivotal point
placement(s)
plan(ned) / planning
platform
players
plug in
pockets
point the finger
polarity management
policy / policies
politics
pool of people
port of call
portrayed in a bad light
pose a problem
position(ed) / reposition(ed)
positive
potential
power(ful) / powerless
practical
practice(s)
practitioner
pragmatic(ally)
preaching
precious
predominantly
prejudice
premeditate / premeditation
preoccupied
prescribe / prescription
present / presentation
pressure(s)
pride / proud
prince two
principle(s)
priority / priorities / prioritise
privilege / privileged position
problem(s) / problem solving / problem area(s)
procedure(s) / procedural
process mapping
process(es)
procurement
product development
product(s)
profession(al) / profession(als)
profit and loss
programme
progress / progressing / progression
project development
project management
projects
promise(d)
promote(d) / promoting / promotion
proportion(ate)
proposition
pros and cons
provider(s)
psychometric testing
publicity / public relations
pull back
punch up
punctuality
push / / pushing / pushing it
push the button
pushed into a corner
put words in my mouth
put your foot / toe in the water
qualification / qualified
quality / quality management
quality assurance
quality of life
question(ing)
quick and dirty
quick win
raise the bar / raising the bar
ramification(s)
range / vast range
rank(s) / ranking
rapid rate
rapport
rare
reach out
reaction / reactive(ly) / proactive(ly)
realisation / realise
reality check
reason(s) / reasoning / reasonable
reassurance / reassuring / reassure(d)
reassuring noises

recognise(d) / recognition
recommend(ed) / recommendation(s)
record(s) / record(ed) / recording
recruit(ment) / recruiting / recruitment
rectify
red herring
red hot
redundant / redundancy / redundancies
referral(s) / refer
reference
refine / refining
reflect(ing) / reflected / reflection(s) / reflective
regenerate / regeneration
regime
regulate / regulatory
rein(ed) in
reinforce(d) / reinforcing
reinvent the wheel
reinvent yourself
reject(ed) / rejection
relationship management
relationship(s)
relentless
reluctant / reluctance
remind
remit
remunerate(d) / remuneration
renewal / renew
reorganise / reorganisation
repercussions
repetitive
replicate / replicable / replication
report(ing)
represent(ed) / representation / representing
reputation
requirement(s)
research(ing)
reservations
resist(ant) / resisted
resolution
resolve / resolve it
resource(s) / resourced
respect
respond(ing) / response
responsibility / responsible / responsibilities
restore / restoring
results / results orientation
retention
retrievable
retrospect / retrospective
revert(ed)
review(ing)
revision
revolutionary
revolving door
reward / rewarding
right first time
right place at the right time
rightful place
risk
risk management
rites of passage
roadblocks
roadmap
robbing Peter to pay Paul
robust
rock up
rocket science
role model(s)
role(s) / role profile
roll your sleeves up
rolling his / her eyes
rolling on / roll on
root and branch
root cause / root cause analysis
route(s)
rub along / rub(bed) along with people
rubbish / a load of rubbish
rule book
rumour mill(s)
run smoothly
running to keep up
safety
safety net
sample
sanction
sausage machine
scale
scars on the back
scenario(s) / scenario planning
sceptical
schedule(s)
scheme
scope / scoping
scoping / scoping exercise
scorecard / balanced scorecard
scratch(ed) the surface / scraping the surface
script(ing)
scrutiny / scrutinise(d)
search
secondment
seeping in
segment(ed) / segmentation
selection
self - preservation
selfish
sell(ing)
sense / sense check(ing)
sense of belonging
sensible
sensitive
service (development) plan
service level agreement
service(s)
session(s)
set foot in the door

set hares running / start hares running
setting the scene
settle(d) down
settlement
shadow(ing)
shape / shaping
shape up or ship out
share(d) / sharing
sharp edge
shift
ships that pass in the night
shock
shoe horn
shop floor
shortcut
shoulder to the wheel
sign off
sign(ing) up
sign(s) / signpost
signal(s)
significant
silo(s) / silo mentality
sit back
situation
situational leadership
skills / skill mix
skin like a rhino
sleep on it
slot(ting) into place
small fish in a big / massive pond
smart
smart arse
smokescreen(s)
snap decisions
snapshot
snowball(ed)
soap opera
socialisation / socialising / social life
software
solution(s)
something and nothing
sophisticated
sort / sorting it out / sort it out
soul
soul searching
sound bite
sounding board
sparks
speak their mind
specialist(s) / generalist(s)
specifications
speculation
spelt out my vision
sphere of control
sphere of influence
spin a yarn
spinning plates
spinning their wheels
slitting / split(ting) out
spooked
spot of bother
spot(ting) things
square peg in a round hole
stakeholder(s) / stakeholder analysis
stakes in the ground
stand(s) out
standard distribution curve
standard(s) / standardise(d)
standpoint
start to finish
starting block
starting point
statement / statement of intent
status / status conscious
status quo
stealth
steamed up / letting off steam
steer(ed)
step by step
step up to the plate
step(ping) back
stick(ing) out
stick(ing) with it
sticking to my ground
sticks into my mind
stifle(d)
stimuli / stimulation
stop still
storming
strand(s)
strategic plan(ning)
strategy / strategic
streamline(d)
strength / strengthen(ing)
stress(ful) / mental stress
stretch(ing)
string
structure(s) / structured / restructure(d)
struggle / struggling / struggled with
style(s)
subjective / subjectivity
submit(ted)
substantial(ly)
success / successful
succession plan(ning)
suck it and see
sucked into / suck(s) up
sunk without trace
superficial
superior(s)
support staff
support(ed) / supporting / supportive
surfing the web / surfing on the web
survey
survive / survival / survival technique
sustainable / sustainability
switched on
sympathise
synergies
system(s) / systematic

systemic
tablets of stone
tackle / tackling
tactic(al)
tailor(ing)
talk and chalk
tally
tangent(s)
tangible
tap into
target(s) / targeted / target setting / target driven
task(ing) / tasks / task orientation / task setting / tasked
teach / teaching
team / teams / team working
team briefing
technology / technology stream
tell(ing)
temptation
tendency
terminate
terminology
terms of reference
test(ed) / testing
test(ed) the water
testament / testimonial
testing out my ideas
the rest of the world
their chins hit the deck
thermometer survey
they rose to it
think(ing)
think(ing) on my / your feet
think(ing) outside the box
thought bubble
thought provoking
thread
throw away comment
throw it around a bit
throw stones
throwing my weight around
thrust
tick(s) all the boxes
ticking the box
tied themselves in knots
tight rein
tight-lipped
tightrope / tightrope walking
time / timing / timeframes / timescales
timetable
tip(s)
to dabble around
to do list(s)
to get their trust
tool
toolbox / tool kit
top down
top end of the market
tier / top tier(s)
touch
touch point(s)
touch wood
touching base
tough cookie
tough time
tough(er) / toughen / toughest
track(ing)
trade show
traditional(ly)
train(ed) / training
tranche(s)
transactional analysis
transfer(ed) / transferring / transferable
transferable skills
transition plan
transition(s)
translate(s)
transparent / transparency
transplant(ed)
treadmill
trend
trial and error
trial(ing)
tribunal
trick(s) / tricks of the trade
trigger points
trigger(ing) / trigger(s)
trim(ming) the tail
trips off the tongue
troops
trouble maker(s)
trust
trying my damndest
tunnel vision
turning people off
turnkey approach
turnover
tweak
tweak(ing) / a little tweak
twiddling their thumbs
ultimate prize
under fire
under the / one umbrella
underachieving
undermine(d)
underperforming / underperformance
underpin
understand(ing) / understood
untenable
up front
up to the job
upbeat
uproot
ups and downs
urgent / urgency
utopian
validation
value proposition(s) / value chain / value stream(s)

values / values base
veneer
vertically integrated / vertical integration
vibe
vicious circle
victim(ised) / victimise
viewpoint
visibility
vision / visioning
vocation(al)
vociferous
voice / hear their voice
void
volume
vow(ed)
vulnerable
walk on water
walking the job
walking the walk
warned off
warning bells
warts and all
wastage
wasting our time / wasting my time
watch
watchdog(s)
wave(s)
wayside / fallen by the wayside
weak(ness) / weaknesses
weigh things up
wellbeing
what it says on the tin
what the hells going on
where they are coming from
whinge-fest(s)
wide ranging
wielding a big stick
win(s) / winning
wing and a prayer
winnable battle(s)
woolly
work life balance
work(ing)
work(ing) it through
workforce
working capital
working group(s)
workload
workshop(s)
worry(ing)
worth its weight in gold
worthwhile
wound up
wriggle out of it
wrong end of the stick
year on year
your head's swimming

Appendix 4

Intertextual Decision Rules / Indexing Rationale

101 A reference to the requirement for government departments to create centres of excellence. The purpose of these being to support the strategic oversight of programmes, providing a continuous overview across all of an organisations portfolio of programmes, by co-ordinating, reporting and challenging what must be delivered and how it will be delivered.
102 A reference to a business process first used by Henry Ford II, who became President in 1945, and who subsequently began to modernise the organisation with the help of a group of 10 young men who had learned statistical techniques working for the US Army Air Force during WW2. Subsequently a term for analytical techniques taught by business schools as part of MBA programmes. A subject written about by distinguished academics, such as Mintzberg, Kaplan, Hamel and Porter, in both peer reviewed journal articles and books. A range of approaches now including the cognitive, configuration, cultural, design, entrepreneurial, environmental, learning, planning, positioning and power schools etc (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand & Lampel : 1998)
103 A reference to one of the nine codified team working roles, named plant, resource investigator, co-ordinator, shaper, monitor - evaluator, team worker, implementer, completer - finisher and specialist, that emanate from a programme of research into the effectiveness of management teams that was conducted, under the leadership of Meredith Belbin, during the early 1960's at Henley College of Management.
104 A reference to the substantial body of scholarship associated with organisational culture which can be defined as the values and norms shared by individuals within an organisation that shape and influence the way that they interact with each other and the external world. Some key contributors of insights in this area are Geert Hofstede, Terrence Deal & Allan Kennedy, Edgar Schein and Arthur F Carmazzi etc.
105 A reference to the codification of behaviour between members of the same species that is intended to cause pain or harm. Related to the 'fight or flight' response to predators and in humans may take a variety of forms including the physical, the mental and the verbal. Distinguished from assertiveness which has cognitive aspects and which is frequently linked to issues such as self-esteem.
106 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the disturbances that propagate through a transmission medium, usually with the transference of energy, often with little or no permanent displacement of the particles of the medium, but with oscillations around almost fixed locations.
107 A reference a perceived ability, capacity or skill to identify, assess and manage the emotions of one's self and others. Usually attributed to the doctoral thesis of Wayne Payne, but popularised by Daniel Goleman's book. Often measured and expressed as an emotional intelligence quotient (EQ).
108 A reference to the four stage process of experiential learning, concrete experience, abstract conceptualisation, reflective observation and active experimentation, developed by David Kolb and published in his book published in 1984. Subsequently codified into an assessment method, the learning style inventory, that attributes to participating individuals one of four preferred learning styles: accommodator, converger, diverger, or assimilator.
109 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to classical mechanics where momentum is defined as the product of the mass of an object and its velocity. Descartes, not Newton, was the first of the great thinkers who specifically used the term when he referred to mass times velocity as the fundamental force of motion. The law of conservation of momentum means that in any closed system, momentum is a conserved quantity that cannot change.
110 A reference to insights of Bandler & Grinder having studied the techniques of the three renowned therapists: Milton Erickson, Fritz Perls & Virginia Satir.
111 A reference to the leadership model, involving task, team and individual, developed by John Adair firstly at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and subsequently at The Industrial Society during the 1960's and the early 1970's.
112 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the phenomenon that is defined in physics as the ability to do work or to cause change. Several different forms of energy exist to explain natural phenomena, such as kinetic, potential, thermal, gravitational, sound, light, elastic and electromagnetic energy etc. A key physical proposition is that energy can be transformed, but that it can not be either created, or destroyed.
113 A reference to a psychometric assessment process designed to determine an individual's natural preferences for perceiving the world and making decisions. Based upon theories developed by Carl Jung and published in 1921 in his book Psychological Types. The related inventory was developed by Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Myers Briggs and published in 1962. The inventory categories participants according to their position in relation to four continuums: extraversion - introversion, sensing - intuition, thinking - feeling and judging - perceiving.
114 A reference to the formalised, systematic process developed by The Industrial Society (now the Work Foundation) that provides a consistent and measurable process for conveying both strategic and operational information throughout an entire organisation. It also encompasses both the potential for handling feedback and for answering questions via face-to-face briefing sessions.
115 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the diffusion of molecules through a semi-permeable membrane from a place of higher concentration to a place of lower concentration, until the concentration on both sides are equal.
116 A reference the regime introduced by government in the UK in 1999 in an attempt to secure continuous improvement in the provision of public services. Places upon local authorities a duty to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness and imposes a series of services reviews that are required to be performed in a manner specified by an inspectorate.
117 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the T-Group work of Kurt Lewin during the 1950's. Also an intertextual reference to Chris Argyris' HBR article of 1964 "T-Groups for organisational effectiveness".
118 A reference to a family of standards for quality management systems maintained by the International Standards Organisation. The requirements of this model include a set of procedures, monitoring processes, the maintenance of records, defect checking, corrective action, system reviews and continual improvement.
119 A reference to the team development stages of forming, storming, norming and performing as identified by Bruce Tuckman following his examination of empirical research studies.

120 A reference to the integrative approach of psychiatrist Eric Berne that combines elements of the psychoanalytic, humanist and cognitive schools. Developed during the late 1950's but popularised by Berne's book 'Games people play' published in 1964.
121 A reference to a process based method for project management and a de facto standard that is used extensively by the UK government and that is recognised internationally in the private sector. Developed by the Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency, subsequently the Office of Government Commerce, the original Prince was launched in 1989, followed by Prince 2 in 1996.
122 A reference to one of the three components, the ego, the id and the super-ego, of the 'psychic apparatus defined in Sigmund Freud's structural model of the psyche. First discussed by Freud in an essay published in 1920 and subsequently elaborated and formalised in 'The ego and the id' published three years later. Originally based upon fewer than 10 client cases.
123 A reference to the post war US government aerospace research procurement procedures that required an organisation chart for every project. This resulted in dual structures of departments and projects that eventually became the 'matrix' organisation. The first company to develop a truly balanced matrix structure was the McDonnell Aircraft Company in 1958.
124 An intertextual reference to Edwin Locke and Gary Latham's 'goal theory' and the notion that individuals sometimes have a drive to reach a clearly defined end state and that a goal's efficiency is affected by three features: proximity, difficulty and specificity.
125 A reference to the leadership model, involving directing, coaching, supporting and delegating, developed by Ken Blanchard & Paul Hersey during the 1960's after studying what made leaders successful. There conclusion was that the success of these individuals lay not in a particular style, but the ability to adapt their style according to the situation.
126 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the point, near or within a body, through which its weight can be assumed to act when considering either forces upon the body or its motion under gravity. The centre of gravity and the centre of mass coincide in a uniform gravitational field.
127 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to Charles Darwin's 'origin of the species' and his discovery of the processes of 'natural selection'.
128 A reference to the generic, process management philosophy derived from the Toyota Production System by Taiichi Ohno, Shigeo Shingo and Eiji Toyoda between 1948 and 1975 which drew heavily upon the previous work of W. Edwards Deming.
129 A reference to the work of Keith Oliver, of consultants Booz Allen Hamilton, who during the 1970's was working at Phillips to remove functional silos. The term supply chain management was first used by Oliver in a FT article of 1982.
130 A reference to the leadership model, involving inspiring shared vision, modelling the way, challenging the process, enabling others to act and encouraging the heart developed by James M Kouzes & Barry Z Posner.
131 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the discipline of "static's" within structural engineering and the point about which a mass rotates. For an object to be balanced the pivot point needs to be in line with the centre of mass and the moments (the product of the mass and the distance from the pivot) either side of the pivot need to be equal.
132 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the tendency of a body to remain at rest, to move at a constant velocity, or to continue in a straight line unless acted upon by an external force. A fundamental principle of classical physics and one of Newton's laws.
133 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to part of Karl Mark's and Friedrich Engle's theory of historical materialism which was studied, analysed, characterised and subsequently popularised by the political economist and sociologist Max Weber. A topic that continues to be discussed in some influential academic circles by contemporary political scientists such as Theodore J. Lowi.
134 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the point from which light (or radiation) diverges, or the point at which it converges.
201 A reference to Influential individuals whose backing can ensure that a project or invention gets a chance to prove itself. A finding of Peters and Waterman's, In Search of Excellence was that organisations that nurtured champions were more likely to qualify as excellent.
202 A reference to an idea, or concept.
203 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to communicating, or maintaining a relationship. The expression refers to baseball and the practice of a player briefly touching each of the bases when he runs around after hitting a home run; therefore touching base is briefly checking in.
204 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the practice of software programmers of providing crude solution or programming implementation that is imperfect, inelegant, or otherwise inadequate, but which solves or masks the problem at hand, and is generally faster and easier to put in place than a proper solution. Microsoft's first operating system, MS-DOS, was originally called Quick and Dirty Operating System (QDOS), prior to its purchase from Seattle Computer Products.
205 A reference to a work familiarisation programme for school students where the student accompanies a member of a profession to gain an insight into the realities of a potential career.
206 A reference to an organisation's main or essential activities that in the late 20th century resulted in the 'unbundling' of corporations as enterprises outsourced their non-core activities. A intertextual reference to Hamel & Prahalad's core competencies as being the portfolio of skills, technologies and capabilities that an organisation does well, that give it the ability to attract customers and that give it an advantage over its competitors.
207 A reference to a person or organization that monitors and publicises the behaviour of individuals, corporations, or governments etc to discover undesirable activity.
208 A reference to a short phrase or sentence that deftly captures the essence of what a speaker is trying to say. Thought to be an interdisciplinary intertextual reference to Mark Twain's description of the proper proportions of a maxim as being 'A minimum of sound to a maximum of sense'.
209 A reference to an idea, or concept.

210 A reference to the process of consciously working with a boss to obtain the best possible results for the subordinate, the boss, and the organization. It is a deliberate effort to bring understanding and cooperation to a relationship between individuals who often have different perspectives.
211 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the need for an individual to rise to a challenge. The expression refers to baseball and the need for a player to approach the 'home plate' to take a turn at batting. The home plate is the final base in baseball that a player must touch to score. The expression was first used in baseball usage in 1875 and first entered general usage in 1919.
212 A reference to the interchange between different cultures or different ways of thinking that is mutually productive and beneficial.
213 A reference to the process through which a trade or occupation is transformed through the development of formal qualifications based upon education and examinations, the emergence of regulatory bodies with powers to admit and discipline members, and some degree of monopoly rights.
214 A reference to an idea, or concept.
215 A reference to the process of recruiting individuals to fill executive positions in organizations by utilising an outside executive search organization. An interdisciplinary intertextual reference the practice of taking a person's head after killing them the purpose of which has been intensely debated by anthropologists.
216 A reference to an idea, or concept.
217 A reference to a person whose presence or thought processes cause a change from the traditional way of handling or thinking about a problem.
218 A reference to an idea, or concept.
219 A reference to an idea, or concept.
220 A reference to an idea, or concept.
221 A reference to the belief that a particular, identifiable technique, method, process or activity is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other. These can be defined as representing the most efficient (least amount of effort) and effective (best results) way of accomplishing a task, based on repeatable procedures that have proven themselves over time for large numbers of people.
222 A reference to an idea, or concept.
223 A reference to an idea, or concept.
224 A reference to a lack of communication and common goals between departments in an organization. The silo effect gets its name from the farm storage silo, probably because there could be two silos right next to each other and if people were inside them they would not be able to communicate, since silos are tall, narrow buildings with no windows and are even supposed to be airtight.
225 A reference to an idea, or concept.
226 A reference to an idea, or concept.
227 A reference to a narrowness of viewpoint as a result of concentrating upon a single viewpoint, or opinion etc to the exclusion of others. An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to a number of medical conditions that result in the loss of peripheral vision with retention of central vision, resulting in a constricted circular tunnel-like field of vision.
228 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the ritual that marks a change in a person's social status. Used by anthropologists to discern the social hierarchies, values and beliefs that are important in specific cultures. Frequently accompanied by ceremonies surrounding events such as childbirth, coming of age, marriage, weddings and death etc.
229 A reference to an idea, or concept.
230 A reference to the arrangement of objects, people, orders, or elements etc according to value, grade, category, or class, etc. A feature of bureaucratic organisations is that each office holder is subordinate to the one above it and that every official’s role determined by their office. First discussed by Max Weber in the 1920’s.
231 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to a technique used in filmmaking in which shots of two or more separate, usually concurrent scenes are interwoven. The technique was made famous by Edwin S. Porter's 1903 film, The Great Train Robbery.
232 A reference to an idea, or concept.
233 A reference to an idea, or concept.
234 A reference to the links, as shown on an organizational chart, that exist between managers and staff whom they oversee indirectly rather than on a day-to-day basis. A feature of matrix management organisations. It means that the person has dual responsibilities, both to their line manager and to another person or entity such as a project team.
235 A reference to an idea, or concept.
236 A reference to an idea, or concept.
237 A reference to a system of ownership favoured by some large corporations for integrating a number of companies to form a wholly owned, complete supply chain. One of the earliest, largest and most famous examples was the Carnegie Steel company where Andrew Carnegie dominated US steel production by integrating coalmines, steel

plants, coke ovens, ore barges and railways from c1870 to c1900.
238 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the practice of performing in public places for tips and gratuities. Busking performances can be just about anything that the audience find entertaining.
239 A reference to an idea, or concept.
240 A reference to the the early 19th century practice of distracting the hounds from the scent of a fox by dragging heavily smoked, deep brownish red and highly pungent herrings across their path.
241 A reference to an idea, or concept.
242 A reference to an idea, or concept.
243 A reference to the individual who is willing to take responsibility for the success of a new enterprise, or venture, and who assumes accountability for both the inherent risks and the eventual outcome. Seen by some as an individual who is also willing to accept a high level of personal, professional or financial risk to pursue an opportunity. The term is a loanword from French and was first defined by the Irish economist Richard Cantillon.
244 An intertextual reference to the process of globalisation through which the world is seen as being more interconnected and can be seen as making the world economy dominated by capitalist models.
245 A reference to individuals whose role is to discover the way. An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to a governmental programme covering all departments that funds experimental field work to improve services and social concerns.
246 A reference to an idea, or concept.
247 A reference to a person or a team who are used as a type of 'bounce back', allowing the person talking to see how their ideas sound. The person acting as sounding board is not really expected to give their own opinion, but simply to react to what is being said. An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the part of a string instrument that transmits the vibrations of the strings to the air, greatly increasing the loudness of sound over that of the string alone.
248 A reference to the increased participation of employees in the enterprise for which they work. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, a former editor of the HBR, is a leading exponent of empowerment as an aid to releasing forces for innovation and change. An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the ritual in Tibetan Buddhism which initiates a student into a particular tantric deity practice.
249 A reference to decentralisation and the granting of substantial amounts of managerial power, authority and accountability, away from the centre of a large corporation to semi-autonomous business units. First written about by Alfred Chandler in the 1960's, but put into practice by Alfred P. Sloan of General Motors during the 1920's. Also an interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the statutory granting of powers from the central government of a state to government at a sub-national level, such as a regional, local, or state level.
250 A reference to a situation where the final outcome of a system is greater than the sum of its parts.
301 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to a developmental production of a play, with a significant amount of rehearsal, but with less fully realized production values than a full production and more broadly a reference to a set of activities designed to promote learning, discussion and feedback about a topic or event.
302 A reference to a form of behaviour.
303 A reference to a participative means of business planning where broad objectives and parameters are set by the executive team and the detailed operational planning is completed by those with responsibility for delivery of the desired outcomes.
304 A reference to a form of behaviour.
305 A reference to a form of behaviour.
306 A reference to a form of behaviour.
307 A reference to a form of behaviour.
308 A reference to an approach.
309 A reference to an approach.
310 A reference to a form of behaviour.
311 A reference to a form of behaviour.
312 A reference to a form of behaviour.
313 A reference to a form of behaviour.
314 A reference to an approach.
315 A reference to an approach.

316 A reference to a form of behaviour.
317 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to a form of government in which the political power is held by a single, self-appointed ruler. Usually seen as synonymous with despot, tyrant or dictator, though each of these terms originally had a separate and distinct meaning.
318 A reference to a means of making business discussions easier for the participants by the appointment of an impartial individual to preside over the arrangements with the objective of guiding the participants towards a consensus.
319 A reference to a form of behaviour.
320 A reference to a form of dispute resolution that aims to assist two (or more) disputants in reaching an agreement. The parties themselves determine the conditions of any settlements reached, rather than accepting something imposed by a third party. The disputants may be states, organizations, communities, or individuals.
321 A reference to an approach.
322 A reference to a form of behaviour.
323 A reference to a a dialogue intended to resolve disputes, to produce an agreement upon courses of action, to bargain for individual or collective advantage, or to craft outcomes to satisfy various interests. It is the primary method of dispute resolution.
324 A reference to a form of behaviour.
325 A reference to a diverse group of people, with a range of complementary experience, knowledge and skills, working together temporarily until a previously specified goal is achieved.
326 A reference to a form of behaviour.
327 A reference to a form of behaviour.
328 A reference to a form of behaviour.
329 A reference to an approach.
330 A reference to a form of business transaction in which a contractor is are responsible for a project from construction through to commissioning. However it may also include follow on activities such as training, logistical, and operational support.
331 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the branch of philosophy involving the study of the principles of valid demonstration and inference.
332 A reference to a subgroup of people or organizations sharing one or more characteristics that cause them to have similar product and / or service needs. A true market segment is distinct from other segments, is homogeneous within the segment; responds similarly to a market stimulus, and can be reached by a market intervention.
333 A reference to an approach.
334 A reference to an approach.
335 A reference to a form of behaviour.
336 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the act of renouncing and resigning from a formal office, especially from the supreme office of state. The term commonly applies to monarchs, or those who have been formally crowned.
337 A reference to a form of behaviour.
338 A reference to an approach.
340 A reference to a form of behaviour.
341 A reference to a form of behaviour.
401 A reference to a means of ensuring that an organisation has access to sufficient talent to ensure its future success. Aspects that might be involved include recruitment, retention, skills assessment, training and development, rewards and compensation, performance appraisal and even outsourcing etc.
402 A reference to a means of formally identifying the performance difference between the current organisational capability and that which is optimum.
403 A reference to a means of codifying the general responsibilities, functions and tasks of a post holder that typically includes details of to whom the individual reports, the qualifications required, the competences and skills expected and the salary etc.
404 A reference to a means of measuring both the financial and non-financial performance of an organisation in the strategic areas that are critical to its success.
405 A reference to a means formally assessing and subsequently managing and monitoring the risks to which an enterprise is exposed. The level of risk is usually expressed in terms of the likelihood of an event occurring and the potential organisational consequences should it do so.

406 A reference to a means of codifying an understanding shared by a provider and a customer regarding a service in terms of its availability, serviceability, performance, operation and other attributes, including the level of service that the customer is entitled to expect.
407 A reference to a means of describing the purpose and structure of a committee, working group, or project etc. The document will frequently seek to clarify who will be involved, what is to be achieved, how it will be achieved, when it is required to be completed and the non-negotiable constraints that will apply etc.
408 A reference to a means of determining the tasks to be undertaken and the sequence, or time of day etc in which this will be undertaken.
409 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to a means within operational research of supporting decision making by analysing all of the possible options and their likely outcomes, costs and effectiveness.
410 A reference to a means of expressing an organisation plan in financial terms. Frequently this takes the form of an annual forecast of income and expenditure that is produced with the objective of both measuring and controlling the operation of the enterprise against the agreed strategies, events and plans.
411 An intertextual reference to 'stakeholder analysis' as a means of formally identifying both those who are likely to be affected by an organisations activities and the precise nature of the impacts,. Includes identifying and describing the interests and relationships of all such individuals, organisations and interest groups.
412 A reference to either an organisational, or individual goal that it intended to be attained and which is believed to be attainable.
413 A reference to a means of providing a memory aid with the objective of ensuring consistency, compliance, standardisation, completeness in carrying out a task and the avoidance of errors and omissions
414 A reference to a largely unstructured list of tasks that need to be accomplished.
415 A reference to a means of ensuring that the management of an organisation devotes its time to dealing with those aspects of its operations where the performance differs significantly from that which was intended.
416 A reference to a means of understanding the non-verbal messages that are communicated via gestures, posture and facial expressions etc. Usually viewed as being indicative of an individuals physical, mental and emotional state, they are considered by many to be difficult to either control or conceal.
417 A reference to a means of setting goals that are specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time bound. A potential intertextual reference to 'management by objectives' which was first discussed by Peter Drucker in his book The Practice of Management in 1954.
418 A reference to a means of planning a series of activities, tasks, or steps designed to achieve an objective or goal.
419 A reference to a means of attempting to ensure that an organisation has a viable internal candidate for key appointments that might become vacant. Aspects that might be involved in preparing suitable employees include coaching, mentoring, training and job rotation etc.
420 A reference to a means of comparing the performance of key business processes, usually within the same business sector. The objective is to identify best practice and to develop improvements plans, usually within the context of a philosophy of continuous improvement, through which an organisation seeks to continually challenges its practices. First used by Xerox in 1979 and first reported in the journal Training & Development in 1984, subsequently featured in HBR in 1987.
421 A reference to a means of making a formal statement regarding the goals of an enterprise, the reasons why these are thought to be attainable and the plans for realising these. May also include background information about the organisation and the management.
422 An intertextual reference to 'balanced scorecard' which is a means of providing an overview the measures that both influence and underlie an organisations performance. The core rationale being that the financial outcomes will always 'lag behind' these indicators and will be determined by them. Developed by Art Schneiderman of Analog Devise in 1987 the approach was included in lectures given by Robert Kaplan at Harvard Business School. Subsequently written about by Robert Kaplan & David Norton, during the 1990's, in both HBR articles and a book.
423 A reference to a means of authorising subordinates to make decisions within a codified framework that gives authority and responsibility to the individual concerned, whilst accountability for the outcome remains with the delegator.
424 A reference to a means undertaking market research in which the research poses as a normal customer, client, or service user to gather information.
425 A reference to a means of turning a strategy into a series of activities, or tasks.
426 A reference to a means of listing meeting activities in the order in which they will be discussed. It may include the time that will be allocated to one or more activity.
427 A reference to a means of distinguishing the important from the urgent and of sequencing tasks and activities.
428 A reference to a means of depicting a business process in diagrammatic form and defining the key inputs and outputs, with the objective of optimising its performance.

Appendix 5

Intertextual Interview Extracts in Context

101 Within two years we had re-established training on the site which had been taken away from them by the Board. ... Um … We had ... um … separated [details omitted] from [details omitted], running as two separate [details omitted] and we had, ... um … the [details omitted] services beginning to be identified as **centres of excellence**.
102 I chose HR ... um … because I'm a firm believer that our business is people and HR is a lot more than just talking to the people, its about **strategic planning** of ... um … services, manpower planning, ... um … it was all aspects of the business.
103 I mean, I'm a big, ... um … [details omitted] came out as a plant so I'm up in the sky sometimes looking for new stuff and I guess one of the, one of my biggest weaknesses is I'm not a **completer - finisher**.
104 So that's how, how we sort of go about ... um … maintaining and performance managing, you know, once we've agreed on the service specs. In terms of how you get to the service specs, well there's always this, this **culture** of can we do something better, what's the evidence base, ... um … what's driving change nationally, what's driving it internationally, ... um … what polices are coming through government.
105 I think particularly because [details omitted] staff, its often, people aren't necessarily ... um … people can be quite ... um … introverted and therefore ... um … they're not necessarily **aggressive** and assertive on how they move things forward so, so sometimes actually encouraging them to work together.
106 So, … er … but once I was on the programme, I, I enjoyed it so much for myself that I became quite a strong advocate of it for others and my team are now going through it in **waves**. So, to a certain extent, the answer is yes and no (laugh).
107 I'm reading a book called 'Working with Emotional Intelligence' at the moment, which is, actually puts together a business case for **emotional intelligence** so, I guess that's a business book. Um … but not really, other stuff, as a regular subscriber.
108 So its about, its about tailoring the message and also its about what are they going to use if for, who are they going to be talking to, and what's their preferred **learning styles** as well, because the, the [details omitted], they can't sit still.
109 And I thought … ah, it might be a good idea to go to [details omitted] 'cos that's kind of a route that seems to be quite profitable and getting what I could from her. And that kind of gave me a bit more **momentum** then.
110 And I think that those kinds of skills and the way people express themselves, I'm really interested in **NLP**, I'm starting an **NLP** course … um … in April.
111 [Details omitted] definitely I remember, and the course I did on the second week I became a manager for the first time, which was at [details omitted], which was, I think it was just called Introduction to Managing People or Introduction to Management. And it was the ... um … **action centred leadership** model.
112 And those, I like that, I like having the passion and the **energy** for stuff, and I like having my brain switched on.
113 Some of that comes from understanding a bit about **Myers Briggs**.
114 And we've produced **team briefing** sheets as well about what each of us does and what we look like. Because quite often when you work in places and you come together, you don't always know who the people are.
115 So I mean, I learn by experience, sometimes I don't learn (laugh) by experience but … um … and its about, it's a bit like **osmosis** I suppose, I mean, I may read round things … um … but I don't have … um … necessarily a terribly logical approach.
116 And I think … um … in our position, working for [details omitted], we've got an obligation to doing that, because we should be trying to get the best service and the **best value** for the service, and if we're not, then we're not doing what we're here for.
117 When you go to meetings with ... um … the [details omitted], the [details omitted], and the [details omitted], they're all sat there round, in suits, and 'My dad's bigger than your dad' and 'We should be doing this and you should be doing that' and you think 'Oh, for Christ's sake!', this is, its like **group dynamics**, you know.
118 So its just picking up any, at [details omitted], we have, we're **ISO 9001** accredited so we have auditors all, swarming over us.
119 You know, let's have a big row and get the **storming** out the way so we can do something, because this is pathetic.
120 I suppose, you know, I can say something honestly to you and there's no edge to it. I'm not telling you this because I want to use power, I want to use **transaction analysis**, I want to make you feel …. I'm telling you this because I believe its important you should know it.
121 So broadly speaking its been an overall type of Prince Two management approach by **managing by exception**. Um … monthly project team meetings with them, to update as to where they are.
122 A top down approach doesn't work with a lot of the people I work with. They have too big, its not ... er … too big, its not **ego**, its not an **ego** thing, but they're too far down the organisation in their experience, not necessarily in their seniority, in their experience, that I can't pull that kind of wool over their eyes.
123 There's a lot of people in [details omitted], a lot of emotion, people will, will jump on a subject before you know it its blown out of all proportion, its part of, the joys of working in a **matrix organisation**.
124 We have various ways of assessing what we think the potential of an account is ... um … and on an annual basis, when we do the **goal setting**, we do quarterly reviews, but on an annual basis we'll say OK, we think this is a five million dollar account potential, we currently do one million dollars, we've got a pipeline of another million dollars, where's the other three going to come from.
125 A lot of it, on the job training, TQM, ... um … coaching and mentoring, ... um … looking at **situational leadership**, situational management.

126 If we look at where our, within [details omitted], the geography of where our customers actually sit, then the **centre of gravity** for our products would be around [details omitted].
127 In terms of change management, we've got to the point where we have an agreed programme that has got clear deliverables in terms of financial return, that can meet our service objectives and is part of a step by step transition into [details omitted] but without it being a revolutionary, you know, its more an **evolutionary** ... um … gradual, step by step change.
128 And all the things within a **lean organisation** I'm trying to create is an environment whereby we reduce the amount of wastage created through our activities as leaders.
129 So we're making transitions in the **supply chain** at the moment to create a **supply chain** organisation that is regional, but, but connects closely with the day to day people in the facilities, doing the same on quality and on the, the manufacturing change management processes, lean activities.
130 So we've got our five practices … um … so you've got your **inspiring shared vision**, you've got the **modelling the way**, you've got the **challenging the process** … you've got the **enabling others to act** and then the **encouraging the heart** piece.
131 And I don't think it is, its just a case of where we've been is not now, again, we're at a **pivotal point** so say OK, where we've been in the past that's been successful for us, won't be successful moving forward. And we need to start thinking about how do we, how do we do that differently.
132 There are some people who perhaps, I don't know, perhaps fortunate enough or whatever to regularly access ... um … training and professional development and others who, for whatever reason, either because of their **inertia** or because they think they've done it all, don't do any.
133 So I need that background. I need to, I need to inform the staff of that background in a way that they will understand. Because while I sit up here in the middle of all this **bureaucracy**, meanwhile they're out serving little old ladies (laugh).
134 We've appointed one team member from within each of our teams to be the main sort of ... er … **focal point**, lead officer, if you like, for contributing to the project in terms of having understanding of our area of work and being able to, hopefully, ensure that the project develops in a way which will suit our needs.
201 And so on Friday we started the session and said look guys, look at this agenda, its horrendous, the pressure we're all under, so, how are we, together, going to sort it out. Who's going to **champion** that bit, because I can't, we can't, who's going to **champion** that bit, what are we going to do about this.
202 We don't have a fire fighting policy in [detail omitted], its more about .., one of the things we introduced we're very **proud** of, within the first six months, was a celebration day and we have celebration day every single year, this will be our fourth coming up.
203 Um … first and foremost, and the one that frustrates me the most at moment because its not happening as well, is my **touching base** with the troops.
204 The other aspects of their skills, … um … the very first week when I came in I did a very **quick and dirty** skills gap analysis within the team, and identified where we needed to do some quick work to get them skilled up.
205 So they're learning to do that role. I'm **shadowing** them as far as possible. I've done that role in numerous ways for the past seven years so, … um … it's very much about getting them to take that leap of faith, that this works.
206 We have awaydays, … um … or away afternoons as I call them, because I don't tend to go for days, I tend to go for short, sharp half days and you know, we have set agendas and we go for things, in which we explore … um … our **core business** constantly.
207 We were doing an internal report which we would then, because we wanted to be transparent because the culture originally, with commissioners, was one of you know, the [details omitted] had abused the money and hadn't, you know, the [details omitted] became the **watchdogs** for expenditure on [details omitted] over the last two to three years.
208 So it can be things like, with, with the national expectations, there is just a recognition that, that things that sound as good **sound bites** are actually harder to implement than, than they appear in reality.
209 Um … and the other part of it, … um … which I think was actually more significant, is … um … just I felt incredibly sort of **dumped on**. That I had to do a huge amount of work.
210 And I think I've now got to the point where I feel confident enough or comfortable enough to say right, we don't do this, we should, lets do it, lets change it, and that is about, to a certain extent, **managing up**, so pitching an idea to senior managers and saying I think we need to do this differently, you know, how, do you, you know, are you on board.
211 I was suddenly thrust into a position with an awful lot more exposure, with, … um … and just had to do a huge amount and sort of **step up to the plate**. And that was a really challenging time.
212 Um … just talking to various people about what their needs are and what's been done already and how we can **cross-fertilise** and make sure that we're all working in the same sort of way about this stuff, sharing knowledge
213 Like I quite like some debate and friction but on an intellectual kind of level, like if it starts getting personal and people are attacking each other and being underhand and you know, I won't let that happen because that's not **professional**, that's not why we're here.
214 Because I think there's often a problem in large organisations around honesty to senior people so trying to promote honesty and also ... um … keeping it fairly positive, not, not falsely so, but not being distracted by kind of **whinge-fests**, you know, things that happen.
215 Well the [details omitted] one was … um … basically I was **headhunted** to go in there from, from [details omitted], to, essentially as a [details omitted] but with a designated Board … um … member.
216 Um … we're changing that to one of, of a much softer culture, a much more **inclusive**, much more around … um… ownership and accountability and trying to drive that decision making accountability down through the chain.
217 And I, I've heard people say that as well, you know, people in my team have said to me, well you've been a real **change agent**, you know, we wouldn't have maybe gone that, on certain things where I've had significant input, maybe we wouldn't have gone quite as far as we did if your voice wasn't at the table, and you didn't say what you said, or we did what we did.
218 I can look back and say well then I did kind of have an approach but if you'd asked me at the beginning of my placement, what is my approach going to be, … um … I didn't **proactively** think about it, I just, I just did it, definitely.

219 And I, I feel really comfy you know, I didn't outline that at the beginning but I can reflect back and be, you know, confident I guess, that there has been some **success** in that and that I, my approach did work (pause), I did, you know deliver what I said I would, what I thought I would.
220 Um … we need to think about the way we model our business and how we **invest** in it differently. Um … and we need to think about the processes that we use to operate on a day to day level and how they need to change.
221 I don't know really because what we're doing is shifting to a known to ... um … something different, that I think is going to work better in the longer term, and I think certainly in the service, the demands of other people in the, in the team, in the other teams, is that we're more flexible and available. So in a way, it has to work because it's the **best practice** for the [details omitted].
222 So, I think we've always been negotiators, facilitators and I think perhaps that's the way, the **ethic** of the team is. So we can switch context quite easily.
223 I've got a very committed hard working team that will do anything really, I'm in a very **privileged** position.
224 So that was my first thing, and then the culture shock of coming into ... um … a very hierarchical, dictatorial, autocratic, structure where there was no equality. It was just driven by a **silo** mentality. It was just, you know, (pause) there wasn't any interpersonal thing at all and that was a huge culture shock and I didn't think I was going to stick it.
225 I did some research into … er … what the outcomes were for them and the types of environments they were living in and … um … what that, the implications of that as to how we were dealing with the **diversity** issues that … um … that were there.
226 I'm talking about directed at the service and how it can undermine people's **morale**, if perpetually other agencies are saying oh well, we're all doing really well and we're all getting on, its just that [details omitted] over there.
227 I don't think I'm doing as much as I probably should be doing but of course the day job gets in the way you know, and you do, you get your head down, tunnel, **tunnel vision**, and then something brings you up short and makes you realise actually, there's no point in doing any of this until you get this sorted out.
228 I mean there's obviously, there's the, there's the kind of **rites of passage** thing when you go, you know, you got to university and suddenly you're exposed to things without any … er … um … supervision from any angle.
229 And, having worked down there for five years, came to here for a sort of three year interim. Um … the Belfast sink of **ambition**, they call [details omitted], because there's one or two fall into it.
230 But the other four days have allowed me to float around here without the man management responsibilities or person management responsibilities and I've been able to do things that I haven't been able to do when I'm working as a manager within the **hierarchy**.
231 Um … I'm also very much involved in seeking external funding to the [details omitted], particularly, well obviously particularly for [details omitted] activities but because of the **cross cutting** nature of [details omitted], we often fit into ... um … bids that are being made in relation to economic development, etc.
232 And I want to show them that, as a manager, part of my professional integrity is to respect the **confidentiality** that my boss has asked to, … um … to respect. And they understand that, I think they respect that.
233 And I want to show them that, as a manager, part of my professional **integrity** is to respect the confidentiality that my boss has asked to, … um … to respect. And they understand that, I think they respect that.
234 I guess there's a local one which would be ... um … managing a (pause), in a matrix situation, managing a direct line sales guy who is not performing in his direct line role, but who is performing, ... um … to the expectations of his **dotted line manager**.
235 I can help my team by guiding them through, you know how they, how they tackle a project, how they think about tackling a project, what their ideas as, discuss that with them and hopefully give them the guidance that's going to allow them to approach in a way that's going to be successful in the most **expedient** manner.
236 You'll hear the people talk about **touch points** at [details omitted], and that's really what we try and do. The interaction between me and my [details omitted] laptop is nothing to do with the software, its nothing to do with … my first touch of that product is a latch on the front of it. My first interaction with that laptop is the hinge on the back of it. My perception of the quality of that laptop is based on the quality of the latch and the hinge.
237 And really what's happened is [details omitted] is ... e r… traditionally very **vertically integrated**, high-cost based company and we're at the premier end of the market, we don't want to be the cheap and cheerful you know, me too type of products, we want to be the innovators, we want to be at the top end of the market.
238 And especially, with a company that, its global and we're shipping between [details omitted] and here and we're shipping between [details omitted] and here, we start getting those things wrong and start doing, sort of **busking** away, and we're, we're wasting money on a grand scale.
239 Um … and you, again, it comes down to mainly intuition but you said it yourself, there's maybe a limit that says OK, if it drops by 10%, I need to kick in a **contingency**. Um … so for example, I don't know, say we lost 10% of sales, overnight, what would we do to make sure that our cost base stayed effective.
240 Um … probably more of a **red herring**. That's something that I, I personally believe that there is, you have effective leaders and you need effective managers. Um … that's something that I would say I'm probably bringing with me ... um … that kind of terminology from other areas, and I'm looking to introduce with, with [details omitted].
241 The facility managers, the operation manager is responsible for those but they all collect up into the [details omitted] performance which is up to the top, and I would be **accountable** for that. And so my number one thing to deliver is operational performance, across that range of matrix which are seen to be influencers of our success.
242 But making that change, it allows us, at a **pace** that people can come to terms with, understand that it's OK to manufacture in [details omitted]. It doesn't mean we're going to close [details omitted] down. So its part of a, … a change management process.
243 Yeh, we, we evolved as an organisation by being fast and nimble so the characteristics of a lot of the people in the organisation is a very **entrepreneurial** style. So whatever the customer needs, in order for us to get that done, we will do that in order to increase our market penetration in each of these countries.
244 I think, I think the families that owned the business recognised that his predecessor had taken u s… was the right Chairman for that given period of time, to establish you know, a **global footprint**, you know, sort of invest money and put things in place.

245 We actually are a **pathfinder** for the … er … a national **pathfinder** in one of these areas because we've, we have started to take the view and develop practice which means that it's a collaborative approach.
246 Simply because there's low morale, high levels of uncertainty, there's you know, potentially in some areas I guess, there's erosion of **authority** because people might think well, I'm not going to be working for you in two months time or three months time, because my bit of the team is being moved to this other, other unit.
247 I mean there's certainly … I've probably had more conversations with my wife about my work over the past six months than I have before that, you know, so to the extent there's been a case (laugh) of, you know, she's become a **sounding board**.
248 Um … I suppose it goes back to some of the points you've made about partly, ... um … using somebody who's closer to the, the actual day to day ins and outs of the, the work. Um … sharing responsibility, ... um … **empowerment**, I don't know if that's answering the point you're making but I, I think it, its easy to think that, as I'm the manager, I need to know it all or I should demonstrate to the rest of my team that I know it all.
249 And there was some of that going on because, the way that this particular restructuring is being managed from people above me, … um … is that the decisions on how its going to be shaped have been **devolved** downwards, which is unusual in a restructure.
250 Well, first of all there are actually some real **synergies** between what they're tasks are and were at that time, and what my team does. It made organisational sense to bring them together. And that was actually the argument that I put forward when I asked to take them over.
301 That way we were beginning to make sense of what was probably in excess of a hundred sub-committees, **workshops**, forums, all over the Directorate, which is spread across my 38 bases, … um … and this is absolute madness, when you have that kind.
302 I ... um … was put in a situation, a very, very difficult situation, very early on in my last job role, that ... um … my **instinct**, my gut instinct, was to say no, I'm not doing that. And I didn't, I went through with it, and ran the risk, and it was disastrous.
303 Once you've agreed those and you've got the financial balance or envelope to go with those, and obviously that's another aspect of it, then its about performance managing, ... um … from the **top down** and the **bottom up** really, in terms that you would meet with commissioners on a quarterly basis.
304 I recently interviewed somebody and we asked a question about what's the worst type of staff management problem to deal with and this person said, the one's you don't know about. And I thought, that's quite a good bloody interview answer really … right **smart arse**, you know (laugh).
305 And then when it comes to the internal world, if you're doing that, you're often in a position of relative weakness and you're not able to actually be **direct** and say, cards on the table, this is what I think we need to do.
306 So I think at the moment, probably quite a lot, and I think we probably need to, probably going on get a difference balance where we keep up that focus but we also need to have an external focus and we need to get our jobs done and there's an element that you can been a wee bit too **navel gazing**, I think.
307 I think, as a [details omitted] dealing with relationships, you're often trying to smooth round corners and making sure that everything's fine and you're often actually being quite, ... um … **obsequious** in some ways (laugh), I don't want to use that word but I couldn't think of any other.
308 So I'm always keen to try out new things and take on new information and **adapt** because of that.
309 I'd do my own triage in my head if you like so its quite hard to then to sort of say, really on their own, number of approaches, a really **systematic** way, 'cos I don't think it was like that.
310 It was at that time when, I probably became a much more ... um … much more understanding around people and that people actually that what, that actually will give you the results and that actually it's a lot more satisfying to do things the right way than you know, **bullying** somebody into something.
311 So I think the learning came out of managing that situation particularly badly, and … um … I, I took it personally, (laugh) I **internalised** the whole thing
312 And I know that's not true and I know its not, but there is that, there's always that, that there and so, … um … I'm also a bit **pig headed** about some of these things as well.
313 So it was quite a difficult situation and our styles and values were enormously different and it caused me a lot of **soul searching**, I think, around, you know, whether I wanted to be part of that organisation.
314 Its really interesting because its something ... um … that I'm really keen to **explore** and I, what I'm really confident is about I have those avenues to do that, so I'm in an action learning set, I've got a coach on [details omitted], you know, it's a bit of a chicken and egg situation.
315 Um … certainly on the change management, it was definitely informal, very **reactive**, (pause) just almost subconscious.
316 It also helps to start a **debate**, so it gives me some tools other than just sitting down and going, what are we going to offer that's different to anyone else, which is the same thing but it helps furnish and enrich that in a way that's much more involving for other people as well.
317 Um … I couldn't be **autocratic**. Not only because it isn't part of my makeup but also because it doesn't work. It doesn't get the best out of people. The best out of people is person to person, it is not telling people what to do.
318 I see myself as part, somebody who **facilitates** the work of the team and what I have to do is recognise the potential of every individual in it, and use the skills that they have.
319 So that was ... um … that was a huge **shock** and I learned, I took a lot of negative messages out of that I think that I think, potentially, could have undermined my core values really, but didn't, fortunately, because then I moved quite quickly on to a situation working in [details omitted] where I picked that up again.
320 To be fair I should say that the previous head of service did go as far as arranging **mediation** for us so that was a step in the right direction.
321 I mean, I have had some experience and well, some of them are fine, I mean they can be very challenging but they're asking **sensible** questions and you know they know their stuff and that's alright then.

322 Someone described me recently as being a **maverick**. And I said I'm not a **maverick**, because I understand what we're trying to achieve, what the organisation wants to achieve, and what the limits are, what we can and can't do within that.
323 And that's what I have been mindful of, in trying to **negotiate** some understanding, you know, by saying, you know, this money's available now, it won't be available for ever, we want to take this opportunity and try and do this, if we don't do this now we won't get a chance to develop the [details omitted].
324 So the first part I had to **persuade** them that there was benefit in doing this. Um … that wasn't as difficult as I thought, because once you pointed out to them actually the inadequacies of doing things the way we were doing it they said oh yeah, you're probably right (laugh), we could do with looking, looking at achieving this.
325 So, at the start of it there was a persuasive period where I formed a **working group** from the various … um … areas and people involved in different parts of the [details omitted] service.
326 Some people are **charismatic**, oh, it trips off the tongue, in fact, they spend more time doing that than they do doing their bloody job, at the other end of the spectrum.
327 I realise that people decide not to hear things because, I take a very **cynical** view of people then, but I'm not to the point yet where I don't have them up in front of a wall and start shooting them (laugh) but I want to be adult and I'm a great believer in people being adults and people coming to work for the same reason I come to work, because I want to enjoy work.
328 Because there's nothing worse than having people standing around, **twiddling their thumbs**, waiting for you. Because you know, you don't want to be perceived as the logjam.
329 Also the, I suppose the, in terms of monitoring its been an evolving project because its involved a lot of consultation so the monthly meetings have been an update for the project team on what the consultees have said about the proposals so far and how they need to be taken into account in **refining** the designs, etc.
330 [Details omitted], who are engineering consultants and they're supervising, they should be supervising the work and project managing the delivery so I'm actually supposed to be acting as a light touch project manager with ... er … a **turnkey** approach from our consultants to do everything, I think is the phrase (laugh).
331 I try and, I try and put some context around things, try and apply a bit of common sense, a bit of logic, try and ... um … lay things out in a very ... er … **logical** way that will allow people to kind of understand what are, what are the real issues behind this.
332 So our business is split, as you probably know, into the various different markets and customers that we serve, and we **segment** that according to … um … like customers and like markets.
333 The other thing that is, shall we say is maybe not as up to the level it needs to be is the **coaching** and mentoring side, I would say especially the mentoring side. That I believe is very much key for getting people into the right way, because they can be used as a sounding board ... um … and I don't think mentors are used here ... um … really at all.
334 If you do it step by step and you share it as you're going and you're involved, and **consult** people, who are stakeholders in, in what you come up with, then when you get to the point where you've actually got something you're going to serve up, a lot of the issues have been resolved.
335 You know, in the past I've, I've had a direct operational line and had a management team working for me that delivered the goods straight, you know, straight to the coal face. And ... um … sorry, straight from the coal face. Now I'm having to **influence** others to actually deliver the goods for me and bring it, bring it together.
336 So, you know, ... um … and we gave then a model to each employee, so we've trained every employee across [details omitted] ... um … in the model, and then talked to them about what it means to them and how they can contribute so that its not just, oh well, my manager doesn't do it so therefore, I can sort of **abdicate** any responsibility.
337 What is it that our customers want from us, you know, ... um … we'd taken a very **arrogant** view of saying, dear customer, this is what you want, and this is what you need, we've got this new fantastic [details omitted] and we think its wonderful and you're going to buy it, as opposed to saying what do industries need.
338 From that point of view, it isn't always the case that you can say right, I'm going to point you in one direction at the expense of all others because I think that's the right way of doing things ... um … and it can, you know, it may mean that you end up with a **compromise** may be, or that things don't develop as quickly as you might want them to or expect them to. Um … but I suppose it comes back to something we discussed a lot earlier on, is it evolution or revolution.
339 I'd say clearly if, if there are widely acknowledged and recognised tools or methods ... um … in relation to management, they obviously are there for a reason and you'd be foolish to ignore them and to think oh, I'll just carry on and do it my own sweet way, I don't need a book or a training course to tell me what to do. Er … I think that would be rather **naive** and foolish.
340 And I think because partly, there was some quite **vociferous** comments at the meeting we had with the [details omitted] team, it was clear that some people had got quite strong views as to how things should develop and what their priorities should be ... er … and as a consequence of that ... um … it was clear that it would be appropriate to try and sort of encourage those people to take some ownership of what we were doing.
401 I chose HR ... um … because I'm a firm believer that our business is people and HR is a lot more than just talking to the people, its about strategic planning of … um … services, **manpower planning**, … um … it was all aspects of the business.
402 The other aspects of their skills, … um …the very first week when I came in I did a very quick and dirty skills **gap analysis** within the team, and identified where we needed to do some quick work to get them skilled up.
403 Part of my **job description** talks about developing psychological mindedness in the organisation and I see my role very much as … um … I, this is my interpretation, if it's in my job description I, I assume that the [details omitted] wants feedback.
404 I guess that the other one for me in the particular work that I do is having the um… is having to meet the national, regional and local **KPIs**, key performance indicators and certainly in the [details omitted] they are a lot more advanced and politically driven than they are in [details omitted].
405 So, there was a lot of **risk management** involved … um … and if I knew what I knew about risk now, I don't know that we'd have taken some of the decisions we took then in setting up the services.
406 So that's another way we, we, a level we operate at … um … um … **service level agreement** reviews, quarterly reviews of contracts, is another indicator of … um … (pause) how you monitor the services and evaluate them.

407 I think some of the Prince stuff just scares people witless, so you know, I don't like [the] project initiation document, I think **terms of reference**.
408 And that's about just having that clarity to say, well my **schedule**'s not your **schedule**, even though I would like it to be.
409 I think, I, certainly not the kind of massive **decision tree** method.
410 It was, my [details omitted] manager … um … was going along and she said 'Oh, can I go along to this talk'. It was like, you know, to sign off the **budget**.
411 And the second is to specifically get a communications manager in that is doing an analysis of the different needs of the different **stakeholders**, so that we're not trying to do, ... er … one message covers all, but we've actually got somebody listening to the range of information need so we can tailor what we need from different people and they can feed back in different ways.
412 Um … well, when it comes to … um … the, the [details omitted] side of things and … um … we have got set **targets** that we need to meet. So the obvious thing is the measurement of how we're progressing towards those **targets**.
413 You know, but its also calling on things like ... um … you're sitting there, your heads swimming right, you're thinking, there's 25 things you've got to do, which one do I do first. And you haven't got it written down as a **checklist**, but you realise 'Oh, should I tell [details omitted], the boss'.
414 So immediately pen and paper out, … er … we need to do this, we need to do that, we need to this and all of a sudden you've got a **to do list** longer than your arm and you say right, we need people for this.
415 So the challenge has been really project managing them to make sure that they do what they are being charged to do, compared with the other pressures that they're under, of course. Um … so broadly speaking its been an overall type of Prince Two management approach by **managing by exception**.
416 Um … but in any case, really start by observing, you know, if nothing else, the **body language** and really listening to what the person is saying and then working your way around … er … any objections if there are any or any concerns if there are any.
417 But his expectations of what he was measuring me against were different to the goals and **objectives** which were set for the business. And so, as far as I was concerned, I'd done a fantastic job in managing the business, growing the business, doing everything that was expected of me, according to all the goals and everything else that were set but his expectations were completely different, and were misaligned.
418 So I've set myself goals, saying well there's my budget, if it drops down to 10%, this is what I do. Um … or it could be, as I say, if it gets down to this level, my managers need to be reporting to me on a daily, basis, weekly basis, monthly basis, about the **action plans** they've put in place to get it going in the right direction.
419 From a **succession planning** point of view it can just be the seeing people actually come through the organisation. Um … I've developed people and seen them come from ... er … and take positions where three or four years previously, my previous manager said 'I would never every promote him'.
420 You would tend to go out and look for somebody who's best in class, and what they did, and get connected up with, with … um … the route that they use, either their internal people if its possible to do **benchmarking** type of visits.
421 So we've got a pool of people that work with people to make improvements in line with their **business plans** and their needs, but who aren't specifically on the payroll of our organisation, they're centrally held.
422 I meet with each of those facilities on a regular basis, for specifics that we're looking at, but formally, on a monthly basis, at a **scorecard** meeting when we look at the … um … performance of their facility against a set of benchmark matrix that all facilities around the globe are measured against.
423 Again, I mean, I don't know how old we're, I'm talking about, twenty years ago probably, and the **delegation**, if I can put it in managerial terms, didn't work, you know.
424 But that was a big change for the staff because they were used to working behind their big counter, where they were safe and all that, and now they're floor walking and supporting people. Um … and bless them, they were up for the change, and a bit of **mystery shopping** has, has fed back that, you know, double bless them, they're doing very well (laugh).
425 So that goes from local [details omitted] plan which is a strategy document that we need to produce, submit to the [details omitted] and government, which sets out the [details omitted] strategy, and sets out an **implementation plan** for that strategy.
426 My team is responsible for putting together the **agendas** for those meetings, making the arrangements for the meetings, ... er … attending the meetings to ensure that they're minuted and producing the minutes afterwards, and ensuring that all the relevant action that's agreed, takes place.
427 I was able to say to them, look, we need to **prioritise** our tasks because there will come a point when we may need to say, sorry, we haven't got the resource to do that. … Not enough people, not enough resource.
428 We're just getting into a phase of **process mapping** which is, which is going to tremendously valuable for cutting out wasteful and needless activity.

Appendix 6

Complete Compendium of Interview Extracts Indexed to the Theoretical Domain

centre(s) of excellence [101]
strategic planning [102]
completer - finisher [103]
culture(s) / cultural difference / culture shock [104]
aggressive(ly) / aggression [105]
wave(s) [106]
emotional intelligence [107]
learning styles [108]
momentum [109]
NLP [110]
action centred leadership [111]
energy [112]
Myers Briggs / Myers Briggs type indicator [113]
team briefing [114]
osmosis [115]
best value [116]
group dynamics [117]
ISO 9000 accredited / accreditation [118]
storming [119]
transactional analysis [120]
prince two [121]
ego [122]
matrix / matrix environment / structure / organisation [123]
goal / goal setting / goal posts [124]
situational leadership [125]
centre of gravity [126]
evolve(d) / evolution / evolving [127]
lean operations / production / processes / enterprise / activities / organisation [128]
supply chain [129]
encouraging the heart [130]
pivotal point [131]
inertia [132]
bureaucracy [133]
focal point [134]
360 review(s) / feedback / appraisals [501]
action learning set(s) [502]
add(ed) value [503]
adult [504]
advantage / competitive advantage [505]
analogy [506]
anger [507]
appreciative enquiry [508]
aptitude tests [509]
assertive(ness) [510]
atmosphere [511]
autocratic [512]
average [513]
biase(d) [514]
cameron's four dimensions [515]
capital / capital project(s) / capital investment [516]
case study / case studies [517]
catalyst [518]
chain / supply chain [129]
change management [519]
code of practice [520]
competence / competency [521]
conscious(ly) / subconscious(ly) [522]
consciously competent [523]
critical mass [524]
demand management [525]
democratic [526]
demographic(s) [527]
depression [528]
digesting [529]
division(s) [530]
dysfunctional [531]
early adopter [532]
efficiently / efficiency [533]
emotional attachment [534]
enrich(ment) [535]
equal / equality / equal opportunities [536]
experiential learning [537]
extrovert [538]
fit for purpose [539]
flat structure [540]
games [541]
gestalt theory [542]
global / globalisation [543]
governance [544]
habit / habitually [545]
hibernate [546]
hierarchy of needs [547]
hormonal [548]
human capital [549]
incentives [550]
incidence / incident / critical incident [551]
intelligence [552]
intrinsic [553]
introvert [554]
intuitive / intuition [555]
job satisfaction [556]
johari window [557]
lead(er) / leadership [558]
leadership styles [559]
learning curve [560]
learning cycle [561]
logistics [562]
make sense / making sense [563]
marketing [564]
maturity [565]
memory [566]
mentor [567]
modelling the way [130]
motivate(d) / motivating / motivator / motivation [568]

network(ing) [569]
numerical / numeracy / numerate [570]
nurture [571]
objective(s) / objective setting / MBO [572]
pareto [573]
performance manage / performance managing [574]
personality [575]
polarity management [576]
power(ful) / powerless [577]
product development [578]
project management [579]
psychometric testing [580]
publicity / public relations [581]
quality / quality management [582]
quality assurance [583]
quality of life [584]
random [585]
rapport [586]
recognise(d) / recognition [587]
reflect(ing) / reflected / reflection(s) / reflective [588]
regulate / regulatory [589]
relationship management / customer relationship management [590]
resource allocation [591]
reward / rewarding / reward systems [592]
ritual and cliché communication(s) [593]
scenario(s) / scenario planning [594]
sense / sense check(ing) [595]
socialisation [596]
sphere of control [597]
standard / normal distribution curve [598]
tangent(s) [599]
team / teams / team working [600]
time and motion [601]
transactional leadership [602]
transferable skills [603]
transformational leadership [604]
unconsciously incompetent [605]
utopian [606]
value proposition(s) / value chain / value stream(s) [607]
wellbeing [608]
work life balance [609]

Appendix 7

Theoretical Domain Decision Rules / Indexing Rationale

101 A reference to the requirement for government departments to create centres of excellence. The purpose of these being to support the strategic oversight of programmes, providing a continuous overview across all of an organisations portfolio of programmes, by co-ordinating, reporting and challenging what must be delivered and how it will be delivered.
102 A reference to a business process first used by Henry Ford II, who became President in 1945, and who subsequently began to modernise the organisation with the help of a group of 10 young men who had learned statistical techniques working for the US Army Air Force during WW2. Subsequently a term for analytical techniques taught by business schools as part of MBA programmes. A subject written about by distinguished academics, such as Mintzberg, Kaplan, Hamel and Porter, in both peer reviewed journal articles and books.
103 A reference to one of the nine codified team working roles, named plant, resource investigator, co-ordinator, shaper, monitor - evaluator, teamworker, implementer, completer - finisher and specialist, that emanate from a programme of research into the effectiveness of management teams that was conducted, under the leadership of Meredith Belbin, during the early 1960’s at Henley College of Management.
104 A reference to the substantial body of scholarship associated with organisational culture which can be defined as the values and norms shared by individuals within an organisation that shape and influence the way that they interact with each other and the external world. Some key contributors of insights in this area are Geert Hofstede, Terrence Deal & Allan Kennedy, Edgar Schein and Arthur F Carmazzi etc.
105 A reference to the codification of behaviour between members of the same species that is intended to cause pain or harm. Related to the 'fight or flight' response to predators and in humans may take a variety of forms including the physical, the mental and the verbal. Distinguished from assertiveness which has cognitive aspects and which is frequently linked to issues such as self-esteem.
106 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the disturbances that propagate through a transmission medium, usually with the transference of energy, often with little or no permanent displacement of the particles of the medium, but with oscillations around almost fixed locations.
107 A reference a perceived ability, capacity or skill to identify, assess and manage the emotions of one's self and others. Usually attributed to the doctoral thesis of Wayne Payne, but popularised by Daniel Goleman's book. Often measured and expressed as an emotional intelligence quotient (EQ).
108 A reference to the four stage process of experiential learning, concrete experience, abstract conceptualisation, reflective observation and active experimentation, developed by David Kolb and published in his book published in 1984. Subsequently codified into an assessment method, the learning style inventory, that attributes to participating individuals one of four preferred learning styles: accomodator, converger, diverger, or assimilator.
109 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to classical mechanics where momentum is defined as the product of the mass of an object and its velocity. Descartes, not Newton, was the first of the great thinkers who specifically used the term when he referred to mass times velocity as the fundamental force of motion. The law of conservation of momentum means that in any closed system, momentum is a conserved quantity that cannot change.
110 A reference to insights of Bandler & Grinder having studied the techniques of the three renowned therapists: Milton Erickson, Fritz Perls & Virginia Satir.
111 A reference to the leadership model, involving task, team and individual, developed by John Adair firstly at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and subsequently at The Industrial Society during the 1960's and the early 1970's.
112 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the phenomenon that is defined in physics as the ability to do work or to cause change. Several different forms of energy exist to explain natural phenomena, such as kinetic, potential, thermal, gravitational, sound, light, elastic and electromagnetic energy etc. A key physical proposition is that energy can be transformed, but that it can not be either created, or destroyed.
113 A reference to a psychometric assessment process designed to determine an individual’s natural preferences for perceiving the world and making decisions. Based upon theories developed by Carl Jung and published in 1921 in his book Psychological Types. The related inventory was developed by Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Myers Briggs and published in 1962. The inventory categories participants according to their position in relation to four continuums: extraversion - introversion, sensing - intuition, thinking - feeling and judging - perceiving.
114 A reference to the formalised, systematic process developed by The Industrial Society (now the Work Foundation) that provides a consistent and measurable process for conveying both strategic and operational information throughout an entire organisation. It also encompasses both the potential for handling feedback and for answering questions via face-to-face briefing sessions.
115 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the diffusion of molecules through a semi-permeable membrane from a place of higher concentration to a place of lower concentration, until the concentration on both sides are equal.
116 A reference the regime introduced by government in the UK in 1999 in an attempt to secure continuous improvement in the provision of public services. Places upon local authorities a duty to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness and imposes a series of services reviews that are required to be performed in a manner specified by an inspectorate.
117 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the T-Group work of Kurt Lewin during the 1950's.
118 A reference to a family of standards for quality management systems maintained by the International Standards Organisation. The requirements of this model include a set of procedures, monitoring processes, the maintenance of records, defect checking, corrective action, system reviews and continual improvement.

119 A reference to the team development stages of forming, storming, norming and performing as identified by Bruce Tuckman following his examination of empirical research studies.
120 A reference to the integrative approach of psychiatrist Eric Berne that combines elements of the psychoanalytic, humanist and cognitive schools. Developed during the late 1950's but popularised by Berne's book 'Games people play' published in 1964.
121 A reference to a process based method for project management and a de facto standard that is used extensively by the UK government and that is recognised internationally in the private sector. Developed by the Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency, subsequently the Office of Government Commerce, the original Prince was launched in 1989, followed by Prince 2 in 1996.
122 A reference to one of the three components, the ego, the id and the super-ego, of the 'psychic apparatus defined in Sigmund Freud's structural model of the psyche. First discussed by Freud in an essay published in 1920 and subsequently elaborated and formalised in 'The ego and the id' published three years later. Originally based upon fewer than 10 client cases.
123 A reference to the post war US government aerospace research procurement procedures that required an organisation chart for every project. This resulted in dual structures of departments and projects that eventually became the 'matrix' organisation. The first company to develop a truly balanced matrix structure was the McDonnell Aircraft Company in 1958.
125 A reference to the leadership model, involving directing, coaching, supporting and delegating, developed by Ken Blanchard & Paul Hersey during the 1960's after studying what made leaders successful. There conclusion was that the success of these individuals lay not in a particular style, but the ability to adapt their style according to the situation.
126 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the point, near or within a body, through which its weight can be assumed to act when considering either forces upon the body or its motion under gravity. The centre of gravity and the centre of mass coincide in a uniform gravitational field.
127 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to Charles Darwin's 'origin of the species' and his discovery of the processes of 'natural selection'.
128 A reference to the generic, process management philosophy derived from the Toyota Production System by Taiichi Ohno, Shigeo Shingo and Eiji Toyoda between 1948 and 1975 which drew heavily upon the previous work of W. Edwards Deming.
129 A reference to the work of Keith Oliver, of consultants Booz Allen Hamilton, who during the 1970's was working at Phillips to remove functional silo's. The term supply chain management was first used by Oliver in a FT article of 1982.
130 A reference to the leadership model, involving inspiring shared vision, modelling the way, challenging the process, enabling others to act and encouraging the heart developed by James M Kouzes & Barry Z Posner.
131 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the discipline of “static’s” within structural engineering and the point about which a mass rotates. For an object to be balanced the pivot point needs to be in line with the centre of mass and the moments (the product of the mass and the distance from the pivot) either side of the pivot need to be equal.
132 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the tendency of a body to remain at rest, to move at a constant velocity, or to continue in a straight line unless acted upon by an external force. A fundamental principle of classical physics and one of Newton's laws.
133 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to part of Karl Mark’s and Friedrich Engle’s theory of historical materialism which was studied, analysed, characterised and subsequently popularised by the political economist and sociologist Max Weber. A topic that continues to be discussed in some influential academic circles by contemporary political scientists such as Theodore J. Lowi.
134 An interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the point from which light (or radiation) diverges, or the point at which it converges.
501 A reference to a means of obtaining information regarding an individuals performance that includes the individual themselves, their peers, their colleagues and their subordinates as well as their line manager.
502 An reference to a system of management education, developed by Professor Reginald Revans during the 1940's whilst working in the Coal Board where he concluded that conventional methods were largely ineffective. The process involves a participant, in conjunction with their peers, reflecting upon and reviewing the action that they have taken and the learning points that arise from this and using this to both guide future action and improve performance.
503 An intertextual reference to the formula that describes the increase in value that results from each stage of the processing of a commodity.
504 An intertextual reference to transactional analysis, an integrative approach to the theory of psychology and psychotherapy developed by Canadian-born US psychiatrist Eric Berne during the late 1950s. Revising Freud's concept of the human psyche as composed of the id, ego, and super-ego, Berne postulated in addition three "ego states" - the Parent, Adult, and Child states - which were largely shaped through childhood experiences. Popularised by Berne's lifelong friend Thomas Anthony Harris's 1969 book I'm OK, You're OK.
505 An intertextual reference to the views of Professor Michael Porter as expressed in his highly influential book Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance. Porter viewed sustainable competitive advantage as stemming from a cost advantage, a differentiation advantage and a focused approach that required a firm to concentrate on a narrow, exclusive competitive segment.
506 An intertextual reference to the cognitive process of transferring information from a particular subject (the analogue or source) to another particular subject (the target), and a linguistic expression corresponding to such a process. Analogy plays a significant role in problem solving, decision making, perception, memory, creativity, emotion, explanation and communication. It underpins tasks such as the identification of places, objects and people, for example, in face perception and facial recognition systems. Hofstadter argues that analogy is "the core

of cognition".
507 A reference to an emotional state that may range from minor irritation to intense rage. The physical effects include increased heart rate, blood pressure, and levels of adrenaline and noradrenalin. It becomes the predominant feeling behaviourally, cognitively and physiologically when a person makes the conscious choice to take action to immediately stop the threatening behaviour of another outside force. Modern psychologists view anger as a primary, natural, and mature emotion and as something that has functional value for survival.
508 A reference to an organisational development process and philosophy that involves a particular way of asking questions that fosters positive relationships and builds upon the basic 'goodness' of individuals and organisations. Based upon the work of earlier theorists and practitioners, it was developed and popularised by David Cooperrider of Case Western Reserve University.
509 A reference to an assessment process that is designed to examine an individuals knowledge, skills, character, beliefs etc frequently by comparison to a 'standardised' set of results. The process is frequently used to either establish an individual's suitability for a particular role, or to identify personal development opportunities.
510 A reference to a behavioural trait that is taught by many personal development experts and psychotherapists and is the subject of many popular self-help books. It is is distinguished from aggression and passivity and it is also considered to be an important communication skill. A person communicates assertively by not being afraid to speak his or her mind or trying to influence others, but doing so in a way that respects the personal boundaries of others. They also display a willing to defend themselves against the aggressive incursions of others.
511 An intertextual reference to the layer of gases that may surround a material body of sufficient mass.
512 A reference to a form of government in which the political power is held by a single, self-appointed ruler. Today it is usually seen as synonymous with despot, tyrant and / or dictator, though each of these terms originally had a separate and distinct meaning.
513 An intertextual reference to mathematical definitions mean, mode and median of of a numerical data set.
514 An intertextual reference to static's and the difference between the expectation of the sample estimator and the true population value, which reduces the representativeness of the estimator by systematically distorting it.
515 An reference to the competing values framework, frequently attributed to Kim S Cameron, in which the dominant characteristic of organisations and individuals are indicated by one of four dimensions / quadrants: collaborate, control, compete and create.
516 An intertextual reference to classical economics where capital, land a labour are the three factors of production. Capital goods have the following characteristics: they can be used in the production of other goods; they are produced, rather than occurring naturally (such as a mineral) and unlike raw materials they are not used up immediately in the process of production.
517 A reference to a means of undertaking research that involves the intensive study of a single group, incident, or community.
518 An intertextual reference to a substance that, in chemistry, initiates or accelerates a chemical reaction without itself being affected.
129 An intertextual reference to the work of Keith Oliver, of consultants Booz Allen Hamilton, who during the 1970's was working at Phillips to remove functional silo's. The term supply chain management was first used by Oliver in a FT article of 1982.
519 A reference to a structured approach to moving individuals, teams, and organisations from their current state to a desired future state. Early models included that developed by Kurt Lewin which described change as a three-stage process based upon unfreezing, change and refreezing. Later formulations included models based upon derivatives of the Kübler-Ross model from her book, 'On Death and Dying'.
520 A reference to a set of guidelines and regulations to be followed by members of some profession, trade, occupation, or organisation etc. that does not normally have the force or law.
521 A reference to the state or quality of being adequately qualified and having the ability to perform a specific role.
522 A reference to a type of mental state, a way of perceiving, or a relationship between self and other that may involve thoughts, sensations, perceptions, moods, emotions, dreams, and self-awareness. The issue of what consciousness is, and to what extent and in what sense it exists, is the subject of much research in philosophy of mind, psychology, neuroscience, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence.
523 A reference to the four stages of competence, or the 'conscious competence' learning model which describes the psychological states involved in the process of progressing from incompetence to competence in a skill. The four stages being: unconscious incompetence; conscious incompetence; conscious competence and unconscious competence.
524 An intertextual reference to either (i) the minimum mass of fissionable material that can sustain a chain reaction (physics); or (ii) the existence of sufficient momentum in a social system such that the momentum becomes self-sustaining and fuels further growth (sociology).
525 A reference to the NHS framework of protocols for managing both queues and referral rates and matching demand with capacity.
526 A reference to a form of government in which power is held indirectly by citizens in a free electoral system. In political theory, democracy describes a small number of related forms of government and also a political philosophy. There are two principles that any definition of democracy includes. The first principle is that all members of the society (citizens) have equal access to power and the second that all members (citizens) enjoy universally recognized freedoms and liberties.

527 A reference to selected population characteristics as used in government, marketing or opinion research, or the demographic profiles used in such research. Commonly used demographics include race, age, income, disabilities, mobility (in terms of travel time to work or number of vehicles available), educational attainment, home ownership, employment status, and even location. Demographics are frequently used in economic and marketing research.
528 A reference to a mental state characterised by a pessimistic sense of inadequacy and a despondent lack of activity. In the fields of psychology and psychiatry, the terms depression or depressed refer to sadness and other related emotions and behaviours. It can be thought of as either a disease or a syndrome.
529 An intertextual reference to the process by which multi-cellular animals take in food, processes it within the alimentary canal to extract energy and nutrients, and expels the remaining waste.
530 An intertextual reference to Alfred P Sloan's restructuring of General Motors by breaking the organisation into small business units, or divisions. This was accompanied by the idea that whilst senior corporate executives should exercise some central control, they should not interfere too much with the decision making in each operation.
531 An intertextual reference to one of a number of categories used by psychologists to categorise and define either abnormal behaviour or mental disorder. A diagnosis of dysfunctional behaviour would suggest that an individual is is clearly not functioning correctly and is therefore not leading what would be considered a 'normal' life. He or she may lack the full range of emotions or feelings and may participate in only a limited range of behaviours that do not allow for a fully functioning lifestyle.
532 A reference to the theory of innovation diffusion and one of five adopter categories defined by Everett M. Rogers. The five categories being Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority, Late Majority and Laggards.
533 A reference to the process of being effective without wasting time or effort or expense.
534 An intertextual reference to the theory within psychology, founded upon the original work of John Bowlby, that the human infant needs a secure relationship with adult caregivers, without which normal social and emotional development will not occur. The theory proposes that in stressful situations infants seek proximity seeking to an identified attachment figure (familiar adults) and that this is a survival instinct. In a later phase of development children use these attachment figures as a secure 'base' from which to explore their environment.
535 An intertextual reference to the work of the psychologist Frederick Herzberg who in the 1950's explored ways of enhancing work satisfaction through the attention to motivational factors that meet employees' aspirations in non-monetary ways.
536 A reference to the legal framework within the EU and the UK that seeks to prevent discrimination. It is based on moral and ethical arguments and is concerned with promoting the rights of all members in a society. Frequently used to describe an approach that seeks to ensure that individuals are not excluded from the activities of society, it also includes measures taken by organisations to ensure fairness in the employment process and extends to promoting the rights of all members in society.
537 An intertextual reference to the work of the education theorist David Kolb that knowledge is continuously gained through both personal and environmental experiences. Experiential learning requires no teacher and relates solely to the meaning making process of the individual's direct experience.
538 An intertextual reference to the personality traits of introversion and extroversion first popularised by Carl Jung. Extraversion and introversion are generally understood as a single continuum and hence to be high in relation to one is necessarily to be low in relation to the other. Virtually all comprehensive models of personality include these two concepts including the Myers Briggs type indicator. Extroverts tend to be gregarious, assertive and generally seek out excitement.
539 A reference to an object or service being appropriate and of a necessary standard, for its intended use.
540 A reference to an organisational structure with few or no levels of intervening management between staff and managers. The central idea behind such structures is that well-trained workers will be more productive when they are more directly involved in the decision making process, rather than closely supervised by many layers of management.
541 An intertextual reference to an aspect of transactional analysis in which adults are perceived as participating in unconscious, repetitive, unhelpful and ultimately unsatisfying patters of behaviour where there is usually a hidden agenda. A game ends in a predictable way and may be played over and over again and generally speaking there are only three roles from which one can participate in a game: rescuer, persecutor and victim. Popularised by Eric Berne in his 1964 book, 'Games People Play'.
542 A reference to a theory within psychology which proposes that the operational principle of the brain is holistic, parallel, and analogue, with self-organising tendencies. The Gestalt effect refers to the 'forming' capability of the senses particularly with respect to the visual recognition of figures and whole forms instead of just a collection of simple lines and curves. Although Max Wertheimer is credited as the founder of the movement the idea of Gestalt it has its roots in theories by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Immanuel Kant and Ernst Mach.
543 A reference to the increasing integration of economies and societies around the world, transcending the boundaries of the nation state, particularly through international trade and the flow of capital, ideas and people, the transfer of culture and technology, and the development of trans-national regulations. However, the term can also used negatively to refer to a deliberate project led by powerful institutions, people, and countries to apply a single template of economic strategy and policy of 'market fundamentalism' to all countries and all situations.
544 An intertextual reference to the set of processes, customs, policies, laws, and institutions affecting the way a corporation is directed, administered or controlled. Commonly accepted principles of corporate governance include the rights and equitable treatment of shareholders, the interests of other stakeholders, the role and responsibilities of the board, integrity and ethical behaviour and disclosure and transparency.
545 A reference to an automatic pattern of behaviour in reaction to a specific situation which may be inherited or acquired through frequent repetition. Within psychology habits are viewed as routines of behaviour that are

repeated regularly and which tend to occur subconsciously, without directly thinking consciously about them. Habit, when used in the context of biology, refers to the instinctive actions of animals and the natural tendencies of plants.
546 An intertextual reference to a state of inactivity and metabolic depression in animals, characterised by lower body temperature, slower breathing, and lower metabolic rate. Hibernating animals conserve energy, especially during winter when food is short, tapping energy reserves, body fat, at a slow rate. It is the animal's slowed metabolic rate which leads to a reduction in body temperature and not the other way around.
547 A reference to a motivational model developed by Abraham Maslow and proposed in his 1943 paper 'A theory of human motivation'. The model charts the progression of human needs from basic urges of warmth, food, and safety to those of love, esteem and personal fulfilment. Maslow’s view is that none of these wants is absolute and that once satisfied it ceases to be a significant motivator. Maslow himself recognised that his unusual methodology meant that, in a conventional sense, his work 'simply was not research at all'.
548 An intertextual reference to the chemicals released by cells that affect cells in other parts of the body. Only a small amount of hormone is required to alter cell metabolism. It is essentially a chemical messenger that transports a signal from one cell to another.
549 An intertextual reference to one of the four types of 'fixed capital' proposed by Adam Smith in his 1776 book 'An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations'. The four types of 'fixed capital' were: (i) useful machines that were instruments of the trade; (ii) buildings as the means of procuring revenue; (iii) improvements of land and (iv) human capital.
550 A reference to any financial or non-financial factor that enables or motivates a particular course of action, or counts as a reason for preferring one choice to the alternatives. Within both economics and sociology it tends to be viewed as an expectation that encourages people to behave in a certain way.
551 An intertextual reference to the work of Colonel John C. Flanagan during WW2 that involved a series of studies focused on differentiating effective and ineffective behaviours. From then CIT has spread as a method to identify job requirements, develop recommendations for effective practices, and determine competencies for a vast number of professionals in various disciplines. A critical incident can be described as one that makes a significant contribution - either positively or negatively - to an activity or phenomenon.
542 A reference to an umbrella term used to describe a property of the mind that encompasses many related abilities, such as the capacities to reason, to plan, to solve problems, to think abstractly, to comprehend ideas, to use language, and to learn. IQ is a score derived from a standardised test that seeks to measure intelligence such as those developed by Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon in the early 20th Century.
553 An intertextual reference to the motivation or desire to do something based on the enjoyment of the behaviour itself rather than relying on or requiring external reinforcement. This form of motivation has been studied by social and educational psychologists since the early 1970s. Intrinsic motivation has been explained by Fritz Heider's attribution theory, Albert Bandura's work on self-efficacy and Edward L Deci & Richard M Ryan’s cognitive evaluation theory.
554 An intertextual reference to the personality traits of introversion and extroversion first popularised by Carl Jung. Extraversion and introversion are generally understood as a single continuum and hence to be high in relation to one is necessarily to be low in relation to the other. Virtually all comprehensive models of personality include these two concepts including the Myers Briggs type indicator. Introverts tend to be more reserved, less outgoing and less sociable. Although they are not necessarily loners, they are less likely to thrive on making new social contacts.
555 An intertextual reference to a form of understanding within psychology that is achieved without apparent effort and that may be characterised as a quick and ready insight, that is seemingly independent of previous experiences or empirical knowledge. Intuition is one of the four axes of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and is both opposite to and part of a continuum with sensing.
556 An intertexual reference to a variety of theories such as Edwin A. Locke’s 'range of affect' theory of 1976, a main premise of which is that how much and individual values a given facet of work, such as the degree of autonomy in a given role, moderates how satisfied or dissatisfied they becomes when these expectations are or are not met. Alternatively Richard Hackman & Greg Oldham propose a job characteristics model in which five core job characteristics and three critical psychological states are seen as determining job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is not the same as motivation, although it is clearly linked.
557 A reference to a cognitive psychological tool created by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955. It is used to help people better understand their interpersonal communication and relationships. It is used primarily in self-help groups and corporate settings as a heuristic exercise. When performing the exercise, the subject is given a list of 55 adjectives and picks five or six that they feel describe their own personality. Peers of the subject are then given the same list, and each pick five or six adjectives that describe the subject. These adjectives are then mapped onto a grid.
558 A reference to a considerable body of scholarship and the thinking of a host of business and management guru's including individuals such as John Adair, John Kotter, Rensis Likert, Leonard Sayles, Warren Bennis etc. The origins of this scholarship can be traced to the 1840's and Thomas Carlyle's interest in the types of behaviour and personality tendencies associated with effective leadership. Subsequently described as trait theory this approach sought to identify the talents, skills and physical characteristics of the men who arose to power
559 An intertextual reference to Kurt Lewin who in the 1939's led a group of researchers to investigate the manner and approach of individuals providing direction, implementing plans and motivating people. This early study has been very influential and established three major leadership styles which were (i) authoritarian or autocratic; (ii) participative or democratic and (iii) delegative or free reign. It has generally been concluded that whilst successful leaders use all three styles, with one of them normally dominant, less successful leaders tend to stick with one style.
560 An intertextual reference to the shape of a graph that plots the relation between the amount of measurable learning and the time and / or effort it takes to learn. The first person to describe this was Hermann Ebbinghaus in 1885. He found that the time required to memorise a nonsense syllable increased sharply as the number of syllables increased. Psychologist, Arthur Bills gave a more detailed description of learning curves in 1934 and in 1936, Theodore Paul Wright described the effect of learning upon labour productivity in the aircraft industry and

proposed a mathematical model of the learning curve.
561 An intertextual reference to the experiential learning cycle of David Kolb, who acknowledged the prior work of Kurt Lewin, John Dewey and Jean Piaget. Kolb's model identifies four abilities that are essential for experiential learning to be effective. These are (i) concrete experience; (ii) reflective observation; (iii) abstract conceptualisation and (iv) active experimentation.
562 A reference to the management of the flow of goods, information and other resources, including energy and people, between the point of origin and the point of consumption in order to meet the requirements of consumers. Logistics involves the integration of information, transportation, inventory, warehousing, material-handling, and packaging etc.
563 An intertextual reference to scholarship of Karl Weick. Sensemaking is the ability or attempt to make sense of an ambiguous situation. More exactly, sensemaking is the process of creating situational awareness and understanding in situations of high complexity or uncertainty in order to make decisions.
564 A reference to the processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers. In the early 1960s, Professor Neil Borden at Harvard Business School identified a number of company performance actions that can influence the consumer decision to purchase goods or services and he suggested that those actions represented a 'marketing mix'. Professor E. Jerome McCarthy, also at the Harvard Business School in the early 1960s, suggested that the marketing mix contained four elements: product, price, place and promotion.
565 A reference to the psychological term used to indicate that a person responds to the circumstances or environment in an appropriate manner. This response is generally learned rather than instinctual, and is not determined by one's age. Maturity also encompasses being aware of the correct time and place to behave and knowing when to act in serious or non-serious ways. Additional ways to judge if a person is mature include rational thinking and logical explanation in solving a problem, and the art of reasoning while debating.
556 A reference to an organism's mental ability to store, retain and recall information. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century put memory within the paradigms of cognitive psychology. In recent decades, it has become one of the principal pillars of a branch of science called cognitive neuroscience, an interdisciplinary link between cognitive psychology and neuroscience.
567 An intertextual reference to Greek mythology, where Mentor was the son of Alcumus and, in his old age, a friend of Odysseus. When Odysseus left for the Trojan War he placed Mentor in charge of his son, Telemachus, and of his palace.
130 A reference to the leadership model, involving inspiring shared vision, modelling the way, challenging the process, enabling others to act and encouraging the heart developed by James M Kouzes & Barry Z Posner.
568 A reference to a considerable body of scholarship and the thinking of a host of business and management guru's including Victor Vroom, David McClelland, Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg and Edward Deci & Richard Ryan etc. Motivation is the set of reasons that determines whether an individual will engage in a particular behaviour. Motivation may be rooted in the basic need to minimise physical pain and maximise pleasure, or it may include specific needs such as eating and resting, or a desired object, hobby, goal, state of being, ideal, or it may be attributed to less-apparent reasons such as altruism, morality, or avoiding mortality
569 A reference to the act of meeting new people in a business or social context or of connecting computers together.
570 A reference to the ability to reason with numbers and other mathematical concepts. It requires an understanding of the number system, a repertoire of mathematical techniques, and an inclination and ability to solve either quantitative or spatial problems in a range of contexts. Numeracy also demands an understanding of the ways in which data are gathered by counting and measuring, and presented in graphs, diagrams, charts and tables.
571 An intertextual reference to the debate within psychology as to whether individual differences in physical and behavioural traits emerge as a result of upbringing and personal experience (i.e. nurture) or an individual inherited genes (i.e. nature). This question was once considered to be an appropriate division of developmental influences, but since both types of factors are known to play such interacting roles in development, many modern psychologists consider the question naive - representing an outdated state of knowledge.
572 An intertextual reference to the original work of Peter Drucker in the late 1950's that was enlarged and developed into a practical methodology by John Humble in the late 1960's. The term 'management by objectives' was first used by Drucker in his 1954 book 'The Practice of Management'. MBO divides corporate goals into objectives that can be assigned to individual managers and thereby used to measure performance.
573 An intertextual reference to a principle which notes that, for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. This principle was first suggested by the business and management guru Joseph M. Juran who named it after Italian economist Vilfredo Federico Damaso Pareto, who observed that 80% of the land in Italy was owned by 20% of the population. The Pareto principle is also known as the 80-20 rule; the law of the vital few and the principle of factor sparsity.
574 A reference to a means of ensuring that managers manage effectively; that they ensure the people or teams they manage know and understand what is expected of them; have the skills and ability to deliver on these expectations; are supported by the organisation to develop the capacity to meet these expectations; are given feedback on their performance and have an opportunity to contribute to individual and team objectives.
575 A reference to the unique pattern of enduring psychological and behavioural characteristics by which each person can be compared and contrasted to others.
576 A reference to an approach to conflict resolution that's about identifying and managing unsolvable problems. It stresses the importance of recognising that some situations don't have solutions and that life doesn't always have to be either / or. Thus whilst some issues are problems that have a definite answer, the more challenging issues are polarities; situations in which either side has benefits and drawbacks. The key is being able to recognise when a situation contains polarities instead of problems and to learn how to manage those situations.

577 A reference to a considerable body of scholarship and the thinking of a host of business and management guru's including Kanter, Etzioni, Hickson, Kenny & Wilson and Mintzberg. The latter's analysis involves three types of external coalitions (the dominated, the divided and the passive); four internal systems of power (authority, ideology, expertise and politics) and five types internal coalitions (the personalised, the bureaucratic, the professional and the politicised).
578 A reference to the process of bringing a new product or service to market. There are two parallel paths involved in the product development process: one involves the idea generation, product design, and detail engineering and the other involves market research and marketing analysis.
579 A reference to the discipline of planning, organising and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives. From the early 1950's two project scheduling models were developed: (i) the 'program evaluation and review technique' developed by Booz-Allen & Hamilton as part of the United States Navy's Polaris missile submarine programme and (ii) the 'critical path method' developed in a joint venture by both DuPont Corporation and Remington Rand Corporation. Latterly these have been replaced by the Prince 2 methodology.
580 A reference to the field of study concerned with the theory and technique of educational and psychological measurement including the development of measurement instruments such as questionnaires and tests.
581 A reference to the practice of managing the flow of information between an organisation and the public. The objective of PR is to gain an organisation or individual exposure to their audiences using topics of public interest and news items that do not require direct payment. Because public relations places exposure in credible third-party outlets, it offers a third-party legitimacy that advertising does not have.
582 An intertextual reference to a means of eliminating production faults by a management led philosophy of continuous improvement. Based upon the work of W Edwards Deming who demonstrated that all processes are vulnerable to variations that result in a loss of quality and that the level of these variations can be managed in order to raise consistency. Deming was followed by Joseph Duran and Phillip Crosby.
583 A reference to planned and systematic production processes that provide confidence in a product's suitability for its intended purpose. QA includes regulation of the quality of raw materials, assemblies, products and components; services related to production; and management, production and inspection processes. Whereas quality control emphasises testing and blocking the release of defective products, quality assurance is about improving and stabilising production and associated processes to avoid or at least minimise issues that led to the defects in the first place.
584 A reference to the degree of well-being felt by an individual or group of people and hence also an intertextual reference to well-being.
585 An intertextual reference to the Greek philosopher Aristotle who defined randomness as situation in which a choice has to be made where there is no logical component by which to determine or make the choice. Latterly a mathematical theory of probability in which randomness is viewed as a repeating process whose outcomes follow no describable deterministic pattern, but which follow a probability distribution.
586 A reference to a feature of unconscious human interaction which can be characterised as being 'in sync' with, or being 'on the same wavelength' as the person with whom you are talking.
587 A reference to the public acknowledgement of person's status, merits, achievements, virtues, or service.
588 An intertextual reference to Donald Schon's book 'The Reflective Practitioner' which was published in 1983. In a more general sense it is a process of introspection and self-observation that involves the reporting of conscious inner thoughts, desires and sensations. It is a conscious mental and usually purposive process relying on thinking, reasoning, and examining one's own thoughts, feelings, and, in more spiritual cases, one's soul.
589 A reference to the process of controlling human or societal behaviour by rules or restrictions.
590 A reference to the processes a company uses to track and organise its contacts with its current and prospective customers and to gain and maintain a client's confidence and trust.
591 A reference to the process of assigning the available resources in an economic way. Part of resource management the process involves firstly a decision regarding which items should be resourced and the level of the resourcing; whilst the second part which prioritises additional items that will be resourced if more resources become available and those that will sacrificed if total resourcing needs to be reduced.
592 A reference to a process that in psychological terms reinforces behaviour, something that, when offered, causes a behaviour to increase in intensity. In neuroscience, a reward system is a collection of brain structures which attempt to regulate and control behaviour by inducing pleasurable effects.
593 An intertextual reference to the five levels of human communication discussed in John Powell's book 'Why am I afraid to tell you who I am'? The five levels are (i) cliché conversation; (ii) reporting the facts about others; (iii) my ideas and judgments; (iv) my feelings and (v) peak communication.
594 An intertextual reference to a strategic planning method that some organisations use to make flexible long-term plans. The practical development of scenario forecasting, to guide strategy rather than for the more limited academic uses which had previously been the case, was started by Pierre Wack in 1971 at the Royal Dutch Shell group of companies. Two years later it was given impetus by the Oil Shock.
595 An intertextual reference to scholarship of Karl Weick. Sensemaking is the ability or attempt to make sense of an ambiguous situation. More exactly, sensemaking is the process of creating situational awareness and understanding in situations of high complexity or uncertainty in order to make decisions.
596 A reference to the term that is used by sociologists, social psychologists and educationalists to refer to the process of learning one's culture and how to live within it. For the individual it provides the skills and habits necessary for acting and participating within their society. For the society, inducting all individual members into its moral norms, attitudes, values, motives, social roles, language and symbols is the means by which social and cultural continuity are attained.

597 An intertextual reference to the work of Delroy L. Paulhus in which he characterises an individuals perception of control as being partitioned into three spheres which are depicted in a life-space diagram The three spheres are (i) personal achievement; (ii) interpersonal, and (iii) socio-political. Thus the three spheres of control become personal efficacy, interpersonal control and socio-political control.
598 An intertextual reference to the normal distribution with a mean of zero and a variance of one. The normal distribution was first introduced by Abraham de Moivre in an article in the year 1733.
599 An intertextual reference to (i) a straight line or plane that touches a curve or curved surface at a point but does not intersect it at that point and / or (ii) the ratio of the opposite to the adjacent side of a right-angled triangle.
600 A reference to the nine codified team working roles, named plant, resource investigator, co-ordinator, shaper, monitor - evaluator, team worker, implementer, completer - finisher and specialist, that emanate from a programme of research into the effectiveness of management teams that was conducted, under the leadership of Meredith Belbin, during the early 1960's at Henley College of Management.
601 An intertextual reference to the business efficiency technique combining the 'time study' work of Frederick Winslow Taylor with the 'motion study work of Frank and Lillian Gilbreth.
602 A reference to a type leadership that operates through creating clear structures whereby it is clear what is required of their subordinates, and the rewards that they get for following orders. It can be characterised by contract negotiations whereby the subordinate is given a salary and other benefits, the allocation of work for which the individual will be held responsible and the management of exceptions. Transactional leadership tends to takes a 'telling' style.
603 A reference to skills, knowledge, and abilities attained through both training and experience in one employment setting that are relevant to different employment opportunities in the labour market. A transferable skills analysis can be performed informally by analysing past accomplishments or experience; or may be more formally skills analysed by vocational evaluators working for organisations such as the U.S. Department of Labor.
604 A reference to a type of leadership that operates through the development of a vision, the selling of the vision, seeking the way forward and unswerving commitment. Working for a transformational leader can be a wonderful and uplifting experience. They put passion and energy into everything and they care about you and want you to succeed. James MacGregor Burns first introduced the concepts of transformational in his descriptive research on political leaders in 1978, but this term is now used in organizational psychology as well.
605 A reference to the four stages of competence, or the 'conscious competence' learning model which describes the psychological states involved in the process of progressing from incompetence to competence in a skill. The four stages being: unconscious incompetence; conscious incompetence; conscious competence and unconscious competence.
606 An intertextual reference to the book 'Utopia' written by Sir Thomas More in 1516 which describes a perfect society on an imaginary island.
607 An intertextual reference to 'value chain analysis' which was first described and popularised by Michael Porter in his 1985 best-seller, 'Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance'.
608 An intertextual reference to the emergent work of the New Economic Foundation and the Well-being Institute at Cambridge University that seeks to replace the narrow GDP view of classical economics with broader ways of assessing societal progress. This includes explicitly seeking to capture how ordinary people feel and experience their lives and what they individually and collectively value. This work includes a framework for National Accounts of Well-being and a cross-national European Social Survey involving 22 countries that was conducted in 2006/2007 and included a detailed module of 50 well-being questions.
609 A reference to an expression first used in the late 1970s to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life. Now more about legal provisions, many of which were driven by EU directives, to provide employment rights. These include a right to a minimum of annual leave; a limit to the working week of 48 hours; a right to 13 weeks unpaid parental leave for men and women; a right to unpaid leave for dependant care; an entitlement to 26 weeks maternity leave; an entitlement to 2 weeks paid paternity leave; a entitlement to adoption leave and a right to request flexible working etc.

Appendix 8

‘Pen Portraits’ of the Five Participating Organisations

1 HeathTrustOrg

HealthTrustOrg provides comprehensive mental healthcare services for the residents of wide geographic area with a culturally and socially diverse population of 1.2 million spread over an area of 172 square miles. The organisation has an income in excess of £160 million and a workforce of 4000 employees. The Trust was created on 1 April 2003 by the merger of two neighbouring organisations and the successor organization is now seeking Foundation Trust status.

On a typical day the Trust will have 700 in patient beds in occupation, 200 day care sessions, 400 clinic appointments and 800 other patient contacts within the community. The organization receives 5,000 referrals a year and operates from a total of 100 different sites. Governance is provided by 8 non-executive directors and 9 executive directors, whilst services are delivered via 5 geographical directorates, 4 specialist directorates and 5 support directorates.

Within the interview transcripts of the interviewees from this organisation there is clear evidence of managerial ‘angst’ and the causes of this appear to be :

1. An apparent failure to merge the cultures of the two successor organisations; an apparent failure to agree and subsequently codify a set of acceptable managerial behaviours and the alleged low level of organisational visibility achieved by the executive team.

2. An inability to sense the overall ‘direction of travel’ that was resulting from the governments political agenda with the resulting outcomes of a poor understanding of both the background to government policy and the thinking behind the plethora of government targets; together with an inability to interpret the meaning and significance of this for the development of local services.

3. Doubts regarding the core rationale for seeking Foundation Trust status; concern that this change of status was being sought too soon after the merger and before the successor organisation had settled adequately; and concern regarding the impact that achieving Foundation Trust status would have upon the organisation and its services.

It is interesting to note that three of the four other case study organisations had also been affected by significant mergers, acquisitions, restructures and changes in culture, in a broadly similar timescale, without this creating the same kind of managerial ‘angst’.

2 CharityOrg

CharityOrg was formed as both a company limited by guarantee and a charity in February 2002 by the merger of two well established, successor organisations within the same field. The merged organisation employs 3,500 scientists, doctors and nurses in 35 different locations throughout the UK and raises £300 million a year via its various fundraising activities. This includes a chain of 650 charity shops, 1,000 local fundraising groups and 3,000 volunteers. The governance of the organisation is provided by 20 trustees and an executive board of a chief executive and 7 executive directors.

A recently completed strategic review has focussed upon the long term fundraising that would be required to pursue all most interesting and potentially research opportunities as quickly as practicable, rather than rationing and prioritising the science according to the levels of fundraising that have been achieved historically. This has highlighted the need to increase fundraising to £400 million within 3 years and this analysis has created the realisation that ‘more of the same’ is not going to close a gap of this magnitude. Accordingly the organisation is attempting to change the culture to one in which innovation, creativity and risk were more highly valued. It has also been concluded that this will require a fundamental change in managerial style, from the performance management of individuals in relation to KPI's, to a more coaching, facilitating, encouraging, empowering, enabling and supporting style, particularly in relation to the development of new ideas. The executive directors are clear that in the long term any business model, or corporate fundraising strategy can be and will be replicated by their competitor organisations and that accordingly the only competitive advantage that can be sustainable in the long term is the organisations culture.

An additional key challenge is the appointment of a new chief executive who is both a 'McKinsey man' and the first to hold this post without being a highly eminent, medical research scientist.

The organisation has a well developed talent management programme which operates at two levels. The first seeks to identify and develop heads of department and the second seeks to identify and 'fast track' the personal development of those who are seen as having the potential to be a director within five years. Both these programmes utilise the Myers Briggs personality profiling technique and this probably explains why three of the five interviewees from this organisation made reference to this. By contrast only one of the nineteen interviewees, from the remaining four organisations, made mention of Myers Briggs personality profiling.

3 CouncilOrgOne

CouncilOrgOne is a unitary authority with responsibility for education, social services, the environment, planning, culture, highways, transport and housing etc. The organisation was formed in 1998 following its de-merger from a County Council that spanned two shire counties and its subsequent amalgamation with a number District Councils.

The organisation has a combined capital and revenue expenditure of £218 million and a workforce of 5,500 employees, 3,000 of whom are teachers. In 2005 the Audit Commission awarded the council a performance rating of 3 stars out of a possible 4 and judged the organisation to be improving adequately.

The governance of the organisation is provided by 58 Councillors from whom a Cabinet of a Leader, a Deputy Leader and 8 Cabinet Members are selected. The current balance of the Council is such that no political party is in overall control and accordingly the controlling administration is provided by a coalition formed by the two largest groupings of Councillors. The executive leadership of the organisation is provided by a Chief Executive and a team of 6 Directors.

In recent years the organisation has invested significantly in management training and development and concerns have recently emerged regarding both the cost effectiveness of the overall programme and the extent to which it is aligned with the organisations core objectives.

The organisation has utilised a consulting organisation to investigate and report upon the provision of both the 'in house' policies and procedures type HR training and the externally provided, integrated management development programme at Certificate, Diploma and Masters level. A copy of the report was provided on a strictly non-attributable basis. The methodology used by the consultants included the analysis of documents, the circulation of a questionnaire that achieved a return rate of 18% and the holding of three focus groups. The key findings of the twelve page report that may be relevant to this research project are as follows :

> "Learning acquired on *[in house]* training was largely focussed on skill development and knowledge acquisition; e.g. recruitment and selection, project management, the SRD system and diversity".
>
> Finding 3.3.3

"The Certificate is more relevant to the *[organisation name omitted]* role and responsibility whereas the Diploma and Masters are seen as too theoretical".

Finding 3.7.6

"The Diploma and Masters programmes are regarded as too theoretical and do not link to *[organisation name omitted]* corporate objectives".

Finding 4.4.1

"The *[Diploma and Masters]* programmes are seen as being of direct value to individual development, hence the perception that many who have attended have since left *[organisation name omitted]*".

Finding 4.4.2

"The certificate level of the formal programme is viewed more positively, and appears to have been strongly influenced by what the council needs to deliver".

Finding 4.4.3

4 ManuCo

ManuCo is an international manufacturing company that is privately owned by three families, although the family members are no longer active participants in the business. The original business was founded in 1899, as a specialty pipe manufacturer for the burgeoning oil industry in the Middle Atlantic states of America. In 1945 the current organisation was created and the focus of the enterprise became the manufacture of locks, latches, captive fasteners, hinges and handles etc for all kinds of consumer goods, including boats, cars, caravans, computers and medical equipment.

The current Chairman and CEO was recruited five years ago and he has a corporate, Fortune 500 background in the USA and subsequently he has recruited to the organisation other key individuals with a similar background. As a result of this the organisation is acquiring a much 'tougher' managerial culture that is replacing the rather 'benign' family firm culture that had existed previously. Included in the change of culture is the adoption of a matrix management structure that has resulted in almost everyone having more than one boss to satisfy! The new Chairman and CEO has also initiated a companywide training programme through which everyone in the organisation has been introduced to the Kouzes & Posner leadership model of challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to acts, modelling the way and encouraging the heart.

The organisation has a tradition of highly ambitious sales growth targets and has sought to double turnover every 5 years. In the recent past this has been accompanied by an equally ambitious acquisitions policy that has seen acquisitions in the UK in 1983, in Germany in 1983 and 2004, in Sweden in 2003 and in the USA in 2004 and 2005. As a result of this the organisation now employs 2,200 people working in 22 different countries and has offices and / or manufacturing facilities in North America, Sweden, Germany, the UK, Hong Kong and China.

The major challenge facing the organisation is that its core manufacturing facilities lie in the high cost regions of the west coast of the USA and western Europe, whilst the majority of its customer base are now manufacturing their consumer goods in China. In response to this the organisation opened its first manufacturing facility in China in 2004. However it is clear that the organisation is still coming to terms with both the very different business environment and the very different ways of doing business in the Far East.

5 CouncilOrgTwo

CouncilOrgTwo was formed in 1998 when the successor organisation that previously had spanned two shire counties was divided such that each of the counties had its own distinctive and very different local government structures. The organisation has a combined capital and revenue expenditure of £847 million and a workforce of 12,000 employees, although around 50% of these are located in schools. In 2005 the Audit Commission awarded the council a maximum performance rating of 4 stars.

The governance of the organisation is provided by 57 Councillors from whom a Cabinet of a Leader and 6 Cabinet Members are selected. The current balance of the Council is such that a single political party clearly has overall control. The executive leadership of the organisation is provided by a Chief Executive and a team of 6 Directors.

Although the organisation had lost part of its geographic area some 9 years previously, by comparison to the other organisations represented by the interviewees, it had a highly stable, perhaps even staid, ‘business as usual’ kind of atmosphere. Whilst there was a clear commitment to both incremental change and continuous service improvement there appeared to have been none of the seismic, transformational change that had been prompted by the mergers and acquisitions, and the subsequent changes in governance, organisational culture, management structures and key personnel that had been experienced by the other four organisations.

Appendix 9

Sources of Indexing Definitions

1 Theory

1. A well substantiated explanation
Source: http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=theory
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

2. An organised system of accepted knowledge
Source: http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=theory
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

3. An explanation based on observation, experimentation and reasoning
Source: http://eobglossary.gsfc.nasa.gov/Library/glossary.php3
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

4. A set of propositions which summarise, organise and explain a variety of known facts
Source: http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/psychology/teaching/glossary.shtml
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

5. An extremely well substantiated explanation
Source: http://nmsr.org/wrkshp9.htm
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

6. An abstract formulation of the constant relations between entities
Source: http://mises.org/easier/T.asp
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

2 Model

1. A framework for thinking and acting
Source: http://merrea.org/glossary%20m.htm
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

3 Concept

1. An abstract or symbolic tag that attempts to capture the essence of reality
Source : http://www.epa.gov/evaluate/glossary/c-esd.htm
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

2. A word, phrase, or term expressing an idea
Source: http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/page.php
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

3. A mental picture of a group of things that have common charcteristics
Source : http://www.neiu.edu/-dbehrlic/hrd408/glossary.htm
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

4. An abstraction or symbol that represents similarities or common characteristics
Source: http://healthlinks.washington.edu/howto/measurement/glossary
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

4 Idea

1. The product of thinking about a problem, or issue

Source: http://mos.gov.pl/mos/publikac/Raporty_opracowania/manual/glosry_1.html
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

2. A specific thought that arises in the mind as a result of cognition
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Idea
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

5 Approach

1. Actions intended to deal with a problem, or situation
Source: http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=approach
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

2. To set about, go about, or to begin to deal with
Source: http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=approach
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

3. A way of doing things
Source: http://cio.osu.edu/projects/framework/glossary.html
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

4. A way of dealing with, or accomplishing something
Source: http://www.mgrush.com/content/view/70/33
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

6 Behaviour

1. A manner of acting
Source: http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=behaviour
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

2. The actions, or reactions of an organism
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Behaviour
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

3. A response to an external, or internal stimuli
Source: http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/science/glossary.shtml
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

4. The actions of people
Source: http://www.crfonline.org/orc/glossary/b.html
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

7 Technique

1. A way of doing something
Source: http://www.artsconnected.org/artsnetmn/spaces/vocabulary.html
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

2. A method, or procedure
Source: http://www.braces.org/healthcareprofessionals/dentists/glossary/T.cfm
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

3. A practical method applied to a task
Source: http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=technique
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

4. A specific method, or system of working
Source: http://projects.edtech.sandi.net/montgomery/mysteriousmasks/art_terms.htm
[Accessed 18 April 2007]

5. An approach, practical method, well defined procedure, or system of working that is applied to perform a task, or activity
Source: http://www.portfoliostep.com/390.1TerminologyDefinitions.htm
[Accessed 18 April 2007]

8 Tool

1. An implement used in the practice of a vocation
Source: http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=tool
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

2. A device that provides advantage in accomplishing a task
Source: http://javaworkshop.sourceforge.net/glossary.html
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

3. An instrument used to solve a problem
Source: http://www.nubnut.com/glossary/t.shtml
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

4. A device used to perform, or facilitate a task
Source: http://www.theexperiment.org/energylanguage/definitions_list.php
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

5. A device that aids the accomplishment of a task
Source: http://nmlites.org/standards/science/glossary_6.htm
[Accessed 12 December 2007]

6. An object, device, implement, or artefact modified for a particular use and used in the practice of a vocation
Source: http://www.creswell-crags.org.uk/Books_and links/Glossary.htm
[Accessed 18 April 2007]

Appendix 10

Management as a conceptual discipline

Laurence Robinson, Dr Catharine Ross & Dr Jan Francis-Smythe

Centre for People @ Work, University of Worcester

Centre for People @ Work
Business School
University of Worcester
Henwick Grove
Worcester
WR1 1NQ

Email: robl5_04@worc.ac.uk

Knowledge & Learning Track

Full Paper

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Management as a conceptual discipline

Summary

This research has investigated the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

The critical incident technique and a case study research strategy were utilised to examine whether management practitioners made conscious references to such scholarship and subsequently the insights of ‘intertextuality’ and the framework analysis technique were utilised to examine whether the process of appropriation might be a much more covert phenomenon.

It has been concluded (i) that management can be characterised as a ‘conceptual’ discipline; (ii) that it is as least as ‘conceptual’, as it is either ‘theoretical’ or ‘practical’ and (iii) that at the heart of the management experience is the appropriation of ideas and concepts, rather than theories and models.

The implications of these findings for researchers, educators and practitioners are explored, and both the limitations of the research and the potential for further work are discussed.

Introduction

The first significant book on the topic of business and management was Frederick W. Taylor's 'Scientific management' (Kennedy, 1998). However, by the end of the 20th century the market for books on the subject of business and management had grown to more than 3,000 new books a year and the total annual value of business and management book sales was considered to be £700 million (Alvarez, Mazza & Mur (1999: 114). In addition, it was estimated that there were at least 30,000 business books in print (Pfeffer & Sutton 2006: 33).

This general picture of a burgeoning intellectual interest in business and management towards the end of the 20th century is confirmed by Thomson (2001: 102) who concludes both that 'management was not an area of academic analysis for most of the last century' and that 'not until the 1960s did any serious analysis start in the universities'.

In fact The Tuck School of Business, which was founded in 1900 and is part of Dartmouth College, in America provided the first graduate school of business. However, the growth in the academic study of business and management has been such that The Global Foundation for Management Education (2008: 26 & 27) conservatively estimated, that on a worldwide basis; there were at least 13.2 million students of business and management; that there were at least 8,000 business schools and that the annual expenditure on university level business and management education was at least US $15 billion. At the time this would have equated to around £27 billion.

Thus, the exponential growth, both in the market for books on business and management and in the market for the academic study of business and management, would seem to imply an increasingly significant role for the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about the practice of management.

However, Thomson (2001: 102) concludes both that 'management in Britain has been an empirical and instrumental, rather than an intellectual occupation' and that 'pragmatism rather than theory has been the basis of progress'. In addition, there are other academics who share Thomson's pessimism regarding both the impact and the influence of academic theorising upon the practice of management (Daft & Wiginton, 1979; Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Mintzberg, 2004; Pearce, 2004).

Furthermore, within academia there is a longstanding and seemingly unresolved debate regarding whether it is axiomatic that research, undertaken with appropriate levels of academic rigour, will always suffer from a lack of practical relevance (Schon, 1983; Svejenova & Alvarez, 1999; Weick, 2001; Starkey & Madan, 2001; Aram & Salipante, 2003; Mintzberg, 2004; Rousseau, 2006; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006; Kieser & Leiner, 2009; Fincham & Clark, 2009; Hodgkinson & Rousseau, 2009).

Finally, the scholarship regarding management itself appears to involve a series of intense and unresolved debates as to (i) whether management can be regarded as a 'science', or an 'applied science' (Moore, 1970; Schein, 1973; Mintzberg, 2004); (ii) whether management can be effectively taught via business schools and academic qualifications such as an MBA (Bailey & Ford, 1996; Nohria & Eccles, 1997, Pfeffer &

Fong, 2002; Daft & Wiginton, 1979; Pearce, 2004); or (iii) whether it is a ‘craft’ that is learnt through an individuals active involvement in a ‘community of practice’ (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Orr, 1996).

In the light of the contradictory evidence this research sought to ascertain whether the generality of management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models about management in any meaningful way and assuming that they did, the extent to which they did so. In addition, it sought to establish the fundamental nature of the processes of appropriation and the factors that determined whether an appropriation process was successful. Furthermore, it sought to establish the role that ideas, theories, concepts and models, once appropriated, played in helping managers to discharge their organisational responsibilities.

Literature review

An initial exploration of relevant scholarship highlighted both the ‘diffusion of innovations’ (Rogers, 1962) and ‘fashion theory’ (Abrahamson, 1991 & 1996; Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999).

Everett M. Rogers has produced the definitive, encyclopaedic review of more than 4,000 studies that constitute the body of knowledge that has come to be described as the innovation – diffusion literature. Diffusion theory is often understood in relation to the diffusion of technical innovations. In fact Rogers (2003: 12) adopted both a broad definition of an innovation and a broad description of its applicability. This specifically includes the diffusion of new ideas.

However, the roots of diffusion theory lie in the Ryan & Gross (1943) study of the uptake of a new hybrid corn seed in rural Iowa, USA and it was these two researchers who first used the term ‘diffusion’. Rogers’ initial contribution to ‘diffusion theory’ was to show that the S-shaped adopter curve, which had been produced by Ryan & Gross, closely followed that of a normal distribution. This allowed Rogers to divide the curve into a number of sub - categories which he then used to categorise the adopter population into five, broad, generic types. Hence, the core of the Rogers’ categorisation system divides the normal distribution curve into four parts by utilising both the mean and the standard deviation. The area lying to the extreme left of the curve is then sub-divided by utilising the mean and two standard deviations. Accordingly Rogers’ adopter categorisations are a purely statistical phenomenon.

However, from a broader perspective, diffusion theory is dependent upon a number of assumptions that are problematic and the theory also contains a number of other limiting characteristics. Firstly, it is clear that the overall approach of the diffusion of innovations model incorporates a ‘centre - periphery bias’ (Schon, 1971). This reflects the origins of the model and both the fact that the new seed corn was by developed by a government agency and the fact that subsequently the new seed corn was diffused to local farmers through this agency (Rogers, 2003). If this model of diffusion is translated to the setting of ideas about management, it would imply the need for centralised ‘think tanks’ to develop and perfect ideas about management prior to their diffusion to practitioners. Although business schools could be suggested as being these centralised ‘think tanks’, it would be necessary to subsequently demonstrate that in practice they fulfilled this role. In addition, for the diffusion of innovations model to be potentially applicable to a management setting it would also be necessary to demonstrate that there were effective channels of diffusion and communication from the centralised ‘think tanks’ and to the practitioner community. In fact there is an overwhelming weight of evidence to confirm that such channels do not to exist (Bailey & Ford, 1996; Nohria & Eccles, 1997; Thomson, Storey, Mabey, Thomson, Gray & Farmer, 1998; Svejenova & Alvarez, 1999; Kieser, 2002; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Rynes, Brown & Colbert, 2002; Mintzberg, 2004; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006; Forster, 2007). In addition, there is evidence that practitioners themselves are the creators of the majority of management innovations, rather than any presumed ‘think tank’ (Mol & Birkinshaw, 2008).

Of equal importance is the fact that the adopter S - curve, upon which the diffusion of innovations model is based, is an ‘after - the - fact’ phenomenon that exists only for those innovations that completely diffuse (Rogers, 1958). Accordingly the model has no predictive capability and in addition, it is unable to explain why poor innovations diffuse and good ones do not (Abrahamson, 1991 & 1996). Finally, the model has a ‘pro-innovation bias’ which assumes that all innovations have a beneficial impact (Downs & Mohr, 1976; Kimberly, 1981; Rogers & Schoemaker, 1971; Van de Ven, 1986; Zaltman, Duncan & Holbeck, 1973).

In fact the ‘fashion - setting’ theory developed initially by Abrahamson (1991, 1996) and later by Abrahamson & Fairchild (1999) was a direct response to the inability of Rogers’ classical diffusion theory to explain why some ineffective ideas about management appeared to successfully diffuse, whilst some apparently effective ideas, did not.

However, ‘fashion - setting’ theory aligns managerial fashion with aesthetic fashion; and in so doing it assumes that both aesthetic fashion and managerial fashion are the product of ‘fashion-setters’. Furthermore, in relation to the apparently fashionable patterns in ideas about management, the role of ‘fashion–setters’ is assigned to consulting firms; management ‘gurus’; business mass media publishers; business schools; book editors and publishers; ghost - writers; conference organisers and video production companies (Abrahamson, 1996). In a later development the notion of a ‘fashion–niche’ was introduced. Each organisational ‘fashion–niche’ is viewed as containing managerial challenges of such significance that there is the continuous need for new and improved management techniques. However, such organisational ‘fashion - niches’ are assumed, but not demonstrated to exist (Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999).

Fashion - setting theory raises concerns because it can be seen as overstating the power of discourse and oratory and because it also assigns to practitioners a role that can be viewed as being both passive and a gullible (Clark & Salaman, 1998; Clark, 2003; Clark & Greatbatch, 2004; Mazza, Alvarez & Comas, 2001). In addition, this is not a view of managers that is supported by other literature, particularly that which is associated with leadership (Heller, 2002). Fashion - setting theory can also be seen as ignoring the evidence that trends in aesthetic fashion can and do occur by processes such as ‘contagion’ (Gladwell, 2000; Granovetter, 1978; Granovetter & Soong, 1983), or even ‘swarm intelligence’ (Beni & Wang, 1989), rather than through the efforts of ‘fashion-setters’. In addition, fashion theory, like diffusion theory, is contrary to the evidence that practitioners themselves are the creators of the majority of management innovations (Mol & Birkinshaw, 2008).

A key methodological deficiency with Abrahamson's central proposition, that management is subjected to fashionable trends, is that citation analysis is used as a proxy for detailed, primary information regarding managerial practice. Indeed the Creation of European Management Practice: Final Report, (2001: 31) highlights the concern that investigations into 'the succession of different management fashions' are usually 'based upon an examination of management literature rather than on actual management practice'. In addition, Worren (1996: 613) cites evidence that contrary to Abrahamson's central proposition, managerial practices are 'surprisingly stable and not particularly faddish'.

Thus, although Rogers' 'diffusion of innovations theory' and Abrahamson's 'fashion - setting theory' both make a significant contribution it is clear that they provide only a partial, or perhaps a particular, explanation for the appropriation of ideas, theories, concepts and models by management practitioners.

In addition, as has already been discussed, the scholarship regarding the researching, teaching and learning of management as a formal, academic subject has highlighted a number of intense and seemingly unresolved debates, rather than clarity and certainty.

It is the equivocal, ambiguous and even contradictory nature of the evidence regarding the appropriation of ideas, theories concepts and models that this research has sought to resolve.

Methodology and methods

This research has adopted a research philosophy of 'realism' and it has utilised a case study research strategy, qualitative data and inductive reasoning to examine whether management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas about management in an obvious and overt way. The case study analysis was conducted in accordance with the processes and procedures outlined by Eisenhardt (1989) and this included both a 'within case' and a 'cross case' analysis. In practice each of the interview transcripts was subjected to an intense inspection process. This resulted in sections of the dialogue being highlighted and extracted into a separate compilation for a more detailed examination. Ultimately 888 interview extracts were attributed to one of ten evidential categories, such as evidence for experience based decision – making.

Subsequently the research utilised the insights of 'intertextuality' (Worton & Still, 1990; Bernstein, 1996; Allen, 2000; Thomas, 2003; Bazerman, 2004) to explore, analyse, categorise and index (Richards & Richards, 1994) additional extracts from the verbatim, interview transcripts. The purpose of this was to examine whether management practitioners appropriate the more formal, more academic ideas about management in a much more covert, subtle, tacit or even subconscious way. This latter stage of the data analysis utilised the framework analysis technique (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994; Pope, Zieland & Mays, 2000; Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor, 2003; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

This 'intertextual' data analysis process involved the further identification of words, phases and expressions that were of potential interest. In simple terms the basis for the identification of these extracts was that they were viewed as 'standing out' in some way against the 'background noise' of the overall sentence. Within the limits of manageability the extraction process aimed to be as inclusive as possible and this is illustrated by the fact that ultimately this collation totalled 1447 interview extracts. The table below illustrates the indexing process and in addition, the illustrative extracts are shown both with an explanation for the indexing rationale and within their context.

Table 1 : Illustration of 'intertextual' indexing process

<table>
<tr><th>Theoretical Domain</th><th>Conceptual Domain</th><th>Tactical Domain</th><th>Practical Domain</th></tr>
<tr><td>Action centred leadership</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">A reference to the leadership model, involving task, team and individual, developed by John Adair firstly at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and subsequently at The Industrial Society during the 1960's and the early 1970's.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">[Details omitted] definitely I remember, and the course I did on the second week I became a manager for the first time, which was at [details omitted], which was, I think it was just called Introduction to Managing People or Introduction to Management. And it was the ... um … action centred leadership model.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Encouraging the heart</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">A reference to the leadership model, involving inspiring shared vision, modelling the way, challenging the process, enabling others to act and encouraging the heart developed by James M Kouzes & Barry Z Posner.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">So we've got our five practices … um … so you've got your inspiring shared vision, you've got the modelling the way, you've got the challenging the process … you've got the enabling others to act and then the encouraging the heart piece.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Champion</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">A reference to influential individuals whose backing can ensure that a project or invention gets a chance to prove itself. A finding of Peters' and Waterman's, In Search of Excellence was that organisations that nurtured champions were more likely to qualify as excellent.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">And so on Friday we started the session and said look guys, look at this agenda, its horrendous, the pressure we're all under, so, how are we, together, going to sort it out. Who's going to champion that bit, because I can't, we can't, whose going to champion that bit, what are we going to do about this.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Empowerment</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">A reference to the increased participation of employees in the enterprise for which they work. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, a former editor of the Harvard Business Review, is a leading exponent of empowerment as an aid to releasing forces for innovation and change. Also an interdisciplinary intertextual reference to the ritual in Tibetan Buddhism which initiates a student into a particular tantric deity practice.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Um … I suppose it goes back to some of the points you've made about partly, ... um … using somebody who's closer to the, the actual day to day ins and outs of the, the work. Um … sharing responsibility, ... um … empowerment, I don't know if that's answering the point you're making but I, I think it, its easy to think that, as I'm the manager, I need to know it all or I should demonstrate to the rest of my team that I know it all.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>Segment</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">A reference to a subgroup of people or organizations sharing one or more characteristics that cause them to have similar product and / or service needs. A true market segment is distinct from other segments, is homogeneous within the segment; responds similarly to a market stimulus, and can be reached by a market intervention.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">So our business is split, as you probably know, into the various different markets and customers that we serve, and we segment that according to … um … like customers and like markets.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>Turnkey</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">A reference to a form of business transaction in which a contractor is are responsible for a project from construction through to commissioning. However it may also include follow on activities such as training, logistical, and operational support.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">[Details omitted], who are engineering consultants and they're supervising, they should be supervising the work and project managing the delivery so I'm actually supposed to be acting as a light touch project manager with ... er … a turnkey approach from our consultants to do everything, I think is the phrase (laugh).</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Managing by exception</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">A reference to a means of ensuring that the management of an organisation devotes its time to dealing with those aspects of its operations where the performance differs significantly from that which was intended.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">So the challenge has been really project managing them to make sure that they do what they are being charged to do, compared with the other pressures that they're under, of course. Um … so broadly speaking it's been an overall type of Prince Two management approach by managing by exception.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Scorecard</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">An intertextual reference to 'balanced scorecard' which is a means of providing an overview the measures that both influence and underlie an organisations performance. The core rationale being that the financial outcomes will always 'lag behind' these indicators and will be determined by them. Developed by Art Schneiderman of Analog Devise in 1987, the approach was included in lectures given by Robert Kaplan at Harvard Business School. Subsequently written about by Robert Kaplan & David Norton, during the 1990's, in both the Harvard Business Review and a book.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">I meet with each of those facilities on a regular basis, for specifics that we're looking at, but formally, on a monthly basis, at a scorecard meeting when we look at the … um … performance of their facility against a set of benchmark matrix that all facilities around the globe are measured against.</td></tr>
</table>

The complete data set for both the case studies and the 'intertextual' analysis was formed by the verbatim transcripts of two sets of semi-structured recorded interviews. The first involved 24 face to face interviews conducted with established, senior managers from five different organisations, representing all sectors of the economy. The second involved 15 telephone interviews conducted with similarly experienced and similarly established practitioners, who were also in the midst of part-time study for an MBA. The purpose of this difference was to explore the possibility that the process of appropriation and the scale and nature of any theoretical influence might vary according to features, such as the timescale between appropriation and any subsequent usage. The structure of the interviews was based upon the critical incident technique and accordingly each of the interviewees was asked to recount the approach that they had adopted in relation to some of their most significant current and historical managerial challenges. The 39 semi-structured, recorded interviews lasted a total of 34 hours 53 minutes; provided information in relation to 160 critical incidents and the verbatim transcripts totalled 355,000 words.

Key discoveries

This research has found that even in relation to their most significant managerial challenges the more formal, more academic theories and models about management exerted little, if any, overt influence over the interviewees. Indeed, even in the most challenging of circumstances their first recourse was to their expert recognition processes. Within the transcripts the kind of words that the interviewees used to describe this were experience, instinct, experiential, common sense, subconscious, intuitive, informal, reactive, immediate and practical.

> "Instinct is a word".
>
> [M1W7]
>
> "I think its intuition".
>
> [M1W5]
>
> "Blindingly obvious".
>
> [M2W1]
>
> "Common sense".
>
> [M2W1]
>
> "Gut instinct".
>
> [M2H1]
>
> "Years of experience".
>
> [M2H3]

Where recognition processes failed to provide an immediate way forward the interviewees would utilise a fairly chaotic process of self reflection, deconstruction and reconstruction. By this means the interviewees would seek to build an approach that had the potential to address their concerns. Within the transcripts the kinds of words that the interviewees use to describe this were gradual, evolving, discovering, emergent and considered. Where appropriate, this process of reflection and gradual discernment would be combined with 'trial and error' implementation. By this means, an incremental approach would be taken towards implementation and a whole range of hard and soft measures would be used both to monitor and to determine progress. At least initially, the criteria for success could be very small, including that the situation that was of concern should deteriorate no further.

> "I mean, the big influence for me is the ability to reflect".
>
> [O1I1]

> "I can't read any paper without relating something in it back to work, even when I'm relaxing at the weekend".
>
> [O2I5]

> "I do spend a lot of time, when I'm not at work, thinking about it".
>
> [O3I2]

> "I spend a lot of time thinking about work and I sort of bed it down, I almost put it into geological strata".
>
> [O5I2]

> "So it would be impossible for me not to be thinking about work when I'm outside the workplace environment".
>
> [O5I4]

> "I was up at three o'clock this morning thinking about it".
>
> [O3I4]

For a significant minority of the interviewees, their emergent, decision-building approach to identifying a way forward, involved the application of a clear set of personal values which they used both as a compass to steer by and as a means of ruling out some potential approaches.

> "A lot of it is a personal value".
>
> [O2I2]

> "I'll talk more about work when there's a, … er … something that's against my principles or values".
>
> [O2I2]

> "That probably stems from my father, to be honest with you. It's just in the beliefs that, that he's given me … um … and the way you treat people. I suppose, yeah, I suppose I've learned a lot from him".
>
> [O4I3]

> "It's more personal I suppose, but it's from … um … my Mum and Dad in a way".
>
> [O5I2]

> "I very much will treat people how I would be expected to be treated".

[M1W7]

> "Oh, I suppose, ethics, I don't know. That's … oh… I never thought about that. I guess everybody has values … um … and … um … everybody somehow knows what's right or wrong".
>
> [M1O1]

Where recognition, personal reflection, gradual discernment and the application of personal values failed to identify a viable approach, the interviewees turned to their fellow practitioners. This process involved a whole range of trusted peers, bosses, subordinates, mentors, role models and confidential advisers recruited via their extensive personal networks. It also included personal friends and family members with relevant experience and expertise.

> "Talking to other people, my peers, just other Heads, about … (pause) … you know, what they might do in their approach".
>
> [O2I4]

> "I draw as much from that as I do from the manager I had previous to that, who I totally and utterly respect and still utilise as a mentor".
>
> [O4I3]

> "For me, it was about … um … asking colleagues basically. It was about finding people who'd been similar situations and saying, "How have you handled this?"
>
> [O2I1]

> "I tap into my network both internally within the company and also externally within the suppliers and within the customer base".
>
> [O4I2]

> "That's where networking came in. I know a lot of people, *[and it was]* worth its weight in gold, you know, it really was".
>
> [O3I4]

> "You know a lot of people and … um … so you can find out what other people have done".
>
> [O5I2]

However, some of the interviewees provided evidence that the more formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models had retrospectively provided confirmatory support for some of their previously established practices.

> "I think the theories are, I think they've been useful in confirming what a lot of my ideas are".
>
> [O3I5]

> "I did the *[name of academic course omitted]*, many years ago, and thought "Oh yeah, I understand that now".
>
> [O3I1]

> "I am a product, I suppose, of academic stuff which was very interesting and it didn't really teach me an awful lot, but you think, "Ah yeah, … right, … yeah, … Oh that makes sense now" ... and I've always sort of thought that, but now there's like a confirmatory science behind it".
>
> [O3I4]

Inevitably there were some exceptions to these general discoveries. However, it is important to state that these exceptions were provided by a small minority of the interviewees who were typically able to provide details of a single exceptional instance over an entire career in management. These exceptions involved (i) either personal or institutional barriers that effectively prevented the kind of widespread consultation that otherwise would have occurred; (ii) the coincidental attendance at either an educational or a training event, where relevant and useful material happened to be presented; (iii) the use of models in a metaphorical way to describe significant organisational change; and (iv) the use of a limited range of 'approved' models by an individual whose organisational role included supporting 'agreed' managerial 'norms'.

Thus, even in relation to the interviewees' most significant challenges it was wholly exceptional and genuinely rare for these interviewees to overtly consult academic theory. In fact it was so rare that the overwhelming majority of these interviewees were unable to identify a single occasion, over an entire career, when they had done so.

When asked to explain the apparently highly limited role that the formal, more academic ideas, theories, concepts and models had played, in helping them to address their most significant challenges; a minority of the interviewees suggested that the influence 'must' be covert, indirect, subconscious, or even subliminal. This proposition was examined by a subsequent stage of the research that involved an 'intertextual' analysis of the verbatim interview transcripts, using the framework analysis technique.

The 'intertextual' analysis of the interview transcripts concluded that, the discourse, dialogue and language of the interviewees, could be indexed to four 'domains': the theoretical, the conceptual, the tactical and the practical. The result of this indexing is shown in Table 2 below. For the sake of convenience, within each of the four domains, the interview extracts have been listed in alphabetical order.

Table 2 : Intertextual Analysis

Theoretical Domain	**Conceptual Domain**	**Tactical Domain**	**Practical Domain**
Theories & Models	Concepts & Ideas	Approaches & Behaviours	Tools & Techniques
Action centred leadership	Accountable	Abdicate	Action plan
Aggressive	Ambition	Adapt	Agenda
Best value	Authority	Arrogant	Benchmarking

Bureaucracy	Best practice	Autocratic	Body language
Centre of gravity	Busking	Bullying	Budget
Centres of excellence	Champion	Charismatic	Business plan
Completer - finisher	Change agent	Coaching	Checklist
Culture	Confidentiality	Compromise	Decision tree
Ego	Contingency	Consult	Delegation
Emotional intelligence	Core business	Cynical	Gap analysis
Encouraging the heart	Cross - fertilise	Debate	Implementation plan
Energy	Cross cutting	Direct	Job description
Evolution	Devolved	Explore	KPI
Focal point	Diverse	Facilitate	Managing by exception
Group dynamics	Dotted line manager	Goal setting	Manpower planning
Inertia	Dumped on	Influence	Mystery shopping
ISO 9001 accreditation	Empowerment	Instinct	Objective
Lean organisation	Entrepreneurial	Internalise	Prioritise
Learning styles	Ethic	Logical	Process mapping
Matrix organisation	Expedient	Maverick	Risk management
Momentum	Global footprint	Mediation	Schedule
Myers Briggs type indicator	Headhunted	Naïve	Scorecard
NLP	Hierarchy	Navel gazing	Service level agreement
Osmosis	Inclusive	Negotiate	Stakeholder
Pivotal point	Integrity	Obsequious	Succession planning
Prince two	Invest	Persuade	Target
Situational leadership	Managing up	Pig headed	Terms of reference
Storming	Morale	Reactive	To do lists
Strategic planning	Pace	Refining	
Supply chain	Pathfinder	Segment	
Team briefing	Pride / Proud	Sensible	
Transactional analysis	Privileged	Shock	
Waves	Proactively	Smart arse	
	Professional	Soul searching	
	Quick & dirty	Systematic	
	Red herring	Top down / Bottom up	
	Rites of passage	Turnkey	
	Shadowing	Twiddling their thumbs	
	Silo	Vociferous	
	Sound bite	Working group	
	Sounding board	Workshop	
	Step up to the plate		
	Success		
	Synergies		
	Touch points		
	Touching base		
	Tunnel vision		
	Vertically integrated		
	Watchdog		

	Whinge - fests		

The ‘intertextual’ indexing of the interview extracts to the ‘conceptual domain’ was subsequently corroborated by substantial passages of the verbatim interview transcripts. These demonstrated that it was rare for managers, when explaining their approach to dealing with an issue, to explicitly refer to either a particular theoretician, or a particular theory. In addition, it was equally rare for a manager to attempt to either refer to, or to describe a particular management model. Interestingly this finding held true, even where there was a strong organisational ‘agreement’ to particular managerial ‘norms’. Indeed, this finding even held true in an organisation that had, for example, adopted a particular model of leadership with the strong personal endorsement of a new Chief Executive!

However, if the narrative of the interviewees’ decision making explanations are analysed, it becomes clear that, in fact, the interviewees had a good informal understanding of the theoretical models that were relevant to the challenges that they were discussing. Thus, the inability of an interviewee to ‘name’ either a theory or a theoretician should not be taken to imply their failure to understand the relevant theory in a more generalised, more abstracted way. In the extracts that are reproduced below the interviewees clearly demonstrate an understanding of the proposition that managerial effectiveness is enhanced when the practitioner adopts a flexible approach that is dependent upon the individual; the nature of the challenges that are being faced; and the wider organisational circumstances.

> “So the managerial challenges have been taking them by the hand and leading them through this and trying to get their trust and their will, goodwill, but also getting them actually to start performing, start doing some tasks, and I’m still having … um … what I’d call a reasonably serious challenge with one particular individual who is digging heals in a little. I still think some of that is about … um … that individual’s personal panic, so I’ve got some work to do in terms of coaching that person, … um … but its now bordering on an issue for me, in terms of OK, perhaps I need to get a little bit less soft (laugh) and start … um … performance managing”.
>
> [O1I2]

> “I have people on my team that are experienced, one of them is a manager of people, … er … and there’s only one person on my team that is what we call a junior person because she’s a placement student. So OK, with her, I have to have a slightly different approach, more direct and a lot more close coaching, because that’s what she needs, but some of the other, other people on my team, that’s not what they need, because of their experience. Um … so that’s made me a little bit, you know, trying to think of what would be the best approach with them and the key for me is I have, I have to listen to what they have to say. A top down approach doesn’t work with a lot of the people I work with”.
>
> [O4I1]

However, what is interesting is that these interviewees could easily have referred to the theoreticians Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard, and their model of ‘situational leadership’. However, they did not do so.

In addition, there is evidence to indicate that managers, attending lectures during the course of their part time MBA studies, adopt behaviours that are consistent with this kind of more indicative understanding. It would appear that once these individuals have grasped the ‘gist’ of any theoretical input, their attention turns to both the implications of the new information and the potential implementation issues. Indeed the evidence is that this occurs to the point that they stop listening to the rest of the lecture!

In the section of verbatim transcript that is reproduced below the interviewee draws attention to the fact that whilst ‘certain lecturers at college enthuse about certain writers’, she is more interested in ‘looking at the wider picture’ and in ‘understanding concepts’, because she knows that these are what will ‘take her forward’.

> “Whilst there are many theorists out there, with many theories, but … they all support practice. So I’m not, … I’m, … I wouldn’t think that I draw on anybody in particular in terms of what I would … you know, leadership or anything like that. But, … what, … what takes me forward is the understanding of the concepts. Erm, … and, … but also being able to look at, … look at, … look at them and say, ‘Yes that fits in with what I am trying to do, but doesn’t necessarily completely fit in’. I might have to draw on somebody else’s theory to support that, … and whilst, you know, … um … certain lecturers at college enthuse about certain writers, you know, I’m very much more about looking at the wider picture … and picking out, … what’s good, what’s good for me to use at that particular time. And I’m not, … I’m not a big model person, … erm … my brain doesn’t really think in models, as such, … I don’t think”.
>
> [M2H3]

In the light of both the outcomes of the ‘intertextual’ indexing and the corroboration of this more broadly based data analysis, it has been concluded (i) that management can be characterised as a ‘conceptual’ discipline; (ii) that it is as least as ‘conceptual’, as it is either ‘theoretical’ or ‘practical’; and (iii) that at the heart of the management experience is the appropriation of ideas and concepts, rather than theories and models.

Discussion

The findings of this research regarding the prevalence of experience based decision – making is consistent with the established scholarship relating to decision - making in high intensity, operational situations such as fire fighting, This scholarship suggests that experienced individuals, unlike novices, utilise ‘recognition primed decision – making’ (Klein, 1993). This involves firstly expert diagnosis; then the retrieval of memory based response options and finally the rapid evaluation of these to identify a single response with the best prospects of succeeding.

In addition, the scholarship regarding the realities of the managerial experience has concluded that management can be characterised as a high stimulus, rapid response environment that is fragmental, demanding, pressurised, time constrained and hectic (Mintzberg, 1973; Mintzberg, 1989; Stewart, 1983). Accordingly this would suggest that the adoption of 'recognition primed decision – making' would be a rational recourse for the generality of management practitioners and not just 'fire ground commanders'.

Furthermore, these findings are consistent with more broadly based, established scholarship which suggests that, for all adult homo sapiens, scripts, schemes, frames, traces and schema provide a schematic store of life experiences (Bartlett, 1932; Koffka, 1935, Abelson, 1976; Schank & Abelson, 1997; Minsky, 1975) and that these provide the 'trustworthy recipes' that enable adults to handle many situations without the need for overt thinking (Schutz, 1964).

Other similarly broadly based, established scholarship relating to human memory systems suggests that for homo sapiens the elaboration, encoding and consolidation of experiences is a key factor in both the effective storage and the subsequent retrieval of memories (Craik & Tulving, 1975). In addition, this scholarship suggests that the human memory is an 'adaptive system', which is selective in the level of detail that it both stores and retrieves. An example of this is 'transience' (Schacter, 2001). This adaptive feature removes from the active memory information that is no longer required. Thus, most individuals have no reason to remember the registration numbers of every car they have ever owned and so most people don't. As the time between each instance of retrieval increases, it becomes harder to recall the information. In effect, the human memory system 'gambles' that the un-retrieved information is no longer relevant. This highly advantageous adaptation works in our favour most of the time. Occasionally, as occurs when we meet someone we haven't seen for many years and we can't remember their name, this adaptive 'gamble' works against us!

Equally, the adaptation of 'non-literal categorisation' is utilised when someone names a particular breed of bird (Schacter, 2001). In order to do this the individual needs to notice and draw from their memory the recurring features that unite all birds and to ignore all the idiosyncratic details that differentiate particular breeds.

Similarly, the development of a 'gist' based memory system enables human beings to generalise in a meaningful way. It also frees them from a deluge of trivial facts (Schacter, 2001). In addition, a 'gist' based memory system provides humans with the ability to see the patterns that provide a broader, more strategic picture. Indeed the study of chess players has shown that the key difference, between an experienced Grand Master and a novice chess player, is the ability of the former to achieve high levels of abstraction; to detect groupings that are significant; and to develop a strategic analysis from the confusion of the positions occupied by the individual chess pieces (Hofstadter, 2001).

Thus, an individual's ability to conceptualise, to form abstractions and to grasp the 'gist' of information, rather than to focus upon the details, would appear to be some of the essential pre-requisites to appreciating both its relevance and the breadth of its potential applicability. Similarly, the ability to elaborate, encode and ‘chunk’ information would appear to be some of the essential pre-requisites for both connecting new information to existing data stores and for organising data into higher levels of strategic meaning.

Hence, this more broadly based scholarship regarding ‘adaptive’ memory systems provides a powerful rationale for why management practitioners might be better served by a ‘gist’ based understanding of the more formal, more academic theories and models about management, than that which might be provided by perfect recall.

Limitations

Although the initial cohort of interviewees was provided by organisations from the public, the private, the not for profit and the charitable sectors of the economy; all but one of the organisations were located in the West Midlands. Accordingly care needs to be exercised in relation to any implied assumption that, for example, the nature of the economy in this region is typical of the whole of the UK. Similarly, all but one of the members of the cohort of part time MBA interviewees was drawn from the same academic institution, which utilised the fairly standard teaching methods. These included lectures, case studies, delegate discussions, personal study and assignments. Accordingly care needs to be exercised in relation to any implied assumption that the learning experiences of these part time MBA students are typical of MBA students from the whole of the UK, particularly where institutions may be using widely different course structures, such as distance learning.

Accordingly this research has utilised ‘theoretical’ generalisation (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 264) to make wider inferences of the more general applicability of the insights that have been obtained.

Further work

A clear implication of the recent Hodgkinson, Langan-Fox & Sadler-Smith (2008) journal article regarding ‘intuition’ is that in the long term a definitive and comprehensive understanding of the mental processes that lie behind the kind of ‘chunking’, ‘gisting’, encoding and elaboration that have been described; probably lies with social cognitive neuroscience and functional magnetic resonance imaging.

However, the key discoveries of this research could be and perhaps should be enhanced, developed and clarified; or simply subjected to further scrutiny and verification.

In addition, subsequent work might focus upon the central proposition that, in so far as theory is appropriated at all, it is appropriated in a conceptual, abstracted and ‘gisted’ form and that the process of elaboration and encoding would appear to be fundamental to this outcome. Accordingly, any further work might seek to focus upon firstly the role that is played by the chaotic and highly intrusive processes of personal reflection and secondly the extent to which the ability to conceptualise may vary across a broad spectrum of management practitioners.

Implications for professional practice

The key discoveries of this research would appear to have significant implications for research, teaching, learning and practice.

Firstly, the continuing discussions regarding rigour versus relevance and theory versus practice would appear to become less significant. Indeed, an implication of this research is that the relevant image is not that of the extreme polarities of either rigour, or relevance; or even that of theory or practice; but rather that of a middle ground of conceptualising, abstracting and 'gisting'. A corollary of this is that researchers and educators could be reassured that their key task was not to impart a detailed and long lasting knowledge of theory and models per se; but rather to facilitate the identification of the abstractions and concepts that underpin these theories and models. It is these that are likely to form the basis of the more portable 'ideas and concepts' to which practitioners might refer when confronted by their most significant managerial challenges.

Equally, practitioners could be reassured that their key task was not to appropriate theory and models per se, but that neither was to simply acquire a range of tools and techniques, even though these would inevitably form an important aspect of their managerial competence. However, they could be encouraged to understand that a key aspect of their professional calling was to participate in the difficult, relentless, lifelong task of conceptualising, abstracting, 'gisting', elaborating, encoding and 'chunking' that appears to underpin the critical process of 'building up a giant repertoire of concepts in the mind' (Hofstadter, 2001: 500).

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Appendix 11

Are you a conceptual manager?

Many managers will be familiar with the proposition that conceptualising is one part of the experiential learning cycle [1] that consists of firstly concrete experiences; then observations and internalised reflections; followed by the formation of abstract concepts and generalisations; and finally active experimentation in new situations. However, a key objective of this article is to persuade you that, for managers, conceptual thinking is much more important than this. Indeed this article will argue that an individual's ability to perform some key conceptual operations is a critical success factor for a career in management.

Before beginning to explore the reasoning that lies behind these assertions let's consider two questions. What happened to all of the more formal, more academic theory that you became familiar with during your training and education in management and how does knowledge of this scholarship help you to discharge your managerial responsibilities?

If you are typical of the overwhelming majority of established, senior managers you will be hard pressed to identify a significant occasion when your decision making has been guided by direct reference to a particular management theory. In addition, even if you are able to recall the names of some academically respected theoreticians, together with the name of the theory that made them famous, you will be hard pressed to provide a succinct explanation of their respective theories. Let me provide you with an illustration. Think about Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg and Douglas McGregor. What is the name by which each of their respective theories is usually known? Can you succinctly describe the key elements of each of these theories?

If you are unable complete these tasks to your personal satisfaction, you may take comfort from the fact that another key objective of what follows is to explain why the ability to recall such information is neither necessary, nor perhaps even desirable?

For managers whose substantive role includes responsibility for operational issues, rather than only long term, strategic planning matters, the evidence regarding the basis of their decision making is clear and unequivocal. Managers make the overwhelming majority of these decisions by utilising expert recognition processes [2]. They frequently describe this with terms such as experience, instinct, intuition, or common sense. By these means, an experienced manager identifies the key characteristics of the situation that is of concern to them. Then, from their data store of relevant experiences, they retrieve a small number of potential responses and, almost instantaneously, they are able to select the most viable option for implementation.

When circumstances are similar to, but not identical to any previous situation that they have experienced, the manager will deconstruct a number of previous experiences and reconstruct these, until they create an approach that is potentially viable.

Where the situation is completely beyond the manager's experience and even this kind of deconstruction and reconstruction is unable to identify a viable approach, their response is to seek advice and guidance from their fellow practitioners, rather than to consult academic theory.

The evidence is that even in relation to an individual's most difficult organisational and personal challenges it is wholly exceptional and genuinely rare for a manager to overtly consult academic theory. In fact it is so rare that the majority of managers are unable to identify a single occasion, over an entire career, when they have done this. Indeed, in the genuinely rare and wholly exceptional circumstances where a minority of individuals have overtly consulted academic theory, there is almost always a structural impediment, such as confidentiality, that has prevented their collaboration with fellow practitioners [3].

So what happens to all the theory that managers are exposed to during their training and education? When, in the light of their recognition based decision making, managers are asked to explain the role that academic theory plays in their approach to managing, they will frequently assert that it 'must' exert a subtle, covert, subconscious, or even subliminal influence over them.

Whilst it would be easy to dismiss this as 'wishful thinking', there is good evidence to suggest that these assertions may actually be true!

Indeed, if the narrative of managers' decision making explanations are analysed in detail, it frequently becomes clear that, in fact, they had a good, informal understanding of the theoretical models that are relevant to the challenges that they were discussing. Thus, the inability to 'name' either a theory or a theoretician should not be taken to imply a failure to understand the theory in a more generalised, more abstract, more conceptual way.

As an illustration of this consider the example of the senior manager who was unable to name either the relevant management gurus or the name by which their particular model of leadership is traditionally known, despite the fact that there had been a formal organisational commitment to these particular managerial 'norms'. Indeed, the manager's inability to recall these details occurred despite the fact every manager had received training in relation to this particular model and the fact that the adoption of the model across the whole organisation was instigated by the new Chief Executive! However, this is not to deny that the manager concerned had a very clear understanding regarding the implications of the organisations adoption of this model for their own approach to management.

Consider also the example of the managers' who demonstrated a clear understanding of the proposition that managerial effectiveness is enhanced when they adopt a flexible approach that is both determined by and dependent upon the individual employee; the precise nature of the challenges that are being faced; and the wider organisational circumstances. Although each of these individual's could have referred to the academic theoreticians Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard; and their model of 'situational leadership'; the reality is that they did not do so.

In addition, there is some evidence to suggest that managers, who attend lectures during the course of their part time MBA studies, also adopt behaviour that is consistent with this kind of generalised abstraction rather than focussing upon the precise replication of the theoretical details. Once these individuals have grasped the 'gist' of any theoretical input, their attention tends to turn to both the implications of the new information and the potential implementation issues. Indeed the evidence is that this occurs to the point that they stop listening to the rest of the lecture!

For insights and understanding regarding what may be going on, we need to turn our attention to the scholarship regarding the human memory system. The first key insight is that the placing of any experience into the long term memory of a human being involves a process of 'chunking', elaboration and encoding [4]. The more extensive the elaboration and encoding, the more connections there will be between the new experience and the existing data store of experiences. This in turn, increases the potential for relevant information to be easily retrievable. In effect, this is the revision process for an examination at work. The more an individual goes over the information, the more likely they are to be able to recall it, when it is required.

A second important aspect of this scholarship is that the human memory is an 'adaptive' system [4] that over the evolution of humankind has developed a whole series of useful adaptations and features. A key aspect of this was the emergence of a 'gist' based memory system. This frees human beings from the tyranny of being constantly bombarded by a huge deluge of trivial facts. Think Dustin Hoffman as Raymond Babbitt in 'Rain Man'! In addition, 'gist' based memory provides us with the ability to see the patterns that both provide a broader, more strategic picture and enable us to generalise in a meaningful way. Indeed the study of chess players [6] has shown that the key difference, between an experienced Grand Master and a novice chess player, is the ability of the former to achieve high levels of abstraction; to detect groupings that are significant; and to develop a strategic analysis from the confusion of the positions occupied by the individual chess pieces.

Thus, an individual's ability to conceptualise, to form abstractions and to grasp the 'gist' of information, rather than to focus upon the details, would appear to be some of the essential pre-requisites to appreciating both its relevance and the breadth of its potential applicability.

So what are the implications of this for managers?

Well firstly, it would be to appreciate that the key professional requirement is not the appropriation of academic theory and models per se. In addition, it would be to also understand that neither is it to simply acquire a range of tools and techniques that would inevitably form an important aspect of managerial competence. Rather, it is to recognise that a key aspect of a manager's professional calling is to participate in the difficult, relentless, lifelong task of abstraction, elaboration, encoding and 'chunking', that will underpin the process of building a repertoire of concepts, that will be held in their long term memories.

Thus, from this perspective a manager's primary task becomes that of continuously absorbing ambiguous and equivocal environmental information and to subsequently process this to a sufficiently high level of abstraction that dynamic groupings can be formed and strategic meanings detected. By this means each experience will also be organised and consolidated into the structure of an individual's long term memory, in the way most likely to facilitate its subsequent retrieval and good managerial 'moves' would become almost instantaneously apparent.

This analysis also suggests that when confronted with your most significant managerial challenges you should not turn to your favourite text book expecting to find a tailor made theoretical solution. Rather your gaze should fall upon the concepts that both underpin and are embedded within, the theory that you will find there. Of course there may be other less challenging occasions when a prudent practitioner may choose to 'return to theory' as a means of both replenishing and refreshing their personal repertoire of concepts.

Footnotes

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