

**THE IMPACT OF AN ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE
ON THE WELLNESS OF MIDDLE MANAGERS IN A MINING COMPANY**

by

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DECLARATION

Herewith I, Wendy Vundla declare that this Master's dissertation titled:

“The Impact of an Organisational Restructuring Exercise on the Wellness of Middle Managers in a Mining Company” is my own unaided work both in content and execution. All the resources I used in this study are cited and referred to in the reference list by means of a comprehensive referencing system. Apart from the normal guidance from my study leaders, I have received no assistance, except as stated in the acknowledgements.

I declare that the content of this thesis has never been used before for any qualification at any tertiary institution.

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ABSTRACT

The workplace of today is global, fast paced and under intense pressure to stay competitive and achieve financial results. This makes change an inevitable part of any organisation because in order to survive and thrive in this environment organisations need to continuously change and re-invent themselves. This study was conducted in a mining company and the industry has been one of the biggest contributors to the South African economy for over a century. There have been many changes and developments within the mining industry over the years. The mining industry has also experienced a lot of transformational activities such as mergers, acquisitions, downsizing and restructuring. During these changing and uncertain times it is important to pay special attention to the employees in the organisation as people still remain the most important asset in any organisation. Change can be a pleasant or traumatic experience for people and this makes it important to ensure that with all changes to the work environment employees are well looked after and their wellbeing is maintained. Employee wellness has been a subject of much interest for many years and it has been found that organisations that invest in the wellness of their employees have greater benefits and are more successful at managing change.

This study was conducted to investigate the impact of a restructuring exercise on the wellness of middle managers. The study aimed to determine the impact/effect of a restructuring exercise on employee wellness in a sample of employees in the middle management category. This research investigated possible wellness factors that were impacted on during this organisational restructuring exercise. Three wellness dimensions were looked at and these included: physical, mental and social dimensions of wellness. The intention is to use the information collected as guidelines in the development of future employee wellness programs, taking into account change management and how to better handle it.

A qualitative approach was followed and employees from a mining company were asked to participate in the study. Data was collected firstly through the use of an open

ended questionnaire and thereafter two focus groups were conducted. The focus group sessions were recorded and the data was transcribed. A process of coding was used to analyse and get the central themes from the data. In conclusion the results indicated that the restructuring exercise had a significant impact on the wellness of middle managers. The general responses were negative and indicated that people's wellness was definitely impacted on. The key themes and sub themes that emerged across all dimensions were grouped into the following: communication, trust, personal health management (nutrition, physical health and fitness and sleeping habits), mental wellbeing (stress and anxiety, morale, uncertainty), workplace environment and social status.

The role of managers/leaders was seen as key during this process. Also it was clear that the development and implementation of relevant wellness programs was important to manage employee wellness during such activities. Therefore recommendations and strategies for managing change and wellness offered in this study take into account the responses from the participants and the key issues identified. This study was conducted in a specific organisation with a limited number of participants from the Corporate Office and therefore the findings should not be generalised to other middle managers in other organisational contexts without a degree of caution. Another important limitation to consider is that this research was taken at a specific time during this restructuring exercise. The negative responses could have been influenced by the timing of this research, in that, although there was a lot of communication pertaining to the changes envisaged to employees, there however were no final decisions made or implemented yet. Employees were in a waiting period and they did not know what was going to be the extent of the impact of these changes on them. A recommendation is that this research is undertaken at a later stage when all changes are implemented. In this case this was however not possible due to a time factor from the researcher's side and delays within the organisation.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of a restructuring exercise on employee wellness amongst middle managers in a mining company. This chapter will discuss the objectives and significance of the study, provide the research questions and also a definition of the key terms used in this study. The literature review, method of investigation (i.e. research design, sample, data collection procedure and data analysis) of the study and the ethical issues surrounding the study will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

1.2 Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to contribute towards research in the area of employee wellness and organisational restructuring within a corporate mining environment. Strategies and programs to address the different aspects of employee wellness are becoming increasingly important especially during times of change. This study will explore the concepts of change management, restructuring, health and employee wellness, focusing mainly on physical, mental and social wellness. The company used in this study is currently going through an organisational restructuring exercise. The aim of the project is to have an optimal design of support services structures and to implement the most effective and affordable services environment. Although the exercise has not been fully implemented yet, there have been changes in other areas, for example the structure of the Executive team was redesigned to fit the vision of the services project. There has been communication to employees since the project's inception and employees are aware that there will be changes to the work environment. The exact changes have however not been clearly defined.

The study aims to determine the impact/effect of this restructuring exercise on employee wellness in a sample of middle managers. This research will investigate possible factors, challenges, and benefits of organisational restructuring and employee wellness amongst this population. The intention is to use the information collected as

guidelines in the development of future employee wellness programs taking into account change management and how to better handle it.

1.3 The significance of this study

Organisations all across the world have at some point been involved in cost cutting strategies such as downsizing, job elimination and restructuring. These are important strategies since in today's world, change is the only constant and in order for organisations to survive they need to re-look at their structures, product markets and costs from time to time. Initiatives such as restructuring have been found to impact on employees' productivity and performance levels. This is due to the high levels of anxiety, feelings of uncertainty, absenteeism, low morale and staff turnover (Martin & Roodt, Not dated). Wellness is an important factor in the workplace. It assists in creating healthy, productive, energetic, motivated, and value adding employees who are committed to the organisation and its goals (Sieberhagen, Rothmann & Pienaar, 2009).

If wellness is not managed it can lead to low and reduced organisational performance. The survival of an organisation through strategies such as restructuring will widely depend on the wellbeing of its managers. Managers play a key role as change agents and their leadership will be imperative in taking the employees through the change (Botha & Brand, 2009). It is therefore important to continuously assess the wellness behaviour and health risk of managers. The main aim of this study is to contribute towards research in the area of employee wellness and restructuring initiatives in the corporate mining industry. This research is significant in that the mining industry has been around for hundreds of years and it continues to contribute a major portion to the country's economic development and GDP. It employs over 400, 000 employees from different occupations, e.g. engineers, technicians, environmentalist, human resources specialists, psychologists etc. The role of managers and leaders within the organisation is imperative in ensuring the success of an organisation through difficult times. Research in understanding the impact of a restructuring exercise

on the wellbeing of middle managers will add value to literature and assist in developing wellness programs that will address the key issues that managers and employees face in these changing times.

1.4 Research question(s)

The research questions arising from the above are:

- Does the process of organisational restructuring have an impact on middle managers' wellness?
- What is the impact of the restructuring exercise on middle managers' physical wellness?
- What is the impact of the restructuring exercise on middle managers' mental wellness?
- What is the impact of the restructuring exercise on middle managers' social wellness?

A qualitative approach will be used in this study as it will be explorative in nature, aiming to learn more about factors influencing wellness during a restructuring exercise. Qualitative research enables the researcher to gain in depth and detailed information regarding a certain issue. The key themes will be captured as the researcher continues to analyse the data and meaning can be derived from the results.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Below is a table providing definitions to some of the key terms used in this study.

Table 1: Definitions of Key Terms

KEY TERM	MEANING
Qualitative research	A method aimed at gathering an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour. The qualitative method investigates the <i>why</i> and <i>how</i> of decision making , not just <i>what, where, when</i> .
Methodology	Refers to the way to proceed to solve problems, which is the research process.
Middle managers	Can be heads of specific departments or specialising in a certain field. They are responsible for implementing top management policies and plans and typically have two management levels below them. In this study they are characterised using the Department of Labour employment equity categories (i.e. as being in a Paterson grading between D1-D5)
Wellness	A total person's approach towards improving the quality of his or her life, health and psychological strengths in proactive and positive ways - both as member of a community and as an employee (Witmer & Sweeney, in Els & De la Rey, 2006).
Physical wellness	Ramsey & Smit (in Temane & Wissing, 2006) developed a model in which they described physical well-being as consisting of disease, mortality rates and life expectancy. The physical dimension involves cardiovascular flexibility and strength, regular physical activity, knowledge about food and nutrition and medical self-care and discourages the use of drugs and excessive alcohol consumption
Mental wellness	Mental wellness is generally viewed as a positive attribute, such that a person can reach enhanced levels of mental health, even if they do not have any diagnosable mental health condition (Wikipedia website at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_wellness)
Social wellness	Social wellness is being comfortable, accepting others and sustaining healthy relationships (Botha, 2007:29). Ramsey & Smit (in Temane & Wissing, 2006) describe social wellness as being characterised by social support and activity, personal interaction and life satisfaction.
Restructuring	Drastic or fundamental internal change that alters the relationships between different components or elements of an organisation

Organisational climate	The shared perceptions, feelings and attitudes that organisational members have about the fundamental elements of the organisation, which reflect the established norms, values and attitudes of the organisation's culture and influences individuals' behaviour positively or negatively" (Moran & Volkwein in Castro & Martins,2010:4)
KEY TERM	MEANING
Employee Assistance Program	A worksite based program designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired personal concerns, but not limited to: health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other concerns which may adversely affected employee job productivity (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 1999:5).
MiningCorp	The name used to refer to the company understudy.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will be looking at literature surrounding the topics of wellness and restructuring. Going through various literatures enables the researcher to fully conceptualise and discuss the topic under study. The following topics will be discussed in this chapter: an overview of the mining industry, the changing world of work, an overview of restructuring and an overview of wellness.

2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE MINING INDUSTRY

The research will be focusing on a population of employees employed in the mining industry, with coal mining being the company's key commodity in the business. The company employs over 10, 000 employees across the provinces of South Africa and internationally. The company is rich in history and has seen many changes over the past few years. Its people are the most important asset and thus the company has invested in the development and training of talent.

To better understand the environment in which the study will take place in, it is important to provide a brief introduction of the mining industry in South Africa. In 2007 the South African mining industry employed 493,000 workers. The coal mining industry currently employs more than 58 000 workers, and the industry represents about 18% of South Africa's gross domestic product. South Africa has a wealth of mineral riches and mining in South Africa has been the driving force behind the history and development of Africa's most advanced and richest economy (Wikipedia website at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MiningindustryofSouthAfrica>). Mining continues to be the single most important earner of foreign exchange in the economy. It constitutes what is one of the most successful contributors in the country's economy.

There are several key minerals mined in South Africa, including diamonds, gold, coal, platinum and chromium. With the exception of gold and manganese, all of the country's major minerals have experienced long term growth. South Africa has more than half of the world's reserves of manganese, chromium and platinum group metals. Coal, platinum and chrome measured in production have doubled in size since 1980, while iron ore production has increased by more than half (at <http://www.bullion.org.za/publications/other/segal>). South Africa is the world's third largest coal exporter and in 2005 it accounted for 12% of the world's gold production. South Africa also produces more platinum and similar metals than any other nation. In 2005, 78% of the world's platinum was produced in South Africa along with 39% of the world's palladium (Wikipedia website at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mining_industry_of_South_Africa).

The mining industry is a key industry in South Africa and there have been many changes and developments within this industry over the years. It is a profitable industry with a huge turnover, and it supports millions of people in the country. However, it is also faced with many challenges including issues of sustainability, financial management and cost savings, managing risk, improving performance and safety, complying with regulatory and reporting requirements, recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce and also dealing with mining transactions (PWC website at <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/mining>). The demands of the global market have been pushing the mining sector to evolve and company transactions have been an ongoing phenomenon in this industry. South Africa together with foreign and global mining has seen a spell of restructuring over the years. Companies are continuously engaging in change related activities e.g. exploring new ventures, acquiring competitors, acquiring or disposing of assets and strategic restructuring (PWC website at <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/mining>).

In mining for example, mergers and other corporate actions aim to achieve mainly four things (at <http://www.bullion.org.za/publications/other/segal>):

- Achieving corporate cost savings
- Reducing cost of capital (actions that reduce real or perceived risk)
- Promoting rational market conduct
- Building on distinctive capabilities

Through all these changes it is important to note that most companies still recognize that people still remain the most important asset in any organisation. This makes it important to ensure that with all changes to the work environment employees are well looked after and their wellbeing is maintained.

2.3 CHANGING WORLD OF WORK

The new world of work is ever changing and organisations need to transform themselves to meet the demands of the modern day century. Organisations in the 21st century are facing more challenges than ever before. Organisational learning is necessary in order to stay up to date and survive all these changes. Challenges are not unique to any specific organisation or industry, but affect all organisations, regardless of their structure or size. Today's organisations need to adapt to the environment in which they operate in. This is because there are enormous changes that have occurred over the past decades e.g. globalisation, information technology, social transformations and disasters such as HIV/AIDS, famine and wars and the forever changing political environment, takeovers or mergers, restructuring, and new managers and management style (Macdonald, 2005). The workforce has also been changing in the past century. It is becoming more diverse with respect to the age of workers, the continued entry of women into the workforce, race and ethnicity and the participation of people with disabilities in the workforce. These developments and changes have an impact, firstly; globalisation has resulted in a high degree of diversity (Bews & Uys, 2002). This is both advantageous and disadvantageous in that the levels of familiarity have decreased. Secondly, new organisational forms which are flatter, team and project driven have resulted in an increased need for organisational trust as a means of securing and maintaining a competitive market advantage. Lastly, a decrease in jobs across the

world has led to increased insecurity amongst employees on all levels (Bews & Uys, 2002).

Looking at the above it is important to note that change is a part of every person and organisation's experience. Strong leadership is necessary to be able to establish performance direction and cope with change. It's crucial that competent managers are developed as they will be entrusted with the responsibility to transform their organisations accordingly (Mbokazi, Visser & Fourie, 2004). Management especially middle managers create the vital link between the desired economic progress, the required organisational effectiveness and the actual performance of the people involved (Labbaf *et al.* in Mbokazi *et al.*, 2004). The competency to manage people appears to be especially important for managers during these times as employees will experience and cope with change differently; a stressor to one might not be a stressor to another. Common reactions to change include resentment and resistance, however you can find employees with positive attitudes who are willing to embrace change and adapt to the organisation's new demands. The key stressor in times of change is in not knowing what will happen, how and when. The familiar will be replaced by the unfamiliar, e.g. new ways of doing things, new job, fear of being unable to cope, and redundancy. It is therefore imperative that management provide the right information to employees at the right times.

2.4 AN OVERVIEW OF RESTRUCTURING

2.4.1 An introduction to Restructuring

As discussed above organisations are constantly changing due to various reasons such as cost cutting, increasing productivity, economic demands and changes. These were amongst some of the reasons taken by the company to engage in a restructuring exercise. Organisations restructure with the intent of realizing some perceived gain. Restructuring is about introducing a new strategy, and strategy implementation is best accomplished through high-performing people. In order for a new strategy to have a high probability of success, there needs to be a clear, compelling mission and backed

by constancy of purpose. Employees are also an important component to successfully implementing a strategy. The involvement of employees has been found to greatly enhance the effectiveness of implementing strategies and plans (Evans, 1996). Organisational restructuring should have as a fundamental goal the facilitation of clear, open communication that can enable organisational learning and clarify accountability for results. A restructuring process intervenes in current operations and therefore needs to consider all aspects that are relevant in influencing performance. The management of the restructuring process and the accompanying process of continual organisational design and redesign become imperative to the successful execution of strategy (Meyer & Marais, Not dated).

Organisational restructuring is not always an easy process. Research conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) found that reorganisations are failing to deliver real improvement in performance in four out of ten cases. In addition only four out of ten reorganisations are completed and six out of ten within budget. According to Meyer & Marais (Not dated) there are a number of complicating factors that can contribute to the high rate of organisational restructuring failures, these include:

- the complexity of the environment (external and internal)
- the inherent nature of the restructuring process and
- the nature of existing organisational design and accompanying culture

The greatest failures in a changing environment have been detected at the human level. For a company to be successful, it must have the “right” people. Moran and Brightman (in Lekganyane & Oosthuizen, 2006:237) found that “the manager with the ideal leadership traits is needed to ensure a learning environment with strategic direction, ability to cope with change and to innovate for excellence”. The right employees need to be involved in executing the new strategy and taking the company through the change, which is why it is important that every organisation must develop and retain its high-performing employees (Michlitsch, 2000). Attracting and retaining the very best people is one of the eight most important things that investors use when judging the value of a

company, according to research by Ernst & Young (Michlitsch, 2000). Healthy organisations are critical for survival in this competitive global environment in which we all live, work and operate. The work environment is unpredictable in the middle of a restructuring period and when new initiatives are introduced it is important that together with the leadership, these high performing employees take the company through the change and successfully implement it. Employees prefer to work for companies that are consistently successful. It gives them satisfaction to be a part of that success (Michlitsch, 2000).

Looking at the mining company related to this research there have been several mergers, acquisitions and unbundling over the past couple of years. However the company has managed to survive and become a world leader in coal exports. This success, together with communicating the company's vision, mission and strategy and helping employees to better understand their roles in the implementation will lead to a positive experience of this restructuring exercise.

2.4.2 Background and rational of exercise

Below is a discussion on the restructuring exercise executed at the company under study:

The company has a colourful and interesting history and the journey to its formation in 2006 includes a number of mergers, joint ventures, acquisitions and unbundling activities, which resulted in the organisation it is today. As a result of these corporate activities the company ended up with an assortment of structures, processes and operating models. The company's strategy highlights five strategic focus areas, or long term goals, that will guide the group's decisions and choices. One of these is to 'Achieve operational excellence', which means it wants to be a low-cost producer. However, it seems that its services structures, costs and delivery levels do not enable its operations to be operationally excellent.

The focus of the exercise is on the support services throughout the group to ensure an

optimal design of support services' structures and to implement the most effective and affordable services environment. The objective was to have a healthy parenting balance, a fit for purpose delivery, healthy service organisation structures and optimised cost of services.

Below are five of the key strategic issues that the Services project has identified:

- The company is the end product of significant corporate activity over the past ten years or so. As a result it ended up with an assortment of structures, processes and operating models.
- The company has made a number of changes to structures and other areas of the business, but has not fundamentally changed the services model
- As a result the services model is not optimally designed to serve the current business or growth aspirations.
- The view throughout the business, particularly from the services environment's internal customers, is that the cost of services is too high. There are also issues with service quality and service delivery and business governance in services.
- One of the company's strategic focus areas is to achieve operational excellence, which means it wants to be a low-cost producer. The services environment should enable our operations to be operationally excellent.

In summary the company thus faces the following challenges:

- The cost of services is viewed to be high in relation to the services delivered.
- There are service quality and service delivery issues.
- The business governance applicable to services (i.e. the extent and degree of corporate control) may be inappropriate.

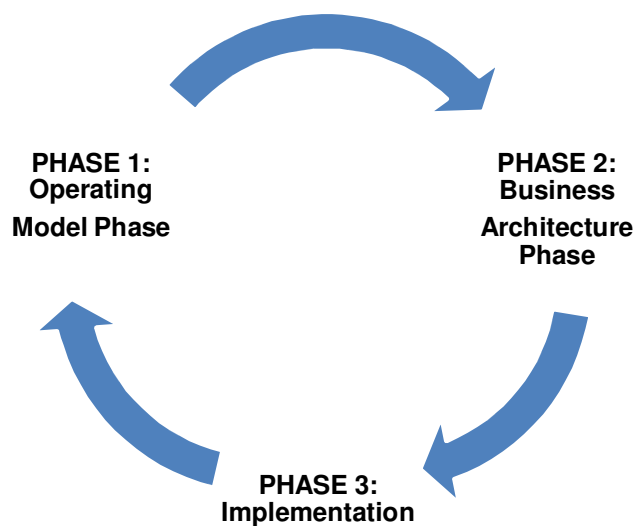
Therefore the aim of the Services project is to examine these issues and challenges and to understand what should be done to improve the services environment. In the end the project will develop a services operating model that will be right for the company, now and in the future.

To address these challenges the company needs to apply the following principles:

- An optimum parenting balance
- Fit for purpose service delivery
- Optimised cost of services
- Healthy services organisation structures.

The Services project is tasked with examining, and where required, adjusting the support services to position this company for the future. The project will be rolled out in three phases. These phases are illustrated in the figure below and described in the following section:

Figure 1: The three phases of the project



PHASE 1: OPERATING MODEL PHASE

In the operating model phase, the project team focused on understanding the current situation in each functional area. It involved:

- Determining functional areas' service offerings to compile a complete services catalogue for every area.

- Collating baseline information on services cost.
- Workshops with various players were held, e.g. existing customers on the cost of services, delivery levels and demand for these services, Business Unit (BU) managers and services departments
- One-on-one interviews with senior managers.
- Compilation of a set of operating model principles which formed the basis for a new services model. The principles were drawn from the company's strategic controller governance model and our strategic focus area of operational excellence. These principles cover aspects such as governance, structure, processes, culture and performance management.

PHASE2: BUSINESS ARCHITECTURE PHASE

The company is currently at this stage which will focus on designing the next level of detail for the operating model, building a more comprehensive business case and developing the implementation plans.

This phase involved:

- Mapping and examining each service area's key processes to determine if, and how, these can be optimised.
- Discussing these processes with representatives from BU and head office service functions.
- Meeting with BU managers to classify functions and activities as 'support services', 'core support' or 'core'.
- In preparation of the second phase's outcomes and the implementation to follow, the project team designed a change readiness assessment survey to understand how employees experience change in the organisation as well as how you perceive the Services project. The results will be used in planning the project and its implementation.

PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION

This is scheduled to happen in the next few months.

Below is a summary of what is expected to change?

There are few things that will change in services:

- The intention is to have a shared services organisation in the future, providing support services to the entire group.
- It will be operated with a customer-orientated mindset, governed by service level contracts (SLCs).
- It will have a matrix reporting structure, with consistent reporting lines.
- There will be use of leading service management principles to manage the interface between the services entity and its customers, BUs and the corporate office.
- There will be standardisation of processes and the cost of services will be transparent so that customers know what they are paying for.
- A flatter structure with larger spans of control.
- Functions will focus on processes and provide shared skilled expertise to internal clients.
- Management has a strategic role, while decisions are made closer to the 'face'.

(Source: S Nkosi and S Swanepoel, personal communication, 2009-2010)

Communication on the progress and steps being taken is being done continuously. Looking at the above it is evident that there will be significant changes to the working environment and it is important to investigate the experiences of the employees, particularly middle managers during these phases. This will assist the company to evaluate the whole process (both positive and negative) and find ways of assisting employees to deal with the change. Below is a discussion of literature on restructuring and related issues such as the climate and communication during such change initiatives.

2.4.3 Organisational climate in times of change

Change as mentioned earlier is inevitable in today's organisations, and when this happens it can affect the organisational climate. To survive and beat their

competitors, organisations are constantly seeking to improve their performance. Organisational climate in particular is constantly challenged by changes impacting organisations today. There are several definitions for organisational climate, and in this study the definition used will be by Gerber (2003) and Moran and Volkwein (1992) found in Castro & Martins (2010:4): “Organisational climate is defined as the shared perceptions, feelings and attitudes that organisational members have about the fundamental elements of the organisation, which reflect the established norms, values and attitudes of the organisation's culture and influences individuals' behaviour positively or negatively”.

Authors such as Brown and Leigh (in Castro & Martins, 2010) think that organisational climate is becoming more important than ever before because organisations need to ensure that those individuals who add value to the bottom line will want to stay in the organisation and will want to continue pouring their effort into their work to the benefit of the organisation. During a change period, employees are prone to feeling disengaged and less committed to the organisation. Loyalty, or commitment to companies, has been decreasing through the 1990s and it is important that, to make the change successful, you attain the loyalty of your employees as there is evidence that loyal employees add to the value of a company (Michlitsch, 2000). One of the key ways of involving employees is to include them when planning strategies. These involvements will greatly enhance the effectiveness of implementing these strategies and plans.

According to Brown & Leigh (in Castro & Martins, 2010) when employees feel that they are being looked after and that the organisation is creating an environment of wellness which is perceived as caring and in which they are able to achieve their full potential, this helps to create a key source of competitive advantage. Organisational climate is shaped by individuals within a group who interact and share the same frame of reference and organisational culture, as they learn to deal with the organisation's demands

(i.e. restructuring). Organisational climate can therefore be regarded as a key variable in successfully implementing change in organisations.

2.4.4 Impact of Restructuring

Research has found that any change or anticipated change has an impact on employee wellbeing since it is associated with increased uncertainty, resulting in increased perceptions of occupational stress, lower job satisfaction, high levels of absenteeism, less commitment to the organisation, a lack of trust and high mental and physical symptoms of ill-health in employees (Chunda & Cooper, 2002). Several researchers (Clark & Koonce, 1995; Robbins, 1998) have supported this finding and shown that restructuring in business firms causes uncertainty and anxiety amongst employees. There are overt and covert resistances to change brought about restructuring. Overt resistance includes strikes, reduced productivity, inferior work and even sabotage. Covert resistance is expressed in increased absenteeism, requests for transfers, resignations, loss of motivation, low morale and high levels of accidents and work errors (Arnolds, 2005:23).

One of the most damaging forms of resistance is passive resistance as this results in the employee refusing to participate in the formulation of change proposals and this ultimately manifests itself in a lack of commitment to these proposals (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2004). Commitment has been defined as “the strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in an organisation” (Mowday *et al.* in Curtis & Wright, 2001: 59). Highly committed workers are found to be more committed than their less committed counterparts. Zaccaro and Dobbins (in Arnolds & Boshoff, 2004) agree that an employee’s productivity is positively affected by organisational commitment. It is important to note that not all change or restructuring is viewed as having a negative impact on employees. When change is well managed it can have a positive impact on the employee and the organisation.

2.4.5 Communication

Changing organisational behaviour requires changing the belief system of employees, and this change process is called learning. Learning does not just occur; it requires clear, open communication throughout the organisation. Lewin (in Gordon, 2006) described three stages as being necessary in the implementation of a change in a person's behaviour. The first stage is unfreezing, the stage during which a person becomes ready to learn or acquire a new behaviour. The second stage is the change itself; this will involve a trial period during which a person familiarizes himself with the new behaviour. The last stage is refreezing which occurs as the new behaviour becomes habitual or ingrained in the individual. Therefore in order for the change to be implemented effectively all staff affected by the change must go through this unfreezing-changing-refreezing process. Communication has been found to play a role in aiding with unfreezing of old behaviours, the transition during which new behaviours are adopted and the refreezing of the new behaviour into habit (Gordon, 2006).

Communication is an essential component of any relationship and this is even more so during times of uncertainty with an organisation. It is the context in which change occurs. One of the sensitive topics in restructuring programs is when, what and how to communicate the key issues. This can often lead to employers not communicating anything at all or communicating messages that unsettle employees. People need to know what they are supposed to do if they are to have any chance for success. Michlitsch (2000) shows the importance of this through his statement that 'an individual without information cannot take responsibility; an individual who is given information cannot help but take responsibility'. Researchers (in Arnolds & Boshoff, 2004) have found that open communication channels and regular feedback are crucial to the successful management of restructuring. In the company under study the CEO and the Project Manager have continuously communicated what was happening in each phase of the project. There was not always a lot of information relayed, however the key aspects of each phase were communicated as and when details were available.

2.4.6 Surviving organisational restructuring

When an organisation restructures or merges with another, this normally brings about panic and anxiety amongst employees. Restructuring can also cause employees to be critical towards the management of the organisation. It is important as mentioned earlier that there is open communication channels and regular feedback to employees. Management should also strengthen mutually respectful relations and offer more training and development opportunities to enhance employees' commitment and job performance (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2004). It is possible to survive and even benefit from the change. Below Olenick (2000) offers some useful tips to employees on how to survive this period of an organisation's life: (Accessed at http://articles.techrepublic.com.com/5100-10878_11-1030446.html).

- ***Assess your value to your company and clients during the “pre-reorg” phase***

Are you hard working, proactive and do you have positive working relationships with clients? Once you've assessed your value to your current organisation, the second step in your decision process is to draw out the full range of options available to you. Evaluate and compare the concrete benefits of remaining at their current job against the potential benefits of working elsewhere when making career-oriented decisions.

- ***Evaluate your risk tolerance***

Evaluate whether you can deal with some uncertainty whilst waiting for a final outcome, if not then start circulating your resume

- ***Decide what is most important to you in a job***

Analyze your “buy points.” Just as potential employers evaluate your “selling points” while perusing stacks of resumes and portfolios and interviewing candidates, you should be itemizing and sorting your “buy points” when

experiencing organisational turmoil or while conducting a job search.

- ***Do your research and make an informed decision***

In times of organisational uncertainty, it is critical that you conduct comparative research. At the very least, you should participate in informational interviews outside your company. During a restructuring, the voluntary attrition rate is normally quite high. Therefore, management “in the know” can be a valuable asset in helping you make your next career decision. If they consider you a precious resource, they’ll help you determine where you fit in the “new” organisation and do whatever they can to convince you to persist through the discomfort of a restructuring.

- ***Think in broad terms***

If your company is undergoing an organisational restructuring, recognize this as an opportunity to evaluate your current level of job satisfaction and determine whether it is time to take advantage of the healthy job market. Itemize your core skills, determine your weaknesses, and assess the growth potential of your current role as well as that of your organisation as a whole. Measure your risk tolerance and your desire for change. This is the time to take a step back and systematically examine the universe of possibilities open to you.

2.4.7 SUMMARY

The above has been a detailed discussion covering the background of the company, its restructuring project and literature around this topic. It is important to note that although the project has not been implemented completely, the communication of the company’s intention to change the way of work may have had an impact on employees. This is more so with the fact that employees do not have all the information with regards to who or what will be affected and when.

The following section will discuss employee wellness and the three dimensions of wellness will include physical, mental and social wellness.

2.5 AN OVERVIEW OF WELLNESS

2.5.1 Healthy Organisations

More people spend more time at work than any other activity except sleeping. People spend half their waking hours at work, and work can contribute to people's health and wellbeing or lack of it. Because work is recognised as a central aspect of most people's lives it is generally recognised that individuals should have a safe and healthy work environment (Tetrik & Quick, 2003).

What is a healthy organisation/work environment?

Miles (in Tetrik & Quick, 2003: 3) defines a healthy organisation as "one that survives but also continues to cope adequately over the long haul, continuously developing and expanding its coping abilities". A healthy organisation is also seen as one that is financially successful and has a healthy workforce. It is able to maintain a healthy and satisfying work environment over time even in times of market turbulence and change. Having the healthiest workforce with people highly committed to the organisation is vital in order for the organisation to survive in this 21st century. There are many benefits to having a healthy workforce e.g. higher productivity, reduced absenteeism and less overtime. This will in the long run reduce employee health related costs and benefits (Kizer, 1987).

Flanagan and Henry (2004) also support the notion that managers who pursue the creation of a healthy organisation, will ultimately lead to increased levels of employee productivity and performance. Having an unhealthy workforce can lead to loss of productivity, there can be an impact on team and customer relations and the general functioning of the business. This will ultimately affect the efficiency and profitability of the organisation (MacDonald, 2005). It is for this reason that business leaders are increasingly realizing that wellness and helping to keep employees healthy is an

absolute necessity in today's world of work. At any point in time an organisation needs healthy employees who are fit to take the organisation through this process. This becomes crucial in periods of change and difficulty because an unhealthy workforce will not be able to work to their full extent thus preventing the organisation from reaching its full potential (Macdonald, 2005).

2.5.2 Employee wellness: Defining the concept

Wellness is a proactive dynamic process whereby the individual and the group become aware of the life choices and responsibility they have and taking the decision to make the right choices towards a life of quality and wellness. Employee wellness is a broad category that encompasses a number of workplace factors (Keyes & Haidt, 2006). Within the overall category of wellness, it is explained that employee engagement (a combination of cognitive and emotional variables in the workplace) generates higher frequency of positive affect (job satisfaction, commitment, joy, fulfillment, interest and caring). Positive affect then relates to the efficient application of work, employee retention, creativity and ultimately business outcomes. The concept of employee wellbeing at work promotes advantages to organisations of having a healthy workforce (Cooper & Robertson, 2001). Therefore, the dynamics of employee wellbeing at work is pivotal in the understanding of the different domains that affect the quality of life at work.

Definitions of wellness:

There are many definitions for wellness, and below are some of these definitions:

1. Kizer (1987: xv) defines wellness as “a process of being aware of and altering behaviour toward a more successful physical, mental, emotional, psychological, occupational and spiritual exercise”
2. This definition is similar to that of health as defined by the World Health Organisation “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity” (Macdonald, 2005:1).
3. Myers (in Botha, 2007:27) defines wellness as “a way of life oriented towards optimal health and wellbeing in which body, mind and spirit are integrated by the individual to live more fully within the human and natural community”

4. Wellness can be defined as the experience of optimal health, good relationships with others, being emotionally and cognitively well stimulated and experiencing significance and purpose in life (Els, in Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2009:2).

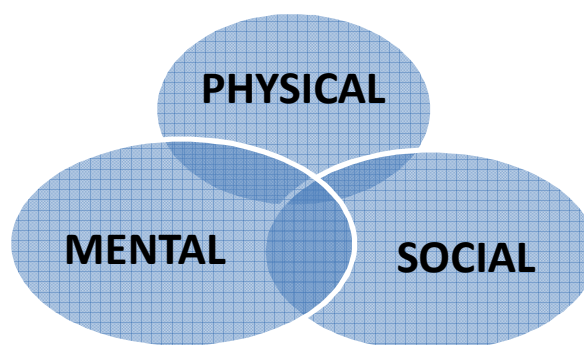
5. Witmer & Sweeney (in Els & De la Rey, 2006:46) understood wellness as a total person's approach towards improving the quality of his or her life, health and psychological strengths in proactive and positive ways - both as member of a community and as an employee.

6. Wellness can be defined as an approach to personal health that emphasizes individual responsibility for wellbeing through the practice of health-promoting lifestyle behaviours (Hurley and Schlaadt, in Botha & Brand, 2009:9).

It is evident from the above definitions that wellness has varying and widely accepted meanings; it can be seen as a holistic concept in which the human being is totally balanced with an overall wellbeing. It should be noted that problems that employees experience arising from any physical, emotional, intellectual, social or spiritual domain become dilemmas that organisations have to deal with (Els & De la Rey, 2006). It is therefore important that throughout the organisation's life that a holistic understanding of wellness is created in order to continuously maintain a healthy workforce.

For the purpose of this study the concept of wellness will be explored by focusing on the following three dimensions: physical, mental and social wellness (depicted in Figure 2). These dimensions will be discussed in the subsequent section.

Figure 2: The dimensions of wellness



2.5.3 Physical wellness

Ramsey and Smit (in Temane & Wissing, 2006) developed a model in which they described physical well-being as consisting of disease, mortality rates and life expectancy. The physical dimension involves cardiovascular flexibility and strength, regular physical activity, knowledge about food and nutrition and medical self-care and discourages the use of drugs and excessive alcohol consumption (Botha, in Botha & Brand, 2009:3). Physical development encourages knowledge about food and nutrition and discourages the use of tobacco, drugs and excessive alcohol consumption. Physical wellness is also about engaging in activities that will promote one's physical wellness, and this may include medical self care and using the medical system appropriately.

(Wellness website at <http://www.definitionofwellness.com/dimensions-of-wellness/physical-wellness.html>). Medical self-care refers to maintaining a healthy lifestyle and minimising wellness behaviour risks e.g. going for immunisation and self-examination tests, giving up smoking, drinking the right amount of water, practicing hygienic measures, checking high blood pressure and cholesterol levels and keeping them within acceptable levels (Botha & Brand, 2009).

Highly stressed employees are twice as likely to suffer from stress related medical problems. Sickness and absence costs employers several millions of rands every year. Sickness and absence cause a significant problem in the workplace in a number of ways: It puts additional pressure on remaining staff and therefore causing work overload problems, it can reduce quality of service to internal and external stakeholders, it can lead to tensions and conflicts, deadlines can be missed, the organisation's reputation can suffer and lastly there are huge financial costs associated with all these (Thompson, 2009).

It is important to have programs that assist employees break bad habits (such as smoking) that could reduce their productivity. Maintaining good health is a vital part of maintaining physical wellness. Macdonald (2005) offers several simple methods that can be followed and encouraged, e.g.:

- Always eat breakfast and eat three regular meals each day

- Exercise moderately two or three times a week
- Sleep seven to eight hours at night
- Do not smoke
- Maintain normal weight
- Drink alcohol only in moderation
- Introducing theme days such as healthy heart month
- Provide useful information to employees about relevant health issues such as healthy eating, dieting and exercise
- Offer incentives for employees who maintain a healthy lifestyle
- Employees to go for annual full medical checkups, check for things like stress, blood pressure, cholesterol and the like

The physical benefits of looking good and feeling terrific most often lead to the psychological benefits of enhanced self-esteem, self control determination and a sense of direction. Many studies have clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of physical exercise in reducing stress, anxiety and depression (Edwards, 2006). Attaining this in times of uncertainty and stressful events within the organisation will be pivotal in its success.

2.5.4 Mental wellness

There is no one definition for mental health and wellness. Mental health is a term used to describe either a level of cognitive or emotional wellbeing or an absence of a mental disorder. Mental wellness is generally viewed as a positive attribute, such that a person can reach enhanced levels of mental health, even if they do not have any diagnosable mental health condition (Wikipedia website at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_wellness).

The [World Health Organisation](#) defines mental health as "a being of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (Wikipedia website at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_wellness).

In positive psychology, mental health may include an individual's ability to enjoy life and procure a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. In his study of physical exercise and psychological wellbeing, Edwards (2006) described mental health as generally implying some experience of psychological well-being, and psychological well-being referring to a particular theoretical and empirical construct, measuring the integration of various psychological components of being well. Mental competence relates to domains of learning and growing up, creativity and intuition, as well as searching for sense and self fulfillment. Mental and emotional incapacity can be caused by many factors; this can also be due to work related stress.

Mental health problems can be a common feature in the workplace, as it is estimated that one in six persons is likely to experience a mental health problem (Desai, 2009). Research conducted in 1998 found that mental health disorders in the Netherlands were the largest diagnostic group for work incapacitation (32%), followed by musculoskeletal disorders (Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2009). The causes of mental health problems are many ranging from a relationship breakdown, financial problems, change in personal and work circumstances e.g. introduction of a new work practices, a new manager, technology or even the loss of employment. In a restructuring exercise one of the greatest fears for employees is a loss of their job and this could lead to other more serious problems such as depression or anxiety which is linked to loss or bereavement (Desai, 2009). The Health and Safety commission estimated that 13.4 million days off work were attributed to stress, anxiety or depression in a single year; the CBI also estimated that a third of all sickness absence was due to mental health issues (Macdonald, 2005).

Maintaining good health is a vital part of maintaining mental and emotional wellness and is an essential aspect if employees are to function productively and achieve results. People who experience mental health problems in the workplace need support, as it can be very easy for them to become isolated from their colleagues. Employers and other work colleagues have to engage with the person experiencing distress through a range of strategies. These include supervisory support, time out, employee assistance programs such as counselling.

According to Macdonald (2005), there are several other simple methods that can be followed and encouraged which include:

- Provide useful information to employees about relevant health issues such as mental health conditions and emotional intelligence
- Introduce a rehabilitation programme for employees with health problems such as mental illness or alcohol dependency
- Provide a free and confidential telephone help line that employees can access anytime to discuss work related and personal problems
- Offer support and counseling to employees who ask for help
- Stress reduction
- Physical activity and good nutrition

2.5.5 Social wellness

Social wellness is about contributing to one's human and physical environment to the common welfare of one's community (Wellness website at <http://www.definitionofwellness.com/dimensions-of-wellness/social-wellness.html>).

There are various interpretations of social wellness. It has been described as having two dimensions, namely environmental wellness and social awareness (Botha & Brand, 2009). Environmental wellness is focusing primarily on environmental issues such as pollution- solid waste, air and water pollution and global warming (Botha, in Botha & Brand, 2009). Social awareness is described as the appraisal of one's circumstances and functioning in society (Botha & Brand, 2009). It is about recognizing the need for leisure and recreation and budgeting time for those activities. Social wellness refers to the ability to perform social roles effectively, comfortably and without harming others. It is about having positive interactions with and enjoying being with others (Wellness website at <http://www.definitionofwellness.com/dimensions-of-wellness/social-wellness.html>).

Social wellness can also be defined as the development and maintenance of meaningful interpersonal relationships (Janse van Rensburg, Surujal & Dhurup, 2011).

It is being comfortable, accepting others and sustaining healthy relationships (Botha, 2007:29). Ramsey and Smit (in Temane & Wissing, 2006) describe social wellness as being characterised by social support and activity, personal interaction and life satisfaction. Developing and building close friendships and intimacy, practicing empathy and effective listening, caring for others and for the common good, and allowing others to care for you are all part of social wellness (Wellness website at <http://www.definitionofwellness.com/dimensions-of-wellness/social-wellness.html>).

Social well-being also results in feelings of confidence in social interactions and provides one with a feeling of emotional security (Janse van Rensburg *et al.*, 2011).

Several researchers support this view and have found that people who have close and supportive friends, family and colleagues are less likely to experience feelings of sadness, loneliness and low self-esteem (Helliwell and Putman, in Botha & Brand, 2009). Social support is defined as the availability and quality of an employee's relationships with supervisors, coworkers, family and friends and the amount of positive consideration and task assistance received from them. Agneessens, Waeye & Lievens (in Botha & Brand, 2009:3) found that "social support correlates to lower stress levels, emotional and psychological wellbeing, physical wellbeing, health and the longevity of individuals".

2.5.6 Wellness and stress

There are several factors that can affect the wellness of employees in the workplace. These can be factors within the workplace or outside the workplace. A restructuring exercise would most probably involve a great amount of change involving the way work is organised and carried out, a change in employer's policies, procedures and rules, unresolved conflicts, people's attitudes and ultimately all these can contribute to the stress experienced by employees (Macdonald, 2005). Stress in organisations is a growing concern among management practitioners because of its dysfunctional effects on organisational effectiveness. Stress is defined as "the naturally occurring mind-body response to demanding and/or emergency situations, either of a chronic or episodic nature" (Quick, Horn & Quick, 1987:19). Stress has been found to be one of the most

common problems in the workplace and causes of employee absence from work. Its prevention and control should be an essential part of effective management of people at work.

There are various theories of stress and amongst many others these include: Person-Environment fit, Karasek's Demand-Control model and preventative stress management. The person-environment fit approach emphasized the stressful nature of confusing or conflicting role demands. Fit being the match between an individual's skills and abilities and the demands of the job, communicated as role expectations. A lack of person-environment fit can lead to the person experiencing distress (Nelson & Simmons, 2003). The demand control model identified a high strain job as one that has a high level of responsibility, with the authority (Nelson & Simmons, 2003). Symptoms such as depression, job dissatisfaction and increased absence from work characterise these types of jobs.

Preventative stress management is about the individual together with the organisation taking joint responsibility in managing stress. It is a three tier stress prevention model-change the cause of stress, manage the individual's response to stress and obtain professional care to heal symptoms of stress (Nelson & Simmons, 2003). These approaches have added value to understanding stress at work; however they are more focused on the negative side of stress with little focus on the positive side of stress (Nelson & Simmons, 2003).

Below are some descriptions of common causes of workplace stress (MacDonald, 2005: 19-20). These are good examples of what can and should be taken into account when going through a restructuring exercise:

Workplace Stresses:

- Heavy workloads: having unrealistic targets and tight deadlines that are perceived by employees as unreasonable or unachievable
- The nature of the job or type of work: problems include, poor task design, repetitive or boring work, lack of clarity, lack of control and the

opportunity for the employee to use his skills

- Long or unsocial working hours
- Lack of training particularly when an employee is moved into a new job
- Lack of management support
- Job insecurity: takeovers, mergers and business reorganisations often lead to restructuring, redundancies and flatter hierarchies
- Change often makes people feel uncomfortable and anxious at the very least, and seriously stressed to the point of illness at worst
- Lack of or too much communication: the uncertainty of fear and sense of isolation caused by lack of or too much information
- Management style: a manager's leadership style can mean the difference between success and failure

As is evident from above there are various sources of stress that can affect employee wellness, e.g. pressure for production, deadlines, competitive work environment, role conflict and changes in the workplace. However, the focus of employee health and wellness should not only be on the factors in the workplace that affect employees negatively, e.g. stress and strain, but also on how to promote the positive aspects of employee health and wellness, e.g. good relationships, mutually respectful support, growth opportunities and adequate job resources (Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2009).

Below are some methods of reducing the likelihood of employees suffering from workplace stress (Quick *et al.*, 1987):

- Wellness is an individual responsibility and the workplace can offer the best to take on that responsibility. There are many ways and actions an employer can take to minimize the effect of change and the experience of stress on employees.
- Reviewing the job and the way it is done: ensure employees have an idea of what to do and how best to do it during times of uncertainty

- Conduct reviews of workloads, targets and deadlines: consult with employees, ensure targets and deadlines are reasonable, encourage employees to take breaks and possibly reduce long work hours
- Ensuring every employee receives sufficient support and resources: this will assist employees to be able to continue and cope with their jobs
- Promoting open two way communication: a common complaint from employees is lack of communication from management. Communication is very important, especially if the issues at hand will directly affect employees. It is not advisable to keep employees in the dark about what is going within the organisation or not consulted over matters that affect them as this is likely to contribute to negative feelings, disgruntled and uncooperative employees.
- Managing change: managers need to recognize what uncertainty and fear of change can do to employees' wellbeing, involve employees as much as possible by communicating to them and reassuring them whenever possible

2.5.7 Effective Management of Employee Wellness

Although the organisation cannot take responsibility for each individual's life choices and health, it does have the responsibility to the individual and to itself to provide work and work conditions conducive to good health and high performance (Flanagan & Henry, 1994). A number of employers are doing their bit to help encourage employee wellbeing. This includes having health promotion programs and various wellness initiatives such as wellness days and employee assistance programs.

2.5.7.1 Health Promotion Programs and Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

Organisations can have a positive influence on the health of workers by creating healthy work environments through providing health promotion programmes and services at work. Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. Workplace health promotion is the combined efforts of employers, employees and society to improve the health and wellbeing of people at work (Zungu & Setswe, 2007). Health promotion programs are key to any company's strategy in creating a healthy organisation and maintaining wellness amongst

employees. A wellness program can communicate the benefits of regular exercise and healthy living, which in turn, may then have an impact on issues such as sickness absence rates and productivity.

There are several criteria that have been identified by researchers that a health promotion program should have in order to be successful, these include: leadership commitment, thorough planning, a wellness approach, continuous communication, employee involvement, family involvement, a team approach and integration and evaluation of the program (Bellingham, 1987). Employee assistance programs (EAPs) are the most common health promotion program and employees at most large businesses today have access to an EAP. Naicker & Fouche (2003:25) broadly define an EAP as “a professional assessment, referral and/or short term counselling service offered to employees with alcohol, drug or mental health problems that may be affecting their work performance”. The aim of employee assistance is to identify and resolve workplace, mental health, physical health, marital, family, personal addictions or emotional issues that affect an employee(s) within the workplace.

EAPs have been used as part of business strategy to enhance employee functioning loyalty and performance in organisations around the world. A survey conducted in 1997 found that of Fortune 500 companies 92% of firms offered EAP's (Gornick & Blair, 2005). The Employee Assistance Professional Association (Gornick & Blair, 2005) refers to employee assistance as the organisation's resources used to enhance employee and workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification and resolution of personal and productivity issues. Harper (in Matlhape, 2003) discovered that South African EAPs have a dual focus on the organisation and employee, and this has resulted in the ability to respond to modern day organisational issues affecting employees at work. These include transformation, affirmative action, downsizing, HIV/AIDS and harassment issues. The essence of EAP work is the application of knowledge about behaviour and behavioural health to make accurate assessments, followed by appropriate action to improve the productivity and healthy functioning of the

workplace (Gornick & Blair, 2005: 11). It is important then that an EAP is anywhere in the company where employee wellbeing needs to be enhanced.

2.5.7.2 Benefits of effectively managing wellness

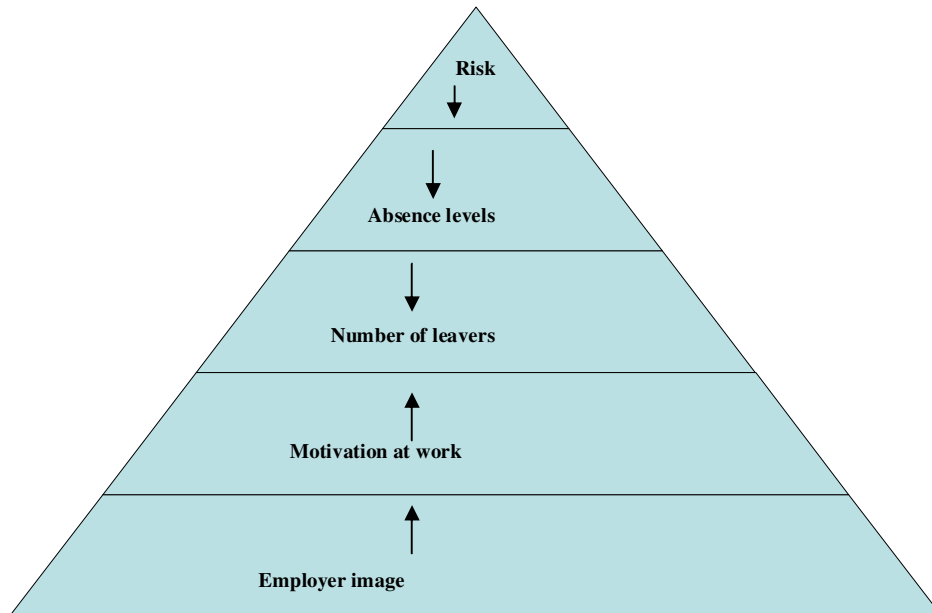
There are many benefits to managing wellness in the workplace. EAPs have been found to be a valuable tool in managing wellness and their management and implementation can be critical. However, because most of the benefits of using EAPs being intangible, it is difficult to measure the cost effectiveness of the EAP. Some studies have evaluated the benefits of these EAPs, e.g. Masi and Goff (in Naicker & Fouche, 2003) showed a \$7 return per employee for every \$1 invested. The McDonnell Douglas Corporation showed an investment to savings ratio of 4:1 (Smith and Money, in Naicker & Fouche, 2003). Health promotion programs also help to prevent injury and illness as people are more alert. In conclusion, managing wellness through the use of health promotion programs has been found to increase employee health, increase employee morale, motivate employees, decrease absenteeism, turnover and increase productivity (Matlhape, 2003; Green *et al.*, 2001). This indicates that when implemented well, EAPs can reap great benefits for the company. Organisations need to construct their wellness programmes depending on what stage of change they are in and the needs identified by the workforce.

People are fundamental to business success. A wellness model developed at the Wellkom Corporate Services in the UK found that (Phillips, Not dated):

- i. Well people + well managed = well customers
- ii. Well people are physically and mentally in a condition to provide exceptional service throughout the day
- iii. Well managed human resources practices are designed and delivered through line managers that lead to people being clear in what is expected, having the skills to deliver, and are motivated to perform
- iv. Well customers stay with you, increase their average spend and recommend you to others more often

Below is a diagram indicating the value of wellness management.

Figure 3: The value of wellness management (Phillips, Not dated):



The following assumptions may be derived from the discussion of the above concepts of the changing world of work, restructuring and employee wellness in the workplace.

- Change is inevitable and it is a constant phenomenon in today's world
- Change can impact on the wellness of the employees bringing about both positive and negative aspects. It is important to manage it appropriately and ensuring sound communication throughout all stages
- The organisation can assist employees in taking care of their health, but the key responsibility lies with the employee to ensure that they lead a healthy lifestyle to reduce the impact of stressors that might be found in and outside the workplace
- The wellbeing of every individual in the workplace as it influences the wellbeing of the organisation and vice versa

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will be focusing on the methodology used in this study. It will discuss the research design and aim, participants and sampling, data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations that were used in this study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND AIM

Methodology refers to the way to proceed to solve problems, which is the research process. In the human sciences there are two main methodological paradigms, namely quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The primary aim of this study is to investigate the experience and impact of a restructuring exercise on middle managers' wellness. The aim is to collect comprehensive and detailed data to gain insight about people's attitudes, behaviours, concerns, lifestyle and feelings with regards to certain concepts. In qualitative research you seek out the why and not the how of the topic through analysing unstructured information.

Qualitative research is a type of scientific research that:

- seeks to answer a question
- systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question
- collects evidence
- produces findings that were not determined in advance
- produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study

Source: Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide (at <http://www.fhi.org/nr/rdonlyres/etl7vogszehu5s4stpzb3tyqlpp7rojv4waq37elpbyei3tgmc4ty6dunb ccfzxtaj2rvbaubzmz4f/overview1.pdf>)

In this study qualitative questionnaire interviews, focus groups and note taking were used for data collection. These will be discussed in detail.

3.3 PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING

The participants are all permanent professional employees in the middle management category. These participants were selected from the various departments at the company's head office which employs about a 1 000 employees. There are several departments including Human Resources, Finance, Supply Chain Management, Safety, Logistics, Information Management, Technology, Research & Development, Engineering and Growth. The middle management category, which also includes specialists, is the focus sample of this study. This category employs more than 30% of the total employees at head office. The reasons for selecting these participants are the following. Although the restructuring exercise will impact on the whole organisation, the greatest impact will be on the service departments at the corporate head office which employs the majority of the professional employees and managers. Secondly, it was not feasible at this current stage to assess all employees at the different business units. Focusing on middle managers at corporate office will make it more manageable to work with this sample and focus on a specific area of the organisation. Thirdly, there were no language limitations as all employees are literate and highly qualified. Fourthly, there were no geographic restrictions since the sample was easily accessible.

Non-probability purposive sampling was used to gather the participants. Purposive samples are samples which result when the researcher handpicks the elements to be included in the sample on the basis of expert judgment (Hoyle, Harris & Judd, 2002). The researcher chose participants with the belief that they have certain characteristics, and that they will likely be able to provide useful information for the purposes for which the study is being done. Although care was taken to ensure that the sample reflected a diverse workforce in terms of race, gender, age and occupational levels, the main problem with purposive sampling is that an error in judgement can occur from the researcher's side and the sample may influence the results.

Below are some biographical characteristics of the sample gained from the questionnaire used to gather data.

Table 2: SELF COMPILED QUESTIONNAIRE: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

	RACE	GENDER	AGE	GRADE	JOB TITLE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS AT COMPANY
1	Unknown	Male	31	D3	Senior Mechanical Engineer	Technology	12
2	Indian	Female	31	D3	Manager, International Employees	Human Resources	4
3	White	Male	57	D4	Senior Process Engineer	Research & Development	20
4	African	Female	54	D1	Specialist: Health & Hygiene	SSD	10
5	African	Male	31	D1	HRBP	Human Resources	6
6	African	Male	43	D1	Contract Specialist	Supply Chain Management	3
7	White	Male	39	D5	Commercial Specialist	Group Logistics	4
8	African	Female	35	D1	Senior Accountant	Finance	4
9	White	Male	54	D3	Senior Support Specialist	Information Management	10
10	White	Male	31	D5	Principal Engineer	Technology	10
11	White	Male	45	D4	Senior Process Engineer	Research & Development	2
12	Indian	Female	27	D1	Project Planner	Projects & Engineering	3yrs 6 months
13	African	Male	38	D1	Safety Specialist	SSD	2
14	White	Female	61	D1	Manager, Library	Finance	22
15	Coloured	Male	45	D3	Manager	Human Resources	5
16	African	Male	42	E role	Head Accountant	Coal SBU-Finance	15
17	White	Female	39	D3	IPS Consultant	Human Resources	16
18	African	Male	28	D1	Specialist: Spatial; Information	Mineral Asset Management	2yrs 4 months
19	Indian	Male	48	D1	Project Planner	Technology	9
20	White	Female	30	D1	Senior Accountant	Finshare	3
21	African	Female	48	D2	Head Accounts Payable	Finshare	3yrs 9 months
22	White	Male	57	F role	Manager, Support Services	Research & Development	38
23	Indian	Female	26	D2	Metallurgical Engineer	Research & Development	5

Below are some biographical characteristics of the sample from the focus groups.

Table 3: FOCUS GROUPS: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

	RACE	GENDER	AGE	GRADE	JOB TITLE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS AT COMPANY
1*	African	Male	42	E role	Head Accountant	Coal SBU-Finance	15
2*	Indian	Female	31	D3	Manager, International Employees	Human Resources	4
3*	White	Male	45	D4	Senior Process Engineer	Research & Development	2
4*	African	Female	54	D1	Specialist: Health & Hygiene	SSD	10
5	African	Female	26	D1	Contract Specialist	SCM	3
6	White	Female		D3	Assistant, Manager	Finance	6
7*	African	Male	38	D1	Safety Specialist	SSD	2
8*	Indian	Female	26	D2	Metallurgical Engineer	Research & Development	5
9	White	Male	56	D1	Specialist, Information	Strategy & Services	37
10*	African	Male	31	D1	HRBP	Human Resources	6
11	Indian	Female	43	D1	Senior Accountant	Finance	5
12*	White	Female	61	D1	Manager, Library	Finance	22

*Indicates employees in the focus group who also completed the questionnaire.

Below is a summary of additional biographical data relating to the sample.

Table 4: Gender

Gender	Male	Female	Total
	15 (56%)	12 (44%)	27

Table 5: Race

Race	African	White	Indian	Coloured	Unknown	Total
	9 (33%)	11 (41%)	5 (19%)	1(4%)	1 (4%)	27

Table 6: Age

Age	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
	4 (15%)	10 (37%)	7 (26%)	6(22%)	27

Table 7: Years at company

Years at Company	0-5yrs	6-10yrs	11-15yrs	15+yrs	Total
	14	6	2	5	27

Summary:

- The total sample size was 27 employees (with 8 of these also involved in focus group discussions)
- 55% of the sample was males
- Whites comprised the greatest percentage: 41 % of the sample
- The age group 30-39 had the largest representation in the respondent group
- Most of the respondents have a Post graduate degree
- 14 respondents have less than 5 years length of service

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Data was gathered by qualitative techniques. Before any data was collected or employees approached, approval from the relevant senior managers was obtained and all consent processes were followed. In January 2011 a self compiled qualitative questionnaire was sent out to 100 employees in the middle management (and specialist) category of the company's head office. The researcher called some of the participants and emailed others requesting them to participate in the research. A participant letter was attached stating that this was for academic purposes, it was voluntary and that confidentiality will be maintained at all times. In the first phase only

17 employees responded. The researcher then sent out more questionnaires in February to try and gain a larger response rate. A total of 6 employees responded in the second request, making it a total of 23 employees responding in the self compiled questionnaire while 4 participants participated only in the focus groups. Thus the total participant sample was 27 people. This was a low response, leading the researcher to proceed with phase two of conducting focus groups.

The researcher conducted focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and concepts presented in the questionnaires. The researcher personally contacted all potential participants to invite them to attend the sessions and to explain the purpose of the focus group. There were two focus groups scheduled in the month of March and April 2011 and a total of 12 employees partook in the focus groups. The first focus group included 8 participants and the second focus group included 4 participants, representing different departments and biographical diversity. Both focus groups lasted about an hour. The focus group discussions were recorded and then transcribed so that the researcher could analyse all data received. This also ensures that data could be retrieved at any time as the researcher had access to this information.

3.5 MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

Self compiled questionnaire

The researcher formulated an open ended questionnaire using questions relating to the stated research questions (see appendix attached). The questionnaire included biographical information to better understand the sample. It also had three open ended questions that were about Physical, Mental and Social wellness. A definition of each of these dimensions was provided and employees were asked to answer all questions in as much detail as possible. The questionnaire was sent to the various middle managers and specialist category employees serving as the study group within the company.

Focus group discussion

The focus groups were used as phase two in collecting data. The researcher aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts presented in the questionnaire and also to

gain additional information on the three dimensions of wellness (physical, mental and social). In the focus group the researcher welcomed everybody and explained that this was a voluntary process and that all participants were respected and encouraged to partake in the discussion. It was stated to participants that there were no right or wrong answers. The researcher then provided the participants with a summary of the responses to the questionnaires and also highlighted the definitions of each wellness dimension. This was done so as to ensure that everybody was at the same level of understanding and was familiar with the dimensions to be discussed. The focus group was a combination of structured and unstructured questions in that the researcher had a framework to follow, i.e. certain questions were asked and a guideline questionnaire was drafted to ensure that all dimensions were discussed. The researcher allowed the participants to discuss issues freely and at their own pace, although there was a time limit to the focus group. All the focus group discussions were tape recorded and data was transcribed and is available for the researcher to analyse.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS: Recording, managing and analysing the data

Data analysis involves the researcher “arranging and portraying the data in ways that help detect patterns or problems, explore associations that exist in the data, and generally see if the data are consistent with their hypothesis and theories” (Hoyle *et al.*, 2002:425). A grounded theory approach was used to analyse the data. Grounded theory is a methodology seeking to construct theory about issues of importance in people’s lives, (Mills 2006 cited in Diedericks, 2009). Coding is one of the main processes of grounded theory and includes the following coding procedures: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. This method was chosen because it will assist the researcher to categorize and assign themes to data.

The coding of data will ensure that themes are properly categorized according to properly defined research questions. Open coding is performed during a first pass through recently collected data. The researcher locates themes and assigns initial codes or labels in a first attempt to condense the mass of data into categories (Neuman, 1997). In axial coding, the researcher will begin to work with an organized set of initial

codes or preliminary concepts. Key words and phrases will be grouped together in broader themes and/or categories. According to Neuman (1997), during axial coding a researcher asks about causes and consequences, conditions and interactions, strategies and processes, and looks for categories of concepts that clusters together. Selective coding is the final phase whereby you relate one category to another and carefully validate relationships. The researcher then verifies the data, analyse what the data means and draw conclusions and implications from this information.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics is a very important issue in research and it must be carefully considered before a study is conducted. Ethical issues arise from our interaction with other people and the environment, especially at the point where there is potential or actual conflict of interests (Mouton, 2001). Ethics is concerned with what is wrong and right in the conduct of research. Often, ethical choices involve a trade off or compromise between the interests and rights of different parties (Mouton, 2001). Looking at the above it is evident that ethics was definitely an issue that needed to be considered by the researcher.

Mouton (2001) describes some of the most common ethical issues and these are discussed below as they are applicable to this study included:

Objectivity and integrity of the research: The experiences of restructuring and wellness can be very subjective and it becomes easy for the researchers to be subjective in their judgment. The researcher tried at all times to maintain objectivity and integrity in the conduct of this research.

Ethical publishing practices: The researcher made sure that the referencing was correct and appropriate; this means that the contributions of individuals and any person who participated in the research in a substantial way were included in the references.

Free and open dissemination of research results: The results of the research findings will be reported in full, openly and in a timely manner.

Relationship to the subjects of science: This research dealt primarily with studying other individuals in the form of a questionnaire and interviews. Participants have rights and

this study could not continue until participants were made aware of these: the *right to privacy* (including the right to refuse to participate in the research), the *right to anonymity and confidentiality*, the right to full disclosure about the research (*informed consent*) and finally the right not be harmed in any manner (physically, psychologically or emotionally) (Mouton, 2001).

Right to privacy: In the invitation letters the researcher indicated that general trends will be included in the research report and no individual results will be reported. The researcher also mentioned to the potential participants that they are not forced to partake in the study. This was a completely voluntary exercise. In the initial phase and halfway in the research study some of the participants decided they did not want to be part of the study. The researcher respected this and did not force them to carry on.

Right to anonymity: When emailing the questionnaire to the participants, it is difficult to assure the participants that they will remain anonymous, as often their email addresses and names are visible. The researcher was aware of this and therefore explained this to them and that all implicit and explicit links between their names and the data they provided will be removed. Anonymity and confidentiality was ensured as the only person with access to the questionnaires and tape recordings was the researcher.

Informed consent: The researcher interacted verbally and via email with the participants in order to get their assistance in this research study. Informed consent was obtained from the participants before participation in the study. This was done verbally (over the telephone) and also, the participants were told by email that by completing the questionnaire they were consenting to be participants in the study. The researcher made sure that the participants got all the information regarding the research. Communication was achieved through contacting and emailing the participants from time to time as the need arose.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a summary of the results obtained in the data collection through the self compiled questionnaire and the focus group. It will present the results per dimension i.e. physical, mental and social wellness.

4.2 DATA OBTAINED THROUGH THE QUESTIONNAIRE

4.2.1 RESTRUCTURING

The title of this study is “The impact of an organisational restructuring exercise on the wellness of middle managers in a mining company” .By virtue the title of the study implied that the restructuring has an impact on the wellness of employees. Therefore it was important that as a first question this was explored by asking the question “Do you think that the restructuring process has an impact on your wellness?” (Refer to research questions in chapter 1, point 1.4).

Below are the results relating to the first question:

Of the 23 participants, 74% (17 participants) responded that the restructuring had an impact on them. The following key themes were identified through the coding process under the ‘yes’ responses:

Theme 1: Mental wellbeing

Under this theme concepts such as stress, anxiety, uncertainty and morale were described by the participants.

- “yes , it has...since nobody could confirm if we were going to be affected or not, the not knowing adds to ones stress levels”
- “yes, all my levels of wellness have been negatively affected”
- “yes, my mental wellness is affected because of the uncertainty”
- “yes, as it brings insecurity and more work”

- “yes, cause it forces you to think about the risk of being retrenched/unemployed”
- “...the uncertainty that goes with it, the stress and lack of transparency in the whole process is getting to me”
- “of course yes, restructuring has an impact on my wellness”

Theme 2: Social status and activities

Under this theme concepts like financial status and impact, and relationships were identified.

- “yes, job security is extreme important to my mental health as well as social and physical health”
- “yes...change and fear for the unknown”
- “yes, it will impact my wellbeing on things family, financial and socially”

Of the 23 participants 21% (5 participants) responded that it had no impact on them.

- “no, this is the 5th time I am going through this”
- “no impact on my wellness”
- “no, you determine your own attitude and adjust positively to any possible change”
- “no, it does not have an impact on my wellness. I think I will survive any outcome...”
- “no, our department is self sustaining and has all the expertise with the permanent employees”

There was one (5%) unclear response whereby the participant stated that it did not affect him directly.

- “yes, not for me personally though because if they verskraal me, I am fortunate in that Xstrata will employ me/or Anglo. (It has however stressed out my colleagues)”

4.2.2 PHYSICAL WELLNESS

The following key themes were identified through the coding process under physical wellness: (1) Personal Health Management (2) Mental Wellbeing (3) Social Life and (4) Coping Mechanisms.

Theme 1: Personal Health Management

Personal health management is a key theme that was evident in the physical wellness of the participants. Under this theme several categories were identified, namely, nutrition/eating habits, physical health and fitness and sleeping habits. 21 of the participants referred to one or more of the categories found in this theme.

a) Nutrition (diet, eating habits, take outs)

Nutrition refers to the eating habits and the diet of the participants. Eating habits are indicated to be impacted in this process. Of the 23 participants 7 of them indicated the impact that nutrition has or might have on their physical wellness:

- “increase in stress can also result in one eating too much”
- “stick to balanced diet and lifestyle”
- “lots of coffee (to keep awake)”
- “eating habits could be influenced firstly by seeking comfort in food...”
- “cutting back on luxuries and in the end switching to less expensive but often less healthy food”
- “stress can also result in one eating too much”

The eating habits were also indicated by two of the participants as having an effect on one’s weight either by eating too much or eating less, which could result in weight loss or weight gain.

b) Physical health and fitness (gym, fatigue, exercise)

Physical health and fitness refers to performing activities such as going to the gym to maintain a physically healthy state. The role that exercise plays in physical wellness was identified by 11 of the 23 participants as a key factor. Participants also indicated that they experienced fatigue and lack of energy due to mental stress and strain that the restructuring process has on them.

- “I work out everyday which is very good”
- “I exercise regularly”
- “I would rather continue to exercise since I believe in the idiom ‘a healthy mind in a healthy body”
- “because of the mental impact...the spiral draw one down on physical activities”
- “increased levels of fatigue”
- “physically people are drained”
- “energy levels goes drops”
- “not ‘lus’ for exercise (rather sleep)”
- “I may feel less inclined to visit the gym as regularly as usual”
- “increased levels of fatigue, impacting on ones physical body”

c) Sleeping habits and patterns

Sleep is essential for a person’s health and wellbeing. Research recommends that healthy adults need at least six hours of sleep per night. Sleep deprivation or being sleepy/tired has been linked to reduced personal health, obesity, increased diabetes risk, and lowered immune system functioning (Rogers, in Blau, 2011). Work stresses have also been found to lead to the “strains” of sleep problems, poor health and turnover intentions (Cooper, 1998; Ivancevich and Ganster, 1987 in Blau, 2011). In this study one participant referred to sleep as a factor that impacts on physical wellness.

- “not a lot of sleep (take work home)”

Theme 2: Mental Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing and health are important in the workplace. Participants identified some mental health related issues that affect their physical wellness. These include stress, morale and the uncertainty that comes with this process. 18 of the participants alluded to either one or more of these as impacting on their wellness.

a) Stress

Stress is defined as “the naturally occurring mind-body response to demanding and/or emergency situations, either of a chronic or episodic nature” (Quick, Horn & Quick,

1987: 19). 4 of the participants referred to the experience of stress and how it affected their physical wellness.

- “increase levels of stress impacts one’s physical wellness”
- “stress levels can influence your sleeping habits and nutrition”
- “tension headaches (stress to get through work)
- “my stress levels increased. If I feel stressed it transfers to all aspects of my life...”

b) Morale and Attitude

Morale refers to the feelings experienced by the participants during a particularly challenging time. It refers to the impact that this has on their motivation and their interest in other activities. 6 of the participants referred to motivation and low morale having an impact on their wellness. Lack of motivation is identified by some participants as having an influence on things like eating and sleeping patterns.

- “...one can sense the feeling of despondency,...the morale is down”
- “some have lost interest in their jobs”
- “lack of motivation , therefore not eating correctly and not being physically fit”
- “we get demotivated”
- “low morale all around”
- “loss of motivation to act and do something”
- Depression “some might sit on depressants for some time”

c) Uncertainty

Uncertainty is indicated as a significant category in this restructuring exercise. It was identified by 4 of the participants as having an impact on their wellness.

- “Restructuring will always affect the physical wellness of any person. It has a lot of uncertainties”
- “apart from the uncertainty my physical wellness have not been influenced very much”
- “uncertainty would influence my general health”

Theme 3: Social Life

Another significant theme that was identified is that of one's Social Life. Under this theme there were several categories identified, e.g. a change in lifestyle, financial and relocation.

a) Change of lifestyle

Change of lifestyle refers to having to lead a different lifestyle because of the impact of the restructuring exercise. This was identified as comprising of different changes:

- "I had to cut back on take aways and eating out"
- "one changes lifestyle...lifestyle is highly influenced by the income and if the income is affected , the lifestyle changes"

b) Financial

Participants referred to the financial adjustments that they had to make during this process. This refers to saving of money and spending with caution.

- "I had to cut back...just to make sure that one does not have huge debt should restructuring result in one being retrenched"
- "I started to pay all my small debts"
- "trying to save money in case the undesirable happens"

c) Relocation

Relocation refers to having to move form one's current geographic location to another. One participant referred to this as having a potential impact.

- "the physical part might be redeployment which will result to relocate..."

Theme 4: Coping Mechanism

Part of the characteristics of a healthy organisation and workforce is the ability to cope during stressful times. This theme was evident in the physical and mental wellness dimensions. Participants identified some coping methods which can either assist or be harmful to an individual.

a) Substance abuse

- “Some will resort to the substance abuse such as alcohol”

b) Disengagement

- “I disengage when I leave the work premises and focus on myself and family”

General

a) No impact

There were 5 respondents that indicated that there was no impact on their physical wellness during the restructuring process

- “I don’t think my physical wellness was influenced in this process”
- “Not any, I am quite good”
- “I am not affected. I continue to maintain my physical activity and general lifestyle as previously”

4.2.3 MENTAL WELLNESS

The process used to identify key themes identified the following themes under mental wellness: (1) Mental and Personal wellbeing (2) Workplace Environment (3) Coping Mechanisms

Theme 1: Mental and Personal wellbeing

This theme was identified as having the most significant influence on mental wellness. 17 of the participants referred to stress, uncertainty, mental alertness, morale and career and goals as playing a role in their mental wellness.

a) Stress and Anxiety

The experience of stress and anxiety has been evident in many of the responses. The participants seem to be worried about many things and this in turn is affecting their mental wellness.

- “I am very worried about the financial side”
- “...more stress leading to sick leave or absenteeism”
- “Increase the levels of stress thereby impacting on one’s mental health”

- “Worried, can’t sleep...”
- “I often have sleepless nights just thinking...”
- “what stressing me is people beneath me, what is going become of them and the department”

b) Uncertainty

Uncertainty is often a significant part in restructuring processes as people do not always know what is going to happen to them and what their future in the organisation will be. This feeling was echoed by 4 of the participants.

- “...constantly concerned if you will still have a job in a few months”
- “I am worried about my future in the organisation”
- “Uncertainty would influence my ability to cope with stress in my job”
- “Fear of not knowing whether you are affected or not”
- “Increase in uncertainty impacts on ones mental wellness”

c) Mental Alertness

Mental alertness refers to the ability/lack of the participants to be mentally alert and focus on the tasks at hand.

- “I have allowed my mind to be stable by focusing on the job at hand.”
- “losing focus at work thinking what is going to happen to me?”
- “Too many things on my brain do silly things like putting toilet paper in fridge”
- “Mind absence- think of other important stuff in meetings”

d) Morale

Morale refers to the feelings experienced by the participants during a particularly challenging time. It also looks at the impact that this has had on their motivation.

- “I was very emotional and angry”
- “You feel powerless and helpless”
- “One positive out of this negative situation is that it has provided me with more motivation to complete my studies as fast as possible”

e) Career and goals

Out of the 23 participants, 4 referred to their career and goals as being an aspect affecting their mental wellness and that needs to be managed.

- “another option is to apply for new employment...one will have to weigh options even if there is a new employment possibility”
- “I am worried about my career path due to restructuring”
- “I am retrenched...I must seek re-employment”
- “I had to reconsider my personal future goals and aspirations”
- “I would have to settle for a while before achieving my career goals in the company’s current restructuring process”
- “I am worried about my future in the organisation”

Theme 2: Workplace Environment

Through the process of coding the theme Workplace Environment was identified. This theme comprises of two sub-themes or categories: organisational commitment and workplace relationships.

a) Organisational commitment

Participants referred to the issue of commitment in that they will continue doing their work and not let this process affect them. Another referred to being loyal to the company.

- “I am loyal to MiningCorp even though opposition companies want me to work for them”
- “However, without commitment, support and ownership from all stakeholders and appropriate phasing in of these, there is a chance of having chaos before there is order”

b) Communication and consultation

Communication and consultation involves talking to employees and where necessary consulting them on the process and getting their input on certain issues. 2 of the participants identified these as issues.

- “the whole process was done without input from the people involved”
- “Others around me tend to be less communicative to colleagues i.e. interest less”
-

Theme 3: Coping Mechanisms

Coping and the ability to deal with the mental effects of the restructuring process was a key theme evident in this study. Under this theme participants identified various coping mechanisms that they use to cope with the strain that the restructuring process has brought on their mental wellness. Below are examples of various methods used by participants:

- “prayer, reading my bible, engaging in positive discussions keeps my mental wellness alright”
- “I try to avoid all negative happenings within this environment”
- “I take every day as it comes...”
- “you can decide to be positive”
- “I read novels, magazines and mostly motivational books”
- “Seeing my two children happy really helps my mental wellness”

General

a) No impact

Three participants indicated that the restructuring process did not affect their mental wellness.

4.2.4 SOCIAL WELLNESS

The processes used to identify key themes were open and axial coding. In this process the following key themes were identified under social wellness: (1) Social and Work relationships, (2) Social Status and Activities and (3) Mental Wellbeing.

Theme 1: Social and Work Relationships

The Social and Work relationships were identified as the most significant aspects impacting on social wellness. This theme includes the categories of lack of time, support and encouragement and loss.

a) Lack of time

Lack of time was identified as being a significant aspect as people were not making or having enough time to see their family and friends.

- "Don't make time for family and friends"
- "Do not take much leave to spent time with family and friends"
- "Don't get time to do other things like attending other social institutions and events"
- "there is less time to socialize , interact or offer support"

b) Encouragement and support

Participants referred to having positive and supportive relationships as things that they did or were exposed to during this process. Five of the participants recognised the importance and the role that encouraging others played. There was also the negative connotation to this aspect, whereby people felt that they became less caring.

- "I in turn help people by reassuring them that everything will be OK"
- "For a while we had to work hard to keep the spirits up and encourage people to rather focus..."
- "At work I get the feeling that the team encourages each other"
- "...the restructuring brought me and my husband closer together"
- "As long as I have my family by my side, I would be able to handle changes"
- "Siyaya has made me personally encourage others to work well..."
- "It's important to surround one with a positive environment"
- "Obviously when my life is not balanced, I become impatient; the sense of care to others is limited"
- "...it affects general informal communication amongst colleagues"

c) Loss

Loss can be actual or perceived; it is multifaceted and relates to the disappearance or removal of familiar work elements or contexts (van Tonder, 2004). A sense of loss in relationships was identified by some of the participants.

- "Colleagues being retrenched is a loss. A social loss is felt"

- “My interaction with clients at the business units who may have to leave the Company, is also influenced by Siyaya”

Theme 2: Social Status and Activities

Social status and activities were identified as being aspects that were influencing social wellness. Participants referred to spending less money and saving more. One participant identified voluntary work as something that she engages in to have fulfilment.

a) Financial Impact

The restructuring exercise has resulted in participants behaving differently when it comes to finances. Participants seem to have a greater need to spend less and save more. For most of the people this was because of the uncertainty that came with this process.

- “Not spending and saving more to ensure I have funds if I am retrenched”
- “I have made lesser donations than I use to make to some charitable organisation”
- “I need to cut on trips with colleagues and families due to financial impact or try to economise”
- “reduced other debts to balance my life within my family”
- “I have decided to tighten my belt when it comes to spending and have increase the amount of money I put in my savings account”

b) Voluntary projects

Voluntary projects refer to the non-profit making activities that an individual engages in.

- “I am also helping in the Community on issues of HIV/AIDS- seeing a person getting better is what fulfils me”

Theme 3: Mental Wellbeing

3 of the participants identified mental wellbeing as having an effect on social wellness in terms of the increased levels of stress and anxiety.

a) Stress and anxiety

- “Increase levels in stress and anxiety makes one become less social...”
- “There was widespread fear and anxiety amongst my colleagues...”

b) Morale and Attitude

Morale refers to the feelings experienced by the participants during a particularly challenging time. It refers to the impact that this has on their motivation and their interest in other activities.

- “Retrenchment among people is seen a failure, the weak/lazy get retrenched”
- “This lead to anger and frustration and even a feeling of hopelessness”
- “By disengaging from work as soon as I leave the premises of MiningCorp”

General

6 participants indicated that there was no impact on their social wellness

- “I am an optimistic person hence my social wellness is not really affected”
- “It has no influence on my social wellness”

4.3 DATA OBTAINED THROUGH THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

4.3.1 RESTRUCTURING

The first question to participants in the focus group discussion was: Does the restructuring have an impact on your wellness? More than 80% of the participants answered yes to this question. The impact was indicated on all the dimensions of wellness- physical, mental and social. All the participants in the focus group felt strongly that there was an impact on their wellness. This response is shared by more than 70% of the participants who answered the questionnaire. These responses will be discussed under each dimension in subsequent paragraphs. Restructuring was not always seen in a positive light and there was an experience of a negative impact on wellness more than a positive impact. Some participants mentioned that, “when you think of restructuring some of us think of things like retrenchment, we are going to lose our jobs”. Restructuring was seen by some as a forced change. It was seen as a forced change in

that you have no control or say over what the results of the restructuring exercise will be. If you are told to relocate, for example, it will not be by choice.

Below are some key themes identified by the participants with regards to the restructuring process. All the above and the below discussion could probably play a role in the negative feelings towards this process.

Theme 1: The use of consultants

The use of outside/external consultants was discussed in great detail by both focus groups. There is a lot of unhappiness with the number of consultants currently employed by the company. Participants felt that the company was spending more money on consultants and that they cost more than permanent employees who could easily do the job if training was provided.

Theme 2: Communication

Communication is one of the most prominent themes that was identified with regards to the restructuring process. The lack of communication, the type/content of communication, the method of communication and management's communication to employees were some of the major points discussed.

Management:

There were mixed feelings amongst participants, in that some people felt that the company and management were hiding information from them. There was a feeling that management was dishonest and telling lies. Management was seen as hiding information and not going back to employees to inform them on the progress. One participant said "...with our management they don't come back to us to tell us what stages we... it's all quiet", another said "You can see when a person is telling lies, you know". Participants indicated that they wanted to get information from management so that they can know what to do and where to go.

Lack of communication:

Most of the participants felt left in the dark as not enough communication was flowing to them. Participants felt that the team driving the restructuring process was not divulging information and they were holding back. This is because information was given to employees bit by bit and in an unclear manner. One participant did however mention that it wasn't always easy to know how much information to give to people, because if you give too much they panic and if you give too little they also panic.

The type/content of communication:

Participants felt that sometimes the information provided was too technical and irrelevant and that even after information sessions one was still left uncertain and confused.

The method of communication:

The method of communication also came up as a concern. Participants felt that emails were impersonal and too generic. They preferred small groups or one on one communication.

Theme 3: Period of restructuring

More than half of the participants referred to the length of this process as a concern. Most of the participants saw this process as taking too long. It was mentioned that even if the outcome was negative it would be better to know as the uncertainty would be gone. Some referred to this process being so lengthy that nobody even remembers when it started.

Theme 4: Honesty and Trust Issues

There were a number of times where participants questioned the truthfulness and honesty of the information they were receiving from management. Employees want one on one open and honest communication. A lot of the things that were being shared were also questioned by employees. The trust relationship seems to have been affected

somewhere in this process. One participant said “...but we don’t get informed or you know we are kept in the dark, so we don’t believe the words that we hear”

Due to most of the responses in the first focus group being mainly negative, it is for this reason that in the second focus group the researcher asked participants to explain their understanding of why there is a restructuring exercise and what its purpose was. An in-depth awareness and desire for change is normally seen as a significant factor in terms of whether people will accept the change or not. Most of the employees have a similar understanding of the need for this exercise in that it is to increase profits and reduce costs. It is also seen as a way to improve service delivery. The cost saving was viewed as an opportunity to increase profit and improve things in the company. Participants mentioned that there seems to have been a shift in the objectives of the restructuring exercise, whereby the first phase of the Siyaya exercise was on cost saving, but it later changed to optimising and streamlining services. Another respondent viewed this by commenting it was improving service delivery and doing more with less people. The overall desire for change among participants seems to be questionable, probably due to the uncertainty and lack of communication that employees are experiencing.

4.3.2 PHYSICAL WELLNESS

Theme 1: Personal Health Management

a) Nutrition (diet, eating habits, take outs)

Eating habits were indicated as having an impact on one’s physical wellness. This could be either eating too much or not eating at all. The change in lifestyle and income could also result in people compromising on their eating habits and diet.

b) Sleeping habits and patterns

Sleep is essential for a person’s health and wellbeing. In the focus groups, (similar to the questionnaire) participants identified their sleeping habits as being negatively impacted. Participants referred to lack of sleep due to being worried about this process.

Lack of sleep was seen as resulting in one being stressed, grumpy and tired, resulting in a negative impact on work performance.

c) Physical health and fitness

Physical exercise was indicated by some participants as something that they still engage in to manage and improve their physical wellness.

4.3.3 MENTAL WELLNESS

Theme 1: Mental and Personal Wellbeing

a) Uncertainty

Similar to the questionnaire respondents, uncertainty was a major issue identified in the focus groups. Responses indicated that people were thinking about the restructuring a lot and thinking about this process and speculating what was going to happen caused a lot of uncertainty for people. There was a perception that whether you were safe or not, the fact that you were uncertain caused a lot of frustration and affected wellness. Uncertainty was also seen by some as contributing to employees looking for employment elsewhere and leaving the company as they couldn't work with this uncertainty.

b) Morale

People mentioned that they felt demoralised by this process and asked themselves why they should continue doing their current job. The morale was low and although they tried to be happy it was difficult as they were not sure what is going to happen. This was a similar finding to the responses in the questionnaire.

c) Stress and Anxiety

One of the most significant impacts on mental wellness was indicated as stress and anxiety. These two aspects were identified by both the questionnaire respondents and the focus groups as being a concern. The uncertainty in this process seemed to contribute to the high levels of stress and anxiety experienced by employees.

4.3.4 SOCIAL WELLNESS

Theme 1: Social and Work Relationships

a) Lack of time

The participants in the focus groups mentioned that the fear of retrenchment resulted in one working harder and probably late hours, therefore no or little time for family or exercise resulted.

b) Loss

Loss was a key factor relating to social wellness. Participants referred to a sense of loss in many aspects. For example, the loss of community and society that could be experienced if an employee had to relocate to another town. Participants also referred to the loss in work relationships, as some employees might be affected and lose their jobs. There were bonds and close relationships formed in the workplace seeing that one spends 8 hours a day, 5 days a week with one's colleagues.

c) Support

Family and friends played a key role in supporting employees during the restructuring process. Talking to people and sharing your concerns and what was happening at work was seen as a way to help reduce the stress. However, some respondents indicated that people did not always tell their families/wives/husbands what was happening at work, as they did not want to cause stress to them. To cope with this process, respondents referred to disengagement as a mechanism they used to separate work and family.

Theme 2: Social Status and Activities

a) Financial Impact

The restructuring was seen as interfering with one's lifestyle and social life due to the financial impact thereof. There was a response that you do not buy luxuries anymore, and instead of buying at Woolworths you will buy at Pick 'n Pay. Participants also realised the importance of having a job and should they lose their job, it would impact on many areas of their lives, for example as stated by another participant: "you can't

afford education for your children, so you can't care for them and you can't look after yourself, all those things". Cutting budgets and saving more were key concepts that kept coming up in the focus group discussions and some participants even attributed spending/saving methods to one's personality i.e. some might put their money into their house bond whereas others might want to spend it all because they do not know if there will be more in future.

4.3.5 SUMMARY

The themes and findings discussed above are summarised below:

- A relationship between the physical, mental and social wellness dimensions was identified.
- The restructuring process was seen as having an impact even beyond the obvious. For example, road rage was seen as a result of one not dealing with one's emotions, but taking them with one and being edgy to a point that one snaps.
- The period of the exercise was seen as a problem in that one could bottle things up and eventually "crack" one day.
- There was a request that management must make sure that the content of all communication was clear and that they endeavour to minimize the doubts amongst employees.
- The time period of this exercise was seen as taking too long. One participant said: "I just want it all to end"
- The issue of using contractors was also a significant problem, as people felt that management was sending mixed signals and not protecting their own internal people. Money could be saved if the company were to stop using contractors
- The possibility of retrenching some people and promoting some was also a cause of concern
- The unknown changes that were still to come were seen as playing a role in the resistance employees were experiencing, and also in people not being motivated to do their work or to learn new things, since things will be changing.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the results of the study and literature is used to verify and better understand some of the concepts. The chapter will look at the dimensions of wellness covered in this study. The quality of data will also be discussed.

5.2 RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE

Over the past three decades many organisations have gone through continual change interventions such as downsizing, re-engineering, outsourcing, mergers and restructuring. The mining industry, for example, is a diverse field that has seen many changes over the past centuries. These have all been done in order to improve the competitiveness and profitability of the organisation. For organisations to survive and grow in the coming years, it is essential that managers respond to the various forces which impact on organisations, for example: coping with organisational change, management of downsizing, redeployment and technological changes (Johnson & Indvik, 1997). The company under study has been through many change initiatives and this is another initiative that has been embarked on. Unfortunately, according to De Klerk (2007) many of these radical changes are accompanied by pain and trauma, decreased morale, decreased commitment, less involvement and loss of trust. The trauma experienced by employees is manifested through symptoms such as fear, anxiety, distrust, withdrawal, rejection, uncertainty, helplessness, and decreased commitment, involvement and loyalty (De Klerk, 2007). These symptoms were evident in the research results and were highlighted by one or more participants in the questionnaire and focus groups. Some of these will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

74% of the participants stated in the questionnaire that the restructuring exercise had an impact on them. The general view from the participants was that although the restructuring exercise was needed, it took a long period of time and had an impact on their wellness. When asked what the purpose of the exercise was, most participants

gave an identical answer, namely that it's a cost saving and reduction exercise and the company wants to optimize and improve on its service delivery. Although most people understood what it was about and why it was initiated, they did not particularly favour or support it.

The possibility of retrenchment was a concept that was discussed by some participants. In transformation and restructuring exercises this is often the case where employees fear job losses and feel that their job security is threatened and even if they are safe they still mourn the loss of those who have left (Ndlovu & Parumasur, 2005). There can be a feeling that now one will be expected to do more with less and will need to adjust to a new organisational structure. Employee morale is often affected in such exercises and this was evident in the study where participants referred to morale and confidence as being negatively impacted. It therefore becomes important to rebuild morale and re-establish the commitment to the organisation through sharing the new vision and mission of the organisation, building and motivating teams.

Some key themes that were identified with regards to the restructuring exercise were communication and trust issues.

Communication

Communication is one of the most significant themes that was identified with regards to the restructuring exercise. It can also be considered to be one of the toughest issues in organisations. No matter how well planned an organisational change program may be, it will not be effectively implemented unless it is communicated to an organisation's staff in such a way that resistance is overcome, fears are lessened, confusion is minimized, and buy-in from all affected parties is secured (Gordon, 2006). This study indicates that the majority of participants felt that there were no open channels of communication in the organisation. The key communication issues identified by the participants were around the lack of communication, the content of communication and the method of communication. Participants also felt that managers were hiding information from them and telling them lies. Ineffective internal communication is a major contributor to the

failure of change initiatives (Kalyal, Not dated). Organisations should encourage open communication and discussion so that these problems can be addressed.

According to Kalyal (Not dated) communication can be used to:

- reduce resistance
- minimize uncertainty and
- gain involvement and commitment as the change progresses
- This in turn improves morale and retention rates (Klein, 1996)
- Role conflict and role ambiguity can also be reduced by providing timely feedback to employees regarding the changes.

It is evident from the above that good communication is crucial during a period of organisational restructuring. When employees and managers are nervous, worried and pressured, they have increased information needs. They deserve to know what is really going on and what is being planned for the future. By not receiving these answers, employees begin to form their own perceptions and mistrust grows. Therefore it is imperative that during changing times everyone continually communicates more actively and openly as one cannot over communicate during a change exercise. This includes the manager, the CEO, and even the Board of Directors. It also includes middle managers, clerical staff and other agents and employees. Change management practitioners have provided some guidelines on how to communicate during change. These include: having a communication plan, communicating consistently, frequently and through multiple channels, communicating the reasons for the change, communicating all you know about the change as quickly as possible, allowing people to ask questions and get clarification and ensuring that leaders and sponsors are around to answer any questions and to be actively involved with the workforce (Heathfield, Not dated).

Trust/Mistrust

There are various definitions of trust. Reina and Reina (in Von der Ohe & Martins, 2010:2) define trust as: “a relationship of mutual confidence in contractual performance, honest communication, expected competence and capacity for unguarded interaction”.

Similarly Robbins (in Von der Ohe & Martins, 2010:2) defines trust as: “the characteristic of high performance teams where members believe in each other’s integrity, character, and ability”. The phenomenon of trust within and among organisations has been the focus of increasing attention on both national and international levels. Continuous changes in the world of work can all have an impact on the employment relations and especially the trust relationships in organisations (Von der Ohe & Martins, 2010).

In this study and especially in the focus group discussion, it was evident that trust has been negatively affected in this restructuring process and therefore there are low levels of trust from the employees with regards to the managers and the whole restructuring process. The participants questioned a lot of the information that they were receiving or not receiving from management. One participant said: “...but we don’t get informed or you know we are kept in the dark so we don’t believe the words we hear”. According to Pennington (in Von der Ohe & Martins, 2010) earning and maintaining the trust of others requires leaders to excel in five areas, namely character, competence, communication, consistency and courage. The construct of trust is linked to the above discussion of communication, which shows that it is crucial for managers to communicate openly and honestly throughout the change exercise. By doing this they help break down resistance, fear and uncertainty. This will thus in turn build more positive feelings of trust. Employees’ trust in their leaders has been found to have many benefits for the organisation, such as improving organisational commitment, team performance and organisational performance (Von der Ohe & Martins, 2010).

5.3 PHYSICAL WELLNESS

Physical wellness was a key issue in this research and the researcher identified four key themes in physical wellness. These included *personal health management*, *mental wellbeing*, *social life and coping mechanisms*. *Personal health management* (nutrition, physical health and fitness and sleeping habits) and *mental wellbeing* were identified as having been impacted the most through this restructuring exercise.

Personal health management

Personal health management looks at aspects of wellness such as nutrition, physical health and fitness and sleeping habits. These are all important in physical wellness as they contribute to a healthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle is defined by Bloch (in Divine & Lepisto, 2005:275) as: “an orientation toward the prevention of health problems and the maximization of personal wellbeing”. A healthy lifestyle incorporates things like healthy eating and exercise.

Physical health and fitness

Physical activity is vital to optimal health. Physical movement and health are essential for the human organism to grow, develop and maintain health. Studies have found an association between regular physical activity and positive lifestyle habits with better health, longevity, quality of life and total wellbeing (Johnson, 2006). Researchers have also found a meaningful relationship between physical exercise and mood states (Derman, Whitesman, Dreyer, Patel, Nossel & Schwellnus, 2010). Physical inactivity has been associated with depression in some cases (Derman *et al.*, 2010).

In the study conducted participants faced a lot of stress and mental strain during this time and this led to an impact in their fitness levels and exercise routines. This was evident as some participants felt that they did not feel like exercising anymore but they would rather sleep. This could contribute to the low morale and depressed moods. Other participants coped with this process by exercising more and ensuring they kept their fitness levels up. People were feeling tired and there was a visible increased level of fatigue. The physical aspect of wellness involves taking care of our bodies and enabling one to function effectively and effortlessly. Fitness is the ability to meet the needs of your lifestyle with ease. It incorporates a healthy diet, regular but moderate exercise as well as weight control and a positive approach to life (Hockey, 1996).

Research has found that an increase in fitness leads to an increase in self esteem, increased energy levels, reduced stress and tension, more productivity, having a better sleeping pattern, enjoying life more and a greater sense of control over the factors that

influence one's life and health, (Hockey, 1996). In their research of fitness and executive leadership; Neck, Mitchell, Manz, Cooper & Thompson (2000) found that physical fitness can prolong one's life, which has tremendous significance for the organisation and executives.

Nutrition

Nutrition, which includes a balanced diet and regular meals, plays a key role in maintaining physical wellness. There has been growing evidence that supports the notion that dietary choices have an influence on mood states and that, for example, depression may have an effect on appetite (increased or decreased) resulting in the decline of nutrition status (Derman *et al.*, 2010). Nutrition was impacted in that participants expressed that the stress experienced during this time led to one eating more or eating less. Also there was an impact in compromising the type of food that one eats by buying less expensive food just so that money could be saved. Not being mindful of the food that one eats could lead to eating more junk and unhealthy food. Hockey (1996) explains the importance of eating well balanced meals consisting of a variety of foods, as this will eliminate certain aspects like lacking energy, stress, having cardiovascular diseases, obesity and excess weight problems and high blood pressure.

Mental wellbeing

In this study stress was identified as affecting personal health and mental wellbeing and due to this it had an effect on physical wellness. Participants mentioned that their nutrition and sleeping habits were influenced by the stress they experienced. Increased stress was seen as contributing to one eating too much and seeking comfort in food and not sleeping enough. Some practical tips of dealing with stress during these times include avoiding cigarette smoking, substance abuse and poor nutrition, as all these contribute to increased stress levels. Van der Merwe (in Human Capital Management, 2006/7) advises that people try and prevent low blood sugar levels by eating regular, small, healthy meals including unrefined carbohydrates, nuts and bananas in the diet. She also recommends exercise (this improves physical and mental wellbeing), sufficient sleep and improved time management.

Social life

This theme identified change of lifestyle and financial impact as some aspects that were impacted. Participants, for example, felt that they had to cut back on eating out and spending money, so that they do not incur huge financial debt. This aspect will be discussed in subsequent sections.

5.4 MENTAL WELLNESS

Mental wellness is a key issue in organisations, especially looking at the pressures and requirements that organisations place on employees. Mental health problems can be a common feature in the workplace as it is estimated that one in six persons is likely to experience a mental health problem (Desai, 2009). This makes it more likely that large organisations may have such cases among its employees. The [World Health Organisation](#) defines mental health as "a being of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (Wikipedia website at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_wellness). It is important to note that mental health is not simply about the absence of mental illness, but it also relates to the presence of feelings of satisfaction and wellbeing. Mental health problems range from mild to more severe conditions and can include anxiety, attention deficit disorder and mood disorders such as depression. If mental health problems are left untreated they can be detrimental to the individual and to his/her performance and productivity within the workplace (Human Capital Management, 2006/2007).

The researcher identified three key themes relating to mental wellness. These included *mental and personal wellbeing, workplace environment and coping mechanisms*.

Mental and personal wellbeing

Participants identified *mental and personal wellbeing* (with identified sub themes including stress and anxiety, morale and uncertainty) as having a major impact on their mental wellness.

Stress

Stress occurs when a person perceives a situation as threatening, harmful or demanding. Stress related problems have been found to be sometimes attributed to the work environment itself with unhealthy relationships, rapid changes in the work environment, long working hours and a lack of job security and safety being major contributing factors (Human Capital Management, 2006/7). Stress not only affects the employee but the economy as well as it has been linked to increased absenteeism, staff turnover, healthcare costs and reduced productivity (Human Capital Management, 2006/7). Participants felt that a restructuring exercise could lead to retrenchments, job loss and have a financial impact on them. The uncertainty in an exercise like this contributed to the experience of stress and anxiety that the employees went through.

Below are some symptoms of stress as identified in Human Capital Management (2007) and also by participants in this research study:

Physical symptoms of work stress

Anxiety, increased heart rate and blood pressure
Physical fatigue and chronic fatigue syndrome
Sleep disturbance

Psychological symptoms of work stress

Anxiety, tension and irritability
Feelings of frustration, anger and resentment
Withdrawal and depression
Reduced effectiveness in communication
Feelings of isolation and alienation
Mental fatigue and poor concentration

Behavioural symptoms of work stress

Procrastination, work avoidance and absenteeism
Lowered performance and productivity
Increased alcohol and drug abuse

Overeating and under eating

Deteriorating relationships with family and friends

To control the stress experienced, it is important to identify the common workplace stressors during this time of restructuring and also assist employees to identify their fears and uncertainties and try to overcome these.

Morale

Morale was a sub theme under Mental and Personal wellbeing which was also identified as being impacted during the restructuring exercise. This has an influence in organisational climate which was discussed earlier. Organisational climate can be defined as: “the shared perceptions, feelings and attitudes that organisational members have about the fundamental elements of the organisation, which reflect the established norms, values and attitudes of the organisation's culture and influences individuals' behaviour positively or negatively” (Castro & Martins, 2010:4). During a change period, employees are prone to feeling disengaged and less committed to the organisation. This is supported by van Dyk, van Rensburg & Tjallinks (2009) who found that feelings of job insecurity also seriously tend to affect the levels of loyalty experienced by employees, as well as their level of commitment towards the organisation. Employee morale plays an important role in the success of any organisation and when it is negative it can impact on many aspects of employee health, wellbeing and productivity. The majority of the participants referred to experiencing a low and negative morale within themselves and also from other employees. Low morale and depressive moods were evident in the participants' work motivation and productivity. Low morale is an example of overt resistance to change (van Tonder, 2004).

It is important that, to make the change successful, the organisation attain the loyalty and commitment of its employees (Michlitsch, 2000). Once it is identified that there is a challenge in any area of wellness, e.g. mental wellness, then organisations will need to implement strategies that will assist employees to get back to their maximum health and wellbeing. Van der Merwe (2011) states that employee wellness will make all the

difference to the bottom line profit margin, therefore wellness and its management is a sound business strategy. The expected results of health and wellness interventions include reduced absenteeism, improved productivity, creativity and higher levels of employee morale (van der Merwe, 2011).

Uncertainty

In today's world of work organisations are operating within a difficult economic environment and in the face of fierce world competition. In order to survive in this environment, organisations have to continuously change and re-invent themselves. This often creates uncertainty and anxiety amongst employees (Ndlovu & Parumasur, 2005). Uncertainty was a significant sub theme that was evident among participants across all dimensions of wellness. Participants did not know how the restructuring exercise was going to affect them, as this was not communicated yet. There were speculations and unconfirmed fears that contributed to feelings of uncertainty amongst most participants. Change in whatever form, whether from process improvements, organisational restructuring, productivity enhancements, reporting relationships or simply relocating to different premises, brings with it feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. Coping through these uncertain times will be challenging for most. Employee concerns will centre on their own financial security, moving out of their comfort zone, mortgage and family obligations and future employment prospects.

Communication is even more vital than usual during times of uncertainty. It can minimize (not completely remove) feelings of uncertainty, unfounded fears and speculation (van Tonder, 2004). There are a number of ways in which employees can be supported and assisted in managing their distress and anxiety (Accessed at <http://www.davcorp.com.au/wpdata/files/27.pdf>). These include:

- Maintain transparency regarding any changes that are taking place
- Communicate the thinking and rationalisation behind proposed changes
- Use a variety of methods to communicate messages to your staff so that information is received
- Ensure your communications are delivered in a timely manner

- Check that your messages have been understood by your team
- Discuss the impact of the proposed changes openly
- Provide opportunities for your team to discuss/debrief their concerns
- Listen to your staff, show empathy, not sympathy!
- Normalise their reactions and responses
- Encourage your staff to look for opportunities and ideas that will assist the business in any cost cutting efforts this will also help to increase their investment in the solution

Career and Goals

As mentioned previously, restructuring exercises come with a lot of changes and uncertainty for employees. Such change initiatives could result in fewer opportunities for promotion and worsened career prospects. These changes are often individual and organisational based and can sometimes contribute to the resistance that employees demonstrate. There are various reasons why employees resist change and these include: misunderstanding and fear of the unknown, climate of mistrust, fear of failure, loss of status and job security. This research indicated career aspirations and goals as aspects that participants believed were under threat. Research by Ashford, Lee & Bobko (in Kalyal, Not dated) indicated that loss of career advancement strongly relates to job insecurity.

Out of the 23 participants completing the questionnaire, 4 mentioned the concern that they had with regards to their career and goals. They mentioned how this affected them mentally as they were worried about how this change would affect their future careers and aspirations within the organisation. Newell and Dopson (in Ndlovu & Parumasur, 2005) found that prolonged downsizing initiatives created a climate of intensified work regimes and a breakdown in the traditional career ladder, and this often resulted in commitment based on fear rather than loyalty to the organisation. A successful change process recognises that a transformation process involves an individual's behaviour and it therefore becomes of paramount importance that change management programs encompass employee involvement techniques and counselling on long term aspirations

and career opportunities to address both individual and organisational needs (Ndlovu & Parumasur, 2005).

Workplace Environment

This theme looked at organisational commitment and also how employees felt about the communication and consultation during this exercise. The theme of communication was discussed in earlier sections, therefore this section will only focus on organisational commitment. During a change period, employees are prone to feeling disengaged and less committed to the organisation. According to Michlitsch (2000) loyalty, or commitment to companies, has been decreasing through the 1990s. It is important that, to make the organisational change successful, the loyalty of employees should be maintained, as there is evidence that loyal employees add to the value of a company (Michlitsch, 2000).

There was evidence provided in the study of some participants being loyal to the company even through these difficult times. One participant said: "I am loyal to the company even though opposition companies want me to work for them". Commitment according to Ford, Weissbein & Plamondon (in Kalyal, Not dated) refers to an employee's attachment to the entire organisation, an organisational subunit, a supervisor or even a change program. Commitment to change refers to "a mindset that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative" Herscovitch & Meyer (in Kalyal, Not dated).

There are several models of commitment to change. These include models by: Conner (1992), Coatsee (1999) and Herscovitch-Meyer (2002).

Connor (in Kalyal, Not dated) refers to a three stage process:

- *Preparation- awareness of change*
- *Acceptance- understanding of change*
- *Commitment- internalization of change*

The above indicated model by Connor (in Kalyal, Not dated) is similar to the ADKAR model of change in Hiatt (2006). The ADKAR model is used to understand change at an individual level. There are five stages of change as indicated in Hiatt (2006):

- i. Awareness of the need for change*
- ii. Desire to make the change happen*
- iii. Knowledge about how to change*
- iv. Ability to implement new skills and behaviours*
- v. Reinforcement to retain the change once it has been made*

An employee moves through all these changes and one stage cannot happen without the previous stage being completed i.e. desire cannot come before awareness and reinforcement cannot come before ability. Having an absence of or weak elements in the ADKAR model can result in employees being more resistant, adapting slower to change, employees reverting to old behaviours and high turnover. When the ADKAR elements are achieved, employees become energised and engaged, more committed to the change and less resistant (Hiatt, 2006).

Coping mechanisms

This sub theme looked at how participants coped with the threat and possibility of change. A restructuring exercise and all the possible changes that employees face bring about uncertainty, an increase in stress and anxiety levels, low levels of morale, poor job performance, increase in absenteeism and staff turnover (Martin & Roodt, Not dated). All these coupled with symptoms such as headaches, muscle aches, nervousness, irritability, and sleep disturbances can all be very disturbing. During times of increased stress, people often look for rapid and easy means of symptom relief. Coping mechanisms are those covert and overt behaviours that a person uses to alleviate and remove stress or threat (van Tonder, 2004). It is about managing the situations that are viewed as potentially harmful or stressful. Coping mechanisms are dependent on several factors which can include the individual's cognitive appraisal of the situation, available coping resources and other personal factors such as beliefs and values (van Tonder, 2004). In the study participants referred to several coping mechanisms, some positive and some negative. For example there was the comment

that someone could turn to substance abuse such as alcohol just to try and deal with the situation. Others mentioned overeating or under eating and how this affects their diet. Several researches warn people against these behaviours and in order to optimize wellness they encourage people to eat healthy, exercise more and relax (van der Merwe, 2009). Some of the participants referred to positive coping mechanisms such as prayer, reading motivational books, taking each day one at a time. Their children and the support received from them were seen as a great help.

5.5 SOCIAL WELLNESS

Research indicated that there are other sources of stress outside work, for example, your spouse, your children and life and these have been identified as having an impact on one's social wellness during restructuring exercise changes (Johnson & Indvik, 1997). Social wellness relates to being comfortable, accepting others and sustaining healthy relationships (Botha, 2007:29). Ramsey and Smit (in Temane & Wissing, 2006) describe social wellness as being characterised by social support and activity, personal interaction and life satisfaction. This study indicated that although there was an impact on the social wellness of participants, this dimension seems to have the least impact on them. There were three key themes identified under this dimension; namely *social and work relationships*, *social status and activities* and *mental wellbeing*. The themes social and work relationships and social status and activities were identified as having been impacted the most in the restructuring exercise.

Social and work relationships

This theme looked at social and work relationships and identified important themes such as *lack of time*, *support and loss*. Relationships (both work and social) and the quality of those relationships is a key aspect to social wellness. When change does occur it can bring new opportunities for personal growth, accomplishment and organisational success, but it also causes feelings of sadness, loss, and anxiety about the future. Social wellness is about having positive interactions with and enjoying being with others. One of the characteristics of social wellness is about recognizing the need for close relationships and intimacy and fostering these. During stressful times these

interactions can be impacted. Participants mentioned that one of the activities that was impacted, was the time spent with family and friends. Participants mentioned spending less time with family and friends and also experienced a decrease in the time spent socialising. One participant mentioned that because his life was imbalanced at this point in time, it made him to be more impatient and his sense of care for others was limited. This is supported by findings from research done on nursing tutors where researchers found that the stress brought about by a downsizing experience contributed to strained family, marital and friendship relationships (van Dyk, van Rensburg & Tjallinks, 2009).

Having *supportive relationships* and also playing a supportive role contributes to one's social wellness. The restructuring exercise did not just impact people negatively. It also impacted some participants positively in that it brought some families closer together and it encouraged communication and closer relationships with others. Orman (1995-2010) advises that during a major change in the organisation people must not neglect their family. Spouses, children and other family members can be excellent sources of emotional support when times are tough at work, but they will not be in a very loving or supportive mood if all you do is neglect them in favor of your job (at <http://www.stresscure.com/jobstress/reorg.html>). Strausser and Phillips (in van Dyk *et al.*, 2009) supported this by indicating it was extremely important that during change one receives support from one's peer group, family and partners.

Social status and activities

Holistic wellness is regarded as a complete state of wellbeing or of integrated optimal living in different spheres of life, including the physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, work and social spheres (Barnard, Peters & Muller, 2010). The financial aspect of one's life may be included as an additional wellness dimension as it also affects many other spheres of life, such as family and social life. This theme relates to the sub themes of *financial impact and voluntary projects*. The restructuring exercise impacted on participants in that they tended to worry about the future, how they will sustain their lifestyle and maintain their families. For some it resulted in spending less and saving more with an emphasis on not incurring any more financial debt.

Financial pressure can be a major source of stress in the workplace. Employees' debt and financial problems can become the organisation's problem due to the fact that such strain affects employees' productivity and their ability to function optimally (Bosman in Barnard, *et al.*, 2010). The organisation can reduce financial stress and improve productivity by assisting employees to attain better financial wellbeing during these critical times. Cox (in Barnard *et al.*, 2010: 2) defines financial wellbeing as: "subjective perceptions and objective indicators of individuals' personal financial status". Financial health is about the ability to manage income and expenses, having a financial plan, savings and also having a manageable debt situation. Companies should have wellness interventions that focus on enhancing financial health as a core area to be addressed and employee assistance programs should have financial health as an integral part of it.

5.6 BIOGRAPHICAL CORRELATES

Most respondents (37%) in both the questionnaire and focus group were employees in the age group 30-39 years, with a tenure of less than 5 years and mostly being from African and White groups. There were no significant differences noticed in the responses from this group compared to the rest of the participants. Most employees, despite age, gender, profession and tenure differences provided largely similar responses in relation to the research questions.

5.7 QUALITY OF DATA

5.7.1 Issues of validity and reliability

Reliability and validity of data are important in any research study. The terms reliability and validity are essential criterion for quality in quantitative paradigms, however the terms Credibility, Neutrality or Confirmability, Consistency or Dependability and Applicability or Transferability are used in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba in Golafshani, 2003). These are essential criteria to quality. Additionally, trustworthiness is crucial to ensure reliability in qualitative research. With qualitative analysis one does not

refer to it as internal and external validity but rather as Credibility and Transferability, respectively.

In the data collection process the researcher followed a two phased approach, utilising a questionnaire and also conducting focus group discussions. The first phase involved sending the participants an open ended questionnaire that asked them to indicate the factors that influenced their physical, mental and social wellness during the restructuring exercise. In this exercise the researcher sent the questionnaire via email to respondents and as a result one gets to see the respondent's name (or at least the email address). This method can thus to a certain extent compromise validity of the questionnaire, as confidentiality is not completely guaranteed. The researcher did assure the participants that no personal identifying characteristics will be revealed and that results will not reflect individual reports but will be a collection of all the information received. The second phase involved two focus group discussions that were held, aiming to further explore the wellness concepts. This was done to provide more information and clarity on the themes found in the first phase. This was also to ensure that the focus group would assist in yielding the data necessary to address the purpose of the study.

Below is a discussion of the terms Credibility, Neutrality or Confirmability, Consistency or Dependability and Applicability or Transferability which are normally used in qualitative research.

5.7.2 Credibility

Researchers in both quantitative and qualitative research need to test and demonstrate that these studies are credible. Credibility also known as internal validity involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research (at www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualval.php). Participants are the only ones who can judge the credibility of the results since the purpose in qualitative research is to understand or describe the phenomena of interest from the participant's view. Credibility was ensured through data collection where relevant and non relevant information was

gathered and interpreted. The researcher kept all personal information collected right from the beginning and compared the data as the research progressed. This also helped to see how initial assumptions have changed over the course of the study. Credibility was also achieved through triangulation, i.e. collection of information through asking different questions, looking for different sources and using different methods. The researcher used a questionnaire and focus groups which are similar to interviews and also involve observation mechanisms.

5.7.3 Neutrality or Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others (Lincoln & Guba in Golafshani, 2003). The researcher used different methods and has kept all data and literature relevant to this study.

5.7.4 Consistency or Dependability

To be more specific with the concept of reliability in qualitative research, Lincoln & Guba (in Golafshani, 2003) use the concept “dependability” in qualitative research which closely corresponds to the notion of “reliability” in quantitative research. They emphasize “inquiry audit” as a measure used to enhance the dependability of qualitative research. The researcher is responsible for describing the changes that occur in the setting and how these changes affected the way the researcher approached the study.

5.7.5 Applicability or Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results can be generalised or transferred to other contexts or settings (Accessed at www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualval.php). With qualitative research it does not necessarily have to mean that the result of one research study has to be relevant or generalisable to another research study, as qualitative findings are best generalisable to theories and not to overall populations. The onus of determining transferability rests on the researcher. The following two strategies for transferability were used in this research study, namely thick description (example) and purposive sampling (by carefully selecting the participants who could provide relevant information).

5.7.6 Trustworthiness

To ensure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial. Seale (in Golafshani, 2003: 601) indicated that while establishing good quality studies through reliability and validity in qualitative research, the “trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability”.

According to Ratcliff (1995) reliability in qualitative research can be established by:

- Multiple viewings of videotape recordings-by the same person or different people
- Multiple listening of audio tape recordings-by the same person or different people
- Multiple transcriptions of audio tape recordings-by the same person or different people

Trustworthiness in this study was gained through triangulation by multiple listening of the audio tape recordings and transcribing word for word what was discussed in the focus groups. The researcher tested and discussed some of this information with peers in this field which also helped with trustworthiness. If the trustworthiness of a study can be increased, then more credible results will be found and this may lead to generalisability which is suggested by Stenbacka (in Golafshani, 2003) as a structure for doing and documenting high quality qualitative research.

5.8 CONCLUSION

South Africa is currently undergoing transformation constitutionally, socially and economically. The same can be said of most organisations. Change is a way of life and the ability to manage change is a key factor in organisational survival and effectiveness. This is because of the huge impact that change initiatives can have on the organisation in particular on employee wellbeing and productivity. In this chapter various themes under restructuring and the dimensions of wellness were discussed. The chapter also

discussed the research findings that reflect that all wellness areas were significantly impacted by the organisation restructuring exercise.

CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGING CHANGE AND WELLNESS

This chapter looks at ways of managing change through two key methods, namely the manager acting as a change agent and also the use of employee wellness management strategies such as Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP's). The second part of the chapter will focus on limitations of this study and recommendations for future research.

The recommendations discussed below are based on some of the findings of the study. There are several factors to consider when implementing a restructuring exercise. In order for the organisation to emerge successful it needs to ensure that the change process is managed appropriately by leaders with the right skills and competencies and also by ensuring that employees' wellness is taken care of.

6.1.1 Role of managers and leaders as change agents

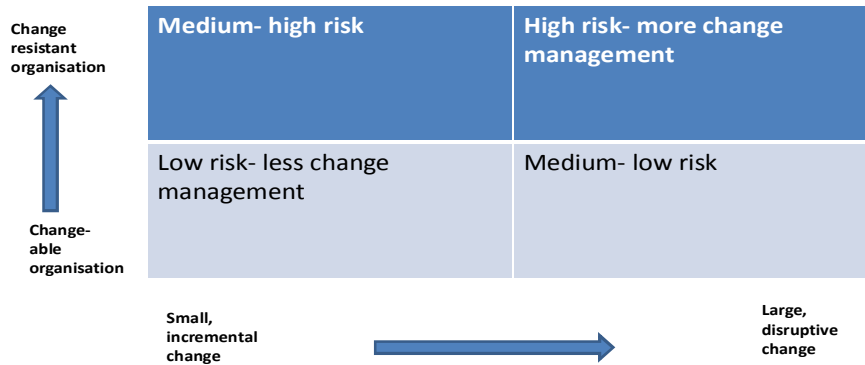
Organisational restructuring can be a traumatic process for employees and it is important that leaders and managers act as change agents who can successfully take employees through this change. Leaders cannot eliminate suffering or people's emotions but they can be instrumental in helping employees through this process. De Klerk (2007:47) indicates the importance of positive leadership and that those leaders need to be able to lead through difficult times by:

- creating a more positive mood
- greater engagement and
- Improved performance

Below are two proposed models to assist leaders to manage the change process. Figure 4 depicts change management scaling where one needs to assess the degree of risk that the organisation faces (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). This assessment will tell you the depth and breadth of the change management effort. Figure 5 is a simple and straightforward 11 step model for managing the change process (Gilley, 2001). It is important to note that although the phases are distinct, they may overlap throughout the process.

Figure 4: Change Management Scaling

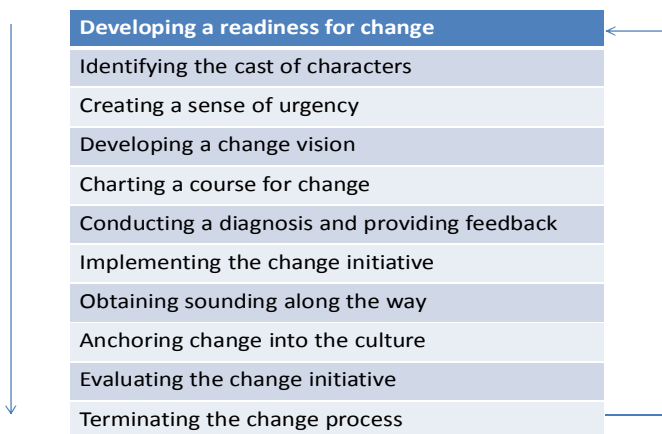
Change Management Scaling



Source: Change Management (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003)

Figure 5: 11 Step Model for Managing the Change Process

Managing the Change process



Source: The manager as a change agent (Gilley, 2001)

When managing the change process it is important for change leaders and management to know that employees move through different stages of change and then manage these accordingly. Below are the stages of change that employees may go through (Gilley, 2001):

Denial → **Resistance** → **Exploration** → **Commitment**

Denial: the change is perceived as something that will happen to others, and the employee feels comfortable saying things like “others will have to change but it won’t affect me” (Gilley, 2001).

Resistance: When change is introduced people tend to feel uncomfortable. Therefore resistance is a predictable, natural and necessary part of this process. Employees tend to resist due to several reasons, such as when they are not well informed, they begin to form their own perceptions about decisions being made and any unaddressed fears and uncertainties can contribute to this resistance (Gilley, 2001).

Exploration: Progress is realised at this stage and employees begin to accept the change. In this state of change the realities of change are perceived more positively than negatively. Individuals go into a *‘hopeful adoption’* period where they accept the reality of the change that is occurring and can start seeking and understanding the positive possibilities of change (Gilley, 2001).

Commitment: The employee accepts the change and is fully committed to the new way of doing things. This is where organisations can utilize collective energies and finally realise the full positive impact of the change initiative (Gilley, 2001).

It will be important to have mechanisms and strategies for dealing with all these stages so that the organisation can move people from the stage of denial to commitment. Organisations can help employees move forward by dealing honestly and openly with the issues at hand and also providing support to the employees.

Some ways of supporting employees include but are not limited to (Gilley, 2001):

- Confront the employee’s behaviour

- Help them realize what they are really feeling
- Provide as much information as you can, communicate why the change is happening
- Listen to employee's concerns
- Help employees stay focused on what lies ahead, not what has gone before
- Help employees focus their energies in positive ways
- Help employees to work together to take action, to learn, to plan and to develop responses to change
- Acknowledge employee's efforts and accomplishments
- Reflect on lessons learnt that will help the team to manage future change

Communication was a key theme identified and it is recommended that during change exercises communication strategies are put in place. This should involve all employees affected and not affected by the change. Relevant information should be available at employees' requests and meetings conducted as regularly as needed. Management at all levels should be visible and they should communicate as openly and frequently as possible

6.1.2 Wellness Strategies: Employee Wellness Programmes/Employee Assistance Programmes

Wellness is a broad concept that involves many dimensions. In this study physical, mental and social wellness were looked at. The results and discussion chapters of this study have indicated that the restructuring exercise has significantly impacted on these and several other aspects. Organisations are becoming more aware of the issues related to employee wellness or wellbeing and there is an increased interest in integrating wellness activities with employers' responsibilities. The move towards healthy workplaces has led to various programmes such as employee wellness programmes/employee assistance programmes being introduced in organisations. The wellness of an employee can influence the wellness of the organisation and vice versa. Employee wellness contributes to the organisation's bottom line and an organisation

that proactively invests time and resources in an employee wellness culture can expect a positive return on investment (Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2011).

According to Sieberhagen *et al.* (2011) and Sherman (1990), return on investment can include the following benefits as indicated in the table below:

Table 8: Benefits of wellness programs:

• Lower health costs
• Less absenteeism
• Healthier employees
• Fewer accidents
• Increased performance and productivity
• Lower staff turnover
• Higher employee morale

Wellness programmes are intervention strategies intended to promote the wellbeing of employees. They can be curative or preventative in nature. The purpose of introducing a wellness programme in an organisation is to create an awareness of wellness issues, to facilitate personal change and health management and to promote a healthy and supportive workplace (Sieberhagen *et al.*, 2011). Wellness programmes help employees achieve and maintain good physical and mental health. Although employers have a primary responsibility to look after their employees, the introduction of a EWP allows employees to take charge of and responsibility for their own wellbeing.

Companies are beginning to place the human factor high on their agendas through the development of wellness programs. A wellness program that can be recommended is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This helps organisations to improve and

maintain employees' health and productivity by addressing the key issues that employees are facing during this changing time.

An EAP may be defined as:

“A worksite based program designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired personal concerns, but not limited to: health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other concerns which may adversely affected employee job productivity” (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 1999:5).

EAPs have been found to play a role in improving employees' performance by improving their health, mental health and life management skills (Harper, 1999). An EAP is a programme that covers the identification, assessment, monitoring, referral, counselling, and follow up activities that aim at addressing employees' problems. An EAP's services are usually free to the employee and their household members, having been pre-paid by the employer. Employees and their household members may use EAPs to help manage issues in their work and personal lives. EAP counsellors typically provide assessment, support, and, if needed, referrals to additional resources (Wikipedia website at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employeeassistanceprogram>). The issues for which EAPs provide support vary, but examples include:

- substance abuse
- safe working environment
- emotional distress
- major life events, including births, accidents and deaths
- health care concerns
- financial or legal concerns
- family/personal relationship issues
- work relationship issues

(Wikipedia website at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employee_assistance_program)

6.1.3 Summary of wellness strategies

It is recommended that wellness programs (including the EAP) and actions that can be effective during this restructuring exercise need to address the following aspects (Hiestermann, 1999; Sherman, 1990):

1. Assisting management to understand the impact of restructuring
2. Providing management with skills to cope with their own stress
3. Assessing whether employees understand the reasons for the restructuring exercise
4. Assessment of psycho-emotional responses, preparation for the changes that will follow in the organisation and the lifestyle of the employee
5. Involvement of the employee's dependants in counseling as often as possible
6. Assistance to develop a healthy self image by focusing on physical and mental wellness of the employee
7. Assistance with fitness and exercise, e.g.:
 - relaxation skills
 - aerobic classes
 - group exercise sessions
 - group health club membership
8. Assistance with healthy nutrition and weight control
 - availability of nutritious foods in the company cafeteria and vending machines
 - availability of nutrition information where food is sold
 - nutritious meal planning on a low budget

9. Assistance to develop intellectual skills, e.g. problem solving skills, goal setting, budgeting skills.

10. Assistance in the development of coping and stress management:

- assertiveness training
- self monitoring techniques
- coping with occupational stressors
- risk factors and response to stress
- support system development
- mental health support
- counselling

6.2 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.2.1 Possible limitations and recommendations for future research

This study was conducted in a specific organisation with a limited number of participants from the Corporate Office and therefore the findings should not be generalised to other middle managers and specialists in other organisational contexts without a degree of caution. The response rate was low. Future research can use larger samples and also focus on a different industry or organisational context. It will be interesting to explore whether similar or comparable results would have been found in other industries too.

Another important limitation to consider is that this research was conducted at a specific stage during the restructuring exercise. The negative responses could relate to this aspect, in that although there was communication about the exercise, there were no final decisions taken or implemented yet. Employees were in a waiting period and they did not know what was going to happen to them. A recommendation is that this kind of research is undertaken at a later stage of the restructuring process when all changes are implemented. In this case this was however not possible due to the time factor from the researcher's side (completion of the study) and delays within the organisation.

A third limitation might have been that of participant effect. Since the data was collected by means of a questionnaire and focus groups, the participants may have caused bias by, e.g. not divulging the true extent of their experiences.

6.3 CONCLUSION

As discussed in this study, organisations are constantly changing due to several reasons, such as cost cutting, increasing productivity, economic demands and changes. These were amongst some of the reasons taken by the company to engage in a restructuring exercise. Organisational restructuring is not always an easy process as it brings about many different challenges and opportunities. The greatest obstacle to change management was identified by Hiatt & Creasy (2003) as employee and staff resistance. Other obstacles included middle management resistance, poor executive sponsorship, limited time, budget and resources, corporate politics. It is evident that for a company to be successful, it must have the "right" people, as employees are an important component to successfully implementing any change.

Understanding the experiences of employees during a restructuring exercise is important to ensure that effective employee wellness and support services are available to employees. This in turn will help in improving the performance and productivity of employees which can result in a more successful change exercise. This study indicated various wellness factors that have been impacted upon by this restructuring exercise and it is believed that this study has contributed to understanding these aspects that influence middle managers and specialists employees in a mining company. Looking at the feedback from employees it is clear that the role of managers is of primary importance and that effective communication, participation and counselling should be implemented during a change process.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Letter to organisation



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Denkleiers • Leading Minds • Dikgopolo tša Dihlalefi

Department Menslikehulpbronbestuur

Nagraadse programme

www.up.ac.za/mhb

Department of Human Resource Management

Postgraduate programmes

www.up.ac.za/hrm

+27(0) 12-420-3108

+27(0)12-420-3574

16 January 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Wendy Vundla and I am a Masters student from the Department of Human Resource Management at the University of Pretoria. As part of the degree I am conducting research on the impact of a restructuring exercise on middle managers' wellness. Three aspects of wellness will be studied; physical, mental and social wellness within the organisations' restructuring exercise. I would like to request permission to approach the middle managers in your organisation to invite them to participate.

Participation in this research will involve completing the attached questionnaire, taking part in an individual interview and the possibility of being part of a focus group discussion. Participation is completely voluntary and participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for

participating or not participating in this research. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times, and the questionnaire and interview data will not be seen by anyone except the researcher. In general, only general trends will be included in the research report and no individual results will be reported. A one page feedback sheet of these trends will be posted at the relevant organisations or will be given to participants on request.

I would appreciate it if you could please grant me permission to gain access to the middle managers to request their participation. We hope that the results of this research will enable us to gain a fuller understanding of the concept of wellness within a corporate mining environment during a restructuring exercise and that it will assist organisations to develop programs to better assist this group of employees.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Vundla
University of Pretoria
072 380 2564

APPENDIX B: Permission letter from Organisation

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Masters in Industrial Psychology (Research Essay)

This is to confirm that Wendy Thembie Vundla is employed by Exxaro and will be doing her Masters Research Essay with the company. Her topic is: **The impact of an organisational restructuring exercise on the wellness of middle managers in a mining company**

The company grants her the permission to proceed with the research and will assist her with obtaining the necessary information to complete the research essay.

Pierre Cloete who is the Wellness Specialist at Exxaro will act as the above mentioned student's research mentor. He can be contacted on 012 307 3225 or email at pierre.cloete@exxaro.com

Regards



Mr S Mookhey

Group Manager: Logistics

Siyaya Change Management Leader

Exxaro Resources


Roger Dyason Road, Pretoria West, 0183 | PO Box 9229, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa | Tel: +27 12 307 5000 | Fax: +27 12 323 3400 | www.exxaro.com
Exxaro Resources Ltd, Reg No. 2000/011076/06 | Directors: Dr D Konar (Chairman), SA Nkosi (Chief Executive Officer), WA de Klerk (Financial Director)
JJ Geldenhuys, CI Gellifih, U Khumalo, N Langeni, VZ Mtambo, RP Mohring, NL Sowazi, J van Rooyen, D Zithlangu
Company Secretary: MS Viljoen

APPENDIX C: Informed consent form and letter of introduction (to participants)



Faculty of Economic and
Management Sciences

Informed consent for participation in an academic research study

Dept. of Human Resources Management

Title of the study

The impact of an organisational restructuring exercise on the wellness of middle
managers in a mining company

Research conducted by:

Ms. W.T Vundla (28462743)

Cell: 072 380 2564

Dear Respondent

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Wendy Vundla a Masters student from the Department of Human Resource Management at the University of Pretoria.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of a restructuring exercise on the wellness of middle managers in a mining company. Three aspects of wellness will be studied; physical, mental and social wellness within the organisations' restructuring exercise. This study has a purely academic nature and participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged from partaking.

Please note the following:

This study involves an anonymous survey. Your name will not appear on the questionnaire and the answers you give will be treated as strictly confidential. You cannot be identified in person based on the answers you give.

- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.
- Please answer the questions in the attached questionnaire as completely and honestly as possible. This should not take more than 20 minutes of your time
- Please note, once all questionnaires are collected and if there is a need the researcher will schedule an individual interview with you in order to clarify and gain a deeper understanding of your comments in the questionnaire.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.
- Please contact my study leader, Prof Hein Brand (012) 420 3108 if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above.
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.
- By completing and sending the questionnaire back this will be deemed as consent

Respondent's signature

Date

APPENDIX D: Self compiled questionnaire

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

The researcher is looking at the impact of a restructuring exercise on the wellness of middle managers. The aim of this interview is to learn about your experience and the factors influencing your wellness. This information will be used strictly for research purposes.

Instructions:

This is an unstructured interview with the researcher. Kindly answer the below questions in as much detail as possible.

Please note, there are no right or wrong answers

SECTION A

Please provide the following biographical information:

AGE: _____

GENDER: _____

RACE: _____

QUALIFICATIONS: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

GRADING: _____

DEPARTMENT: _____

YEARS AT COMPANY: _____

SECTION B

Below are some definitions of the different dimensions of wellness. These will assist you to answer the below questions but should not limit you in your responses.

- **Physical wellness:** encompasses knowledge regarding good nutrition, physical activity and general lifestyle” (cited in Gauche, 2007). The physical dimension involves cardiovascular flexibility and strength, regular physical activity, knowledge about food

and nutrition and medical self-care and discourages the use of drugs and excessive alcohol consumption

- **Mental wellness:**The [World Health Organization](#) defines mental health as "a being of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community“
- **Social wellness:** wellness is about contributing to one's human and physical environment to the common welfare of one's community. Ramsey & Smit (in Temane & Wissing, 2006) describe social wellness as being characterised by social support and activity, personal interaction and life satisfaction. Developing and building close friendships and intimacy, practicing empathy and effective listening, caring for others and for the common good, and allowing others to care for you are all part of social wellness.

1. Do you think that the restructuring process has an impact on your wellness? What is your experience of this process/impact? Please elaborate on your answer.

2. What do you understand by the term physical wellness?

Do you think your physical wellness is being impacted during this restructuring exercise? If yes, please explain how?

3. What do you understand by the term mental wellness?

Do you think your mental wellness is being impacted during this restructuring exercise? If yes, please explain how?

4. What do you understand by the term social wellness?

Do you think your social wellness is being impacted during this restructuring exercise? If yes, please explain how?

5. Are there any other thoughts or experiences that you would like to share with the researcher.

APPENDIX E: Data from the questionnaire and focus groups

Data from Questionnaires

QUESTION 1

-Being one of the employees affected by the restructuring and the uncertainty that goes with it, the stress and lack of transparency in the whole process is getting to me and making me feel not good enough for the job I am doing. On the other hand being at the age I am and the fact that I am still in the company after 22 years and many restructuring processes later, makes me thankful that I could have been a survivor of all the changes that have taken place during the 22 years I have been working at Iscor/Kumba/Exxaro.

-No, our department is self sustaining and has all the expertise with the permanent employees. i.e. our department is not a department of contractor managers. Therefore 1. the impact of losing the position would be low (consulting work will viable) 2. The company cannot really afford to lose our expertise

-Yes, Your levels of uncertainty increases resulting in increase of feelings of anxiousness and stress. Which can impact negatively on ones health and wellness. Increase levels of stress can result in weight loss, heart conditions, etc.

-It definitely impact on the mental wellness. Additional insecurity bring along additional stress. That in turn has a physical impact. Adrenalin released due to the stress levels will result that the body need to cope with the adrenalin. Should there not be a physical a reducing of the adrenalin (Physical exercise) this will definitely impact on the physical well being. Stress levels and levels of anxiety if not dealt with will lead to eruptions and this will disturb the social wellness. First of all towards the family and because of the shame afterwards the withdrawn from social environment will lead to more social disruption.

- Being one of the employees affected by the restructuring and the uncertainty that goes with it, the stress and lack of transparency in the whole process is getting to me and making me feel not good enough for the job I am doing.

On the other hand being at the age I am and the fact that I am still in the company after 22 years and many restructuring processes later, makes me thankful that I could have been a survivor of all the changes that have taken place during the 22 years I have been working at Iscor/Kumba/Exxaro.

- No, our department is self sustaining and has all the expertise with the permanent employees. i.e. our department is not a department of contractor managers. Therefore 1. the impact of losing the position would be low (consulting work will viable) 2. The company cannot really afford to lose our expertise

- Yes, Your levels of uncertainty increases resulting in increase of feelings of anxiousness and stress. Which can impact negatively on ones health and wellness. Increase levels of stress can result in weight loss, heart conditions, etc.

- YES;

All my levels of wellness have been negatively affected due to:

Delayed and inconclusive information: Fear of the unknown, one being unable to plan or proactively deal with what could be the consequences of this restructuring and also be there for my colleagues.

Low morale and low service delivery (pre-controls before my team can pay vendors) negative impacting on our service delivery which is to pay our vendors according to payment terms agreed.

One cannot determine if we battle now with the current structure, how possible will we cope with an increase in workload (from other BUs, and the decrease in personnel who are to perform the increased tasks).

Technology and phasing out of retrenched personnel - not sure if this was considered because with very change or new technology, there are always teething problems..

Non delivery or delay in query resolution by my “stressing colleagues” had a direct impact on my take home.

- Sometimes, as at times I feel a bit tired and I would love to go to the gym as I believe this will help alleviate this challenge.

- Yes, as it brings insecurity and more work as we are reluctant to fill current vacancies.

- No, it does not have an impact on my wellness; I think I will survive any outcome. The only problem is the prolonged uncertainty surrounding the whole process. This does result in an occasional frustration (the not knowing factor).

- Yes, cause it forces you to think about the risk of being retrenched/unemployed. This on it’s own leads to stress or even depression.

- Yes.

Mental: I was looking out for a vacancy on a job grading higher than my current position, but after hearing the proposed changes in the restructuring process, the chances are slim that I will be able to find something in the near future in our company. This has a negative impact on my future plans and goals. However, being highly qualified gives me an edge over the other people in my current grading when retrenchments are considered.

Social: Being part of a team, I realized that it must be very hard for individuals who are breadwinners or single parents or close to retirement when retrenchments are on the table, as they have no one to lean on financially in such times.

- Of course yes, restructuring has an impact in my wellness. Exxaro talks more about optimising, which means that discomfort activities such as redeployment, relocation, down grading and retrenchments are involved. Currently less is being said about how exactly this will unfold, which means that it works on a “let’s wait and see principle. If this restructuring happens, at least one or more of the above activities will happen, which will have an impact on my wellness. The severity of the impact will mostly depend on which of the discomfort activity(ies) are involved i.e. If the salary cut (down grading) occurs, one will have to change the lifestyle which creates some unhappiness. If the retrenchment happens, then serious consequences will happen because at this stage, I have long term debts such as a bond, vehicle, etc which if the installments are skipped, then repossession is guaranteed which can have some disastrous consequences.

- No

This is the 5th time I am going through this and this one it worst I have ever seen, so I do not think their will come much of it or that is going to be sustainable

- Yes, it has. For more than a year we have been aware of the re-structuring and possible retrenchments. Since nobody could confirm if we were going to be affected or not, the “not knowing” adds to ones stress levels.

- Initially yes, but after realising that I was not affected by the restructuring programme, I was relieved. As much as I am aware that it happening and might affect many, the process hasn’t really hit home yet as its still early stages.

- Yes, it will impact my wellbeing on things family, financial and socially. The reason is if the position is downgraded then I’ll be benchmarked with the lower position. The restructuring will change my life behaviour from luxury life or well balanced life to lower.

QUESTION 2: Physical Wellness

-Apart from the uncertainty my physical wellness have not been influenced very much. I work out every day which is very good and try and stick to balanced diet and lifestyle.

-I don't know

-Increase levels of stress impacts ones physical wellness by inducing increased levels of fatigue, impacting on ones physical body. ie you don't want to go to the gym or do physical activities due to the increase in stress and fatigue resulting impacting on the physical body and making it more prone to illness and disease. Increase in stress can also result in one eating too much resulting in negative weight gain thereby impacting on the physical wellness of oneself.

- Because of the mental impact (Doubt in oneself, low esteem, why? what did I do? Etc) the spirital draw one down on physical activities. Loss of motivation to act and do something, that in turn is exerted on the physical. Thus with the physical being drawn down, low activity the physical wellness will decline within time.

Facto that influence the physical wellness is time/length of restructuring process.

- Apart from the uncertainty my physical wellness have not been influenced very much. I work out every day which is very good and try and stick to balanced diet and lifestyle.

- Increase levels of stress impacts ones physical wellness by inducing increased levels of fatigue, impacting on ones physical body. ie you don't want to go to the gym or do physical activities due to the increase in stress and fatigue resulting impacting on the physical body and making it more prone to illness and disease. Increase in stress can also result in one eating too much resulting in negative weight gain thereby impacting on the physical wellness of oneself.

- Low morale all round; low performance; indirectly influencing team and my health due to normal day to day job stressors.

- Emotionally, this is challenging as the restructuring process is taking too long, there is no clear direction and I feel management is not being honest with the Exxaro employees hence rumours beginning to surface. I wish they could be honest – we only had one brief this year via the Exxaro newsletter (Xxlpore). There is no interaction between management and staff. We are just left hanging!

Just looking around – one can sense the feeling of despondency, physically people are drained, when greeting people the response is “down”, people are looking forward to Fridays! The morale is down. Some have lost interest in their jobs as they were not included in the new structure that has been proposed (this affects the physical wellness, social wellness and mental wellness of a person)

- Tension headaches (stress to get through work), lots of coffee (to keep awake), not a lot of sleep (take work home), not 'lus' for exercises (rather sleep).

- I disengage when I leave the work premises and focus on myself and family. Everything about work is attended when I enter the premises of Exxaro. The other thing I exercise regularly.

- I don't think my physical wellness was influenced in this process. I guess you could argue that eating habits could be influenced firstly by seeking comfort in food and secondly by cutting back on luxuries and in the end switching to less expensive but often less healthy food. However, this has not been the case for me.

The same could be said for exercising and medical expenditure where people cut back on these expenses or time spent on it, and compromise their physical wellbeing. Again, this is not relevant for me personally.

- Restructuring will always affect the physical wellness of any person and I am not immune from that. It has a lot of uncertainties. During the restructuring process, one changes the lifestyle, trying to save money in case the undesirable happens. Lifestyle is highly influenced by the income and if the income is affected, the lifestyle changes. We get demotivated, energy level goes drops, and this will impact on our health. There is no extra cash to apy for addional medical requirements because our risk tolerance differs, some might sit on depressants for

some time. However, some will resort to the substance abuse such as alcohol. Therefore the restructuring definitely has an impact on us.

- In my case, as discussed in question 1, my stress levels increased. If I feel stressed it transfers to all aspects of my life and indirectly affects my training schedules at the gym.
- The physical part might be redeployment which will result to relocate unexpected to secure the employment. And be far away from the family its difficult part as I'm used to stay with them on a fulltime basis which may result in stressing not eating, weight loss.

QUESTION 3: Mental Wellness

-At the moment I wouldn't say my mental wellness is being affected that much, by exercising and keeping fit I try not to think about it too much. Being depressed won't help but I am very worried about the financial side. When we were first told how the restructuring was going to affect us, I was very emotional and angry but have since then realized that there isn't much we can do about it. I am thankful that I could survive and be here at this stage of my life. I just think that the whole process was done without input from the people involved. Input after the fact is not helpful.

-I don't know

- Increase in uncertainty impacts on ones mental wellness. Increase the levels of stress thereby impacting on ones mental health.
- The size/magnitude of the restructuring – If it is small and focussed on a small group outside your sphere, less influence. If the total organisation and major shedding chances of redeployment is less.

Process that is followed during the restructuring – Short fast process is less painful that long stretched period of uncertainty

Time of the year that the restructuring happens. If middle of year one has chance of employment soon. If October then one will have to wait because recruitment process, natural employment processes start at Jan will filling at 1 March etc.

Marco factors - Total economical environment- If in recession chances for employment is slim, BEE etc.

Micro environment factors – Household factors i.e current debt ratio and bond payments etc.

-At the moment I wouldn't say my mental wellness is being affected that much, by exercising and keeping fit I try not to think about it too much. Being depressed won't help but I am very worried about the financial side. When we were first told how the restructuring was going to affect us, I was very emotional and angry but have since then realized that there isn't much we can do about it. I am thankful that I could survive and be here at this stage of my life. I just think that the whole process was done without input from the people involved. Input after the fact is not helpful.

- Increase in uncertainty impacts on ones mental wellness. Increase the levels of stress thereby impacting on ones mental health.
- With the current structure; we are coping nor working as we should due to lack of support or commitment from some of the centers. The pre-controls are not working as they should hence we are a query department instead of the accounts payment centre.

Whenever things go wrong, the eyes are on us and not on the root causes (end users or material management

I often have sleepless nights just thinking of how we can clear our current backlog and be ready for the new structure and its processes; which will come with its teething problems.

Systems and processes would be there for the new structure. However, without commitment, support and ownership form all stake holders and appropriate phasing in of these, there is change of having chaos before there is order.

- Prayer, reading my Bible, engaging in positive discussions keeps my mental wellness alright. This is where I gather my strength and yes indeed it keeps me going! I try to avoid all negative

happenings within this environment. I take everyday as it comes, interact with people at home and church. Seeing my two children happy really helps my mental wellness.

- Too many things on my brain do silly things like putting toilet paper in fridge. Mind absence – think of other important stuff in meetings when things are discussed other than my own.

- I read novels, magazines and mostly motivational books.

- As mentioned above, my mental wellbeing was influenced in a sense that I had to reconsider my personal future goals and aspirations. I was hoping for a job upgrade in the near future, but this does not seem to be possible in the current restructuring process. I have just recently qualified as a CA and completed 3 years in my current job grading, yet it seems that I would have to settle for a while before achieving my career goals in the company's current restructuring process.

- Restructuring is a form of compulsory change and I don't think it is a comfortable process because even the people that are considered safe, get sacked. When the process starts, one starts to think of the possible outcomes and the options that one has. Since there are no answers to any of these outcomes or options during the planning phase, this keeps one thinking all the time. Another option is to apply for a new employment, which could be positive or negative because the new employer might later go the same route on the Last In First Out principle. Therefore one will have to weigh options even if there is a new employment possibility. The operation of the mind is such that if it does not get the solution it will affect sleep, concentration, energy level, productivity and it will lead to fatigue. The mental wellness will be greatly affected and it will affect the behaviour. It becomes worse if the outcome is retrenchments.

- I am ok my bee frustrated with incompetent people from HR and contracted company/consultants assisting them.

What stressing me is people beneath me what is going to become of them and the department. You feel powerless and helpless the just carry on no matter what you say.

- Non

It has no influence on my social wellness

- Fear of not knowing whether you are affected or not makes one think of finding other job opportunities.

- One positive out of this negative situation is that it has provided me with more motivation to complete my studies as fast as possible. So should the situation arise where I am retrenched the additional qualification will be rather useful.

- None besides when a communication is made, I just empathise with those that might have many sacrifices (due to relocations/ moves) to make for their families and those that might be retrenched.

- Factors such: losing focus at work thinking what is going to happen with me? I'm worried about my future in the organisation or career path due to restructuring of the organisation. Losing focus at work may result in serious impact on my performance and more stress leading to sick leave or absenteeism.

QUESTION 4: Social Wellness

-I don't think my social wellness have been affected.

-I don't know

- Colleagues – A work environment do have a social part towards it. Colleagues being retrenched is a loss. A social loss is felt. It is the same as friendship loss. One spends 6 hours a day in the company of colleagues.

Retrenchment among people is seen as a failure, the weak/lazy etc get retrenched. This misconception causes one to in a social context to be seen as a failed person that is not true.

-I don't think my social wellness have been affected.

- Increase in uncertainty impacts on ones mental wellness. Increase the levels of stress thereby impacting on ones mental health.
- There is less time to socialize, interact or offer support because my team and I are in most cases dealing emergencies. This is taxing on all round of ones wellness.
- I am a “social person” – the kind of job I am doing helps me to interact with people and I in turn help people by reassuring them that everything will be OK. I am an optimistic person hence my social wellness is not really affected. I am also helping in the Community on issues of HIV/AIDS – seeing a person getting better is what fulfils me.
- Don’t make time for family and friends. Do not take much leave to spent time with family and friends. Don’t get time to do other things like attending other social institutions or events.
- The restructuring does affect my social wellness a little bit. I have decided to tighten my belt when it comes to spending and have increase the amount of money I put in my savings account.
- By disengaging from work as soon as I leave the premises of Exxaro.
- There was widespread fear and anxiety amongst my colleagues after being at an information session regarding the restructuring. This lead to anger and frustration and even a feeling of hopelessness as the uncertainty of retrenchments and increased workloads became apparent. For a while we had to work hard to keep the spirits up and encourage people to rather focus on promoting themselves by doing the work the best they can, than to give up and perform badly. At work I got the feeling that the team encourages each other, as we are all uncertain. On a personal level, the restructuring brought me and my husband closer together, as we started to plan for the future should I be retrenched or should the workload and working conditions be negatively affected.
- The social part covers the way one person lives and work. Once the work part is affected, then the life become unbalanced. This will also cover the relation with the other people. Obviously when my life is not balanced, I become impatient, the sence of care to others is limited, time is spent focusing on trying to get solutions instead of relaxing and reflecting on better things. The atmosphere at home and in the community gets affected because the operator is affected. The extent of the social impact will also still depend on the serious or the type of discomfort activity.
- Its quite a sensitive issue in that people don't generally make jokes about it. So it affects, general informal communication amongst colleagues especially with the older generation that still wish to work but due to rumoured early retirement offers, it makes people uneasy.
- I need to cut on trips with colleagues and families due to financial impact or try to economise. Reduced other debts to balance my life within my family.

Data from the Focus Groups

FOCUS GROUP DISUCSSION

18 MARCH 2011

INTRODUCTION

Good morning Everyone, I am Wendy and I would like to thank you all for taking the time to come here
Discussion will be recorded, Confidentiality will be maintained, Reason for recording is to capture all data
Feel free, open environment

This is for academic purposes

Keep to time limit

I then had an explanation of my research purpose, methodology, data analysis purpose, objective of the focus group

FEEDBACK ON QUESTIONNAIRES

I sent the questionnaires to almost a 100 people, within corporate office and the response was about 20%, so it is not a very high response rate, but because it is a qualitative study that is why I am also doing the focus groups

Question 1: 80% Yes, 20% No

Feedback on all dimensions

Purpose of today

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The first QUESTION 1 is: Does the restructuring have an impact. Some people have answered this question and others haven't, but I think as a start can we look at that question again. SO that we can just all just be clear on, does this have an impact, in terms of the questionnaire 80% said yes but maybe this group will feel differently or, can we have some thoughts to share on that?

Responses:

1: It definitely has an impact because you tend to think about it when you are at home or AT work, a lot of the things you mentioned there comes from just thinking about it and because you feel uncertain you want to make sure you are one of the ones that are not retrenched which means you work harder, you work later hours, you have less time for your family it has a snowball effect

2: From my side I think that look restructuring is one of the change and if I can put it in a simpler way it's a forced change, it's not something that you do yourself. If you apply for a position in Lephalale, you know that you've got some arrangements you can do maybe you definitely want to go and stay that side. So in this one as you say, you've got to stop most of your things, projects that you want go for , maybe you want to buy a car , you want to take your kids to school, something else, maybe you want to buy them some presents or you want to renovate your house, you 've got to stop those things and you keep on thinking about this thing all the time. And something that is also making it worse is that you go there and ask someone your manager is saying I am also in the dark so nobody knows, nobody can give you the answers and your lifestyle is being affected and you know you keep on thinking about it. Say for example you are a lucky person not to be retrenched but they relocate you to Tshikondeni, you didn't plan to go to Tshikondeni so whether you are on the safe side or on the other side you are still uncertain about your future so that's why it definitely affects your wellness

QUESTION: Does most people agree with that?

3: Well, restructuring means change and no one really wants to change if you are in a comfortable zone and you want to stay there. If you want to stay in a comfortable zone then you don't want to change and even if you relocated to another town or whatever your whole social environment changed it's not just your, if you stay in the same place maybe you changed office or you changed your working habits or something but if you relocated you are changing your whole support system or your family ,friendship

4: And another thing is you know regarding your job, you work hard and in the middle of it you think what if then why should I do this job now? You know it's sort of like demoralized and also with your supervisors as Piet has said now that you, they don't know anything. Who's going to know? It's frustrating for us and also with our management they don't come back to us to tell us

what stages are we its all quiet. Everybody we are told to work as normal, you can't at this situation, its impossible you cannot. You know I am a person who looks around check people's faces, you can see people, you know we are all so down. We try to be happy but deep down in our hearts we are not sure what is going on. I wish somebody can come in, call us to the auditorium even if they tell us a lie that you know don't worry next month we will be coming to tell you this story, but now it's all quiet you see the harsh harsh thing. You book the committee room you are told Siyaya is busy taking over so you don't know what is it they are discussing. Why can't they come back to us and tell us what is happening, you know it's a bit worrying.

5. I think what's making it worse is the fact that it has been dragging for so long. Everybody in our department has been saying to each other if they would just get it over and done with, even if it's negative then at least the uncertainty would be gone

6. I also feel like even when we do have those feedback sessions downstairs, they are so technical to the point where you get out of there and all you saw was bubbles, diagrams and what not and you really not sure what they said..It doesn't say much to some people. It might say a whole lot to them but it doesn't say much to some people.

7. And also the the structure , when the departmental structure came out we were told this is subject to change. So why are they showing us? Coz you never know, you will be happy saying there's my position the next day it's not there, so?

8. In our case the structure that they showed us wasn't even as is. The as-is one was wrong. So how am I supposed to know if the to-be will be correct?

Wendy: I think the concerns that you are bringing are very interesting because I was actually going to ask you: Do you feel that the information you are getting is adequate and if understood correctly or if I can rephrase- do you feel it is not adequate or do you feel as Thobeka said it is too technical? (yah). What kind of methods of communication do you want , who do you prefer and what kind of messages would you want to hear from you know?

9. Basically I believe managers should stand up and take control of the situation, speak to their teams you know. As a group or one on one and say hey you are still in the new structure or your job is actually not there anymore. This is how you should feel and these are the options that are coming and be truthful and honest. I mean there's jobs out there in the world, if people just know, you know you are affected people, it's a repel effect, its single mothers that are affected. It affects your whole family, you know this decision that, ok you are going to be relocated or you have a job or you don't have a job or whatever it has a ripple effect on everything and everyone. So I think if people are more open and let's not put up diagrams and all those processes, these are the timelines and just say hey you guys , you are affected, you might be affected let's talk about it and aaah I mean it's not gonna create happiness for everybody, it's also not gonna give everyone a job coz we know restructuring comes with a negativity. But I think we should be honest and stop avoiding and avoiding people because that's where all the negativity sets in. I mean everyone I am sure sitting around the table loves working for Exxaro but at the same time Exxaro should actually be happy that we are still ,we coming to work and you know still putting in the effort. So that's my personal opinion on how it should be handled one on one and honest communication.

10. Not the email please

Wendy: How do people feel about emails?

11. It's so impersonal...and also intranet (others agree mm). What is that? I never apply through intranet. There was an interview and all that

12. It's too generic (and people don't read it), but all the information if they send it on an email or things like it's too generic (precisely) so aah even if its smaller groups, not necessarily one on one but let's say 200 people doing the same environment

13.Maybe to summarize your question and answer it , the communication I think its right but the content of the communication does not reach the audience because when coming out of that session or forum you still asking a question- what now? You are still not answered and so it

doesn't really help to attend those sessions. I think its more of a legislative thing saying we didn't consult , we did communicate but the, me as an employee did I get the consultation? If you say consultation did I understand what you are saying?no?

14. And on top of that they add this self care course. I don't know its self care. You see you wonder now why self care out of the blue, why do- do I need to talk to plants in this situation..no

15. (Hug a tree) they say you must hug a tree

16. But i...

17. According to the doctor that was presenting, it's not related to Siyaya or it's not because of Siyaya (we are not kids)

18. But why all of a sudden?- No- why all of a sudden? Because I remember when I ask Sean, Sean why are you doing this? He says no this is not for, you know- brushing It off. You can see when a person is telling lies you know

19. And the fact that they are saying that

20. ...And what if you are not invited? What does that mean? Because not everyone get's invited for the self care

21. Apparently they've been doing it over a long period (since last year) , why pretend? all of a sudden we get invited, so...

22. Ya, I think the main thing here in terms of communication is that the period is taking too long, the Siyaya process is taking too long and in the process people might want to know what's happening there and the only thing to, you should make, you can make to survive is to tell people lies or to tell people nothing and then in the process when you tell people nothing and people know that something is happening then it makes people get worried. I just want to agree with why on this self care I don't know, the intention is right to bring this thing like self care but the content of that workshop is irrelevant to what is happening now. Just to give you an example, for example if we wanted to address the problem that we might think, then we might be experiencing – it's just to set a questionnaire around what you doing now and just check what people are doing and you look at the questions and you look at this thing and you actually arrange a workshop based on what you see, and you say ok guys are worried about their wellness, just get someone, a consultant who's gonna address the wellness or the alternative methods of contingency plans if a person gets relocated or those types of things and address specifically those things, so that they are trying to address is something irrelevant. The intention is right but the content of the workshop

23. But what I could gather from other session is to indoctrinate you to believe that whatever happens it's your problem because it's your choice to work for this company. So whatever happens it's your decision, so and to come back on a second note and say this is not about Siyaya, its quite..it's lying

24. The interesting thing in that workshop , the doctor said, when he starts he says, everything is like a ball, like your work, if... it will bounce back. We told him no, we don't believe it's also like an egg at this stage because it's fragile and if you don't have work everything else falls down as well because you can't afford education for your children, so you can't care for them and you can't look after yourself, all those things

Wendy: Can I put a turn to that question because I can hear from all of you that this, there is great impact and it's affecting all the areas of your life but maybe for example this programme that they are bringing- Self Care, it's a tool that is being used by the company to try and get you ready for this change. Why do you think that the change or this restructuring has such an impact on people? Why is it, because we see there is an impact we are discussing the impact, why do you think that is so? Why is it impacting all of you or people so much?

25. Uncertainty

26. I mean it's interfering with my lifestyle either way, currently I cannot plan 6 months down the line. What's gonna happen about my life, socially, so either way it does affect you. It's not that I won't get another job but it does affect me

Wendy: There were some responses where because we usually experience things differently, we are sharing our experiences here. There are those who are saying this restructuring exercise doesn't have an impact on them So its quite interesting to here the impact from this group but from the responses of other people where they say it doesn't have an impact. Why do you think some people might say that?

27. Is that one from Siphso?

Wendy: I think it's interesting to try and look at that side also

28. Some they say it doesn't have an impact because they are not really affected, they will be changing offices only, so in nutshell at home they won't even see the difference about their life (25 mins 02sec). I mean if you look at the structures for one, I mean you can obviously, obvious , its obvious there are some people that are guaranteed a jobs and you know they are still going to sit in the same positions, they are going to have better positions or promotions and I mean the fact of the matter at Exxaro there are certain people that are taken care of so I'm sure those are probably the people that haven't had much of an impact

28. Or some of them will be retiring so...it won't have an impact.

29. I think there's also people in denial as well..in denial (yah right) . If you don't think about it, it will go away almost like the ostrich

30. The other thing is that they announced it so long and nothing's actually happened, so people generally stop thinking about it but for me I have also just put it aside for when it starts happening, I am not gonna think about it everyday coz there's other things I need to think about that happen. So if I answer your question at the time there wouldn't be an impact

Wendy: So the prolongness of this period is actually what's causing the different reactions from different people. Ok I think lets move to the physical wellness dimension. As I have mentioned there, there is change in all those habits, can you maybe help me understand, you know what are these ,why would some of these habits change?ummm and how do you feel about these changes, I mane personally if iit's happened to you. Why do you think these would change? Help me understand a little bit better?

31. Some people are emotional eaters and some people are emotional starvers, so either when you get upset you eat more or you don't eat at all.

32. yah I think that in terms of the eating patterns you get people that have got some special diets to keep them healthy all the time and you get others that just eat like I do and obviously if your lifestyle changes because of your income you got to start you know, compromising that part as well. Some people are taking medications that are not necessarily , like supplements that are gonna keep this person healthier for, I don't know for certain diseases or eat some things that are or trying to eat some things that are trying to prevent some diseases so if this thing comes in, you start to compromise on those type of diets and as a result it changes your diet.

33. Or don't buy the luxuries, you buy , you don't buy Woolies anymore. You buy Pick 'n Pay
Wendy: So there is a cost factor, the savings that you were talking about or change in lifestyle

34. In terms of sleeping habits, I am one of those people , if I'm worried about something or if I'm upset I do not sleep at all. So even if you get that little sleep, you dream about such things so that will definitely change your sleeping habits and have an impact on your health as well.

Wendy: Just a explain a little bit on that

34. Cont...If you not sleeping correctly, you will be stressed , needy , grumpy, tired , you will not perform. It just trickles down all the way to your work

35. And then you don't have the extra energy to exercise (exactly, which means, and you eat more, buy chocolates, sweets)

Wendy: SO is it like a circle, a vicious circle, that's what I get from you. So if I get you, if I understand, if I'm correct you cannot separate all those things (yes, yes, yah)

36. And also your mind doesn't shut off, it doesn't, its just recapping everything you relate.

Wendy: Umm , alright, given this information that you are sharing with me , there's an affect on your sleeping, on your eating , on your all your habits. Do you feel you are managing your physical wellness and maintaining a healthy lifestyle? Are you trying to?

37. Well you can always try to, but as we said that, some of the tools you need to try to is money and on the other hand you've got to save that money, you've got to continue cutting your budget or expenditure because you don't know what is gonna happen, so you are actually left in darkness. The control measure that you are supposed to be implementing needs money and you are supposed to be cutting that money.

38. In our department for instance there is a position , well actually more than one position that's been frozen for something like a year and a half I think. So it means that all of us are working harder and because of that you end up working late a lot of the time, which means you don't get to do some exercise, and when you have the time you just feel please can I sit down for 10mins.

Wendy: If we can go to the mental side...feedback form the responses indicates that in this restructuring exercise mental wellness is being affected or impacted for example the uncertainty, the stress, anxiety, the low motivation and morale that seem to be evident in people. Do you agree with the above? And again, kindly share your views on the mental aspect about this.

39. I think we have passed on this and we said the prolonged process causes anxiety, and anxiety leads to kind of stress although you try to deny. Yu can say I have seen so many restructuring in my life but they are all different, so irrespective of your experience it still affects you. So I will say, anxiety I think is number one on all of this. I don't think I am making a mistake or I am stressed or depressed but it's still anxiety

Wendy: You have mentioned something interesting, you said that there's been a lot of changes, I mean in all our lives, not only Exxaro. There's lots of changes that happen in our lives, whether its home, family, friends. So as much as we are experiencing this change and they say change is the only constant thing, what is it that, why is it so difficult for us to accept this change and say it's ok?

40. It's because of the impact that it will have on your life and I'm prepared in the stage of my life to change certain aspects of it, you find some of the things you are not prepared to compromise coz it means if that comes then I will have to look elsewhere to another company which can accommodate me in what I need.

Wendy: What things are people not willing to compromise on, because I think that is what is making this so difficult, what are those things that we don't want to compromise on?

41. Relocation (moving to another town or province). To move based just on application of a position is so stressful alone, what about if you are forced to move it's even double.

42. I think these you don't wanna compromise on is basic needs (MASLOW) which include..food, house, stuff like that

43. Church as well, because moving to another place you find you don't have community, the society that you live with is not there anymore. You have to start all over again.

44. Your support system at home you know, when your sisters and family are nearby when your children are sick at least you can run you know. Now tell me Tshikondeni (a place) where will I go?

Wendy: So where you are now, your environment right now, is one of the most important things that determines whether you I will accept the change or not- that's what you are saying? (yes, yah)

45. And where I am now is by choice, I chose to be here

46. That's what I wanted to say, this is like you said earlier a forced change and because it's uncertain as well, you don't have a say, the whole answer. Hopefully you can stay in the same position, same location but if they give you a choice, you have a position but you have to move it's not in your type of control.

47. Specially if you say for instance if you have both parents, the husband and wife and they say for instance I work in Grootegeluk and my wife stays in Pretoria , so how do you move forward, how do you change?

Wendy: SO the solutions that are being proposed or which might possibly happen are not in favour of most people. That's what I am hearing. For some people maybe someone has been waiting to move to Grootegeluk or Tshikondeni, so it probably works in both ways

48. Yah coz if you look at the structure basically we are still going to need more people but where? You get the point? More people where people don't want to go. With the Medupi project and all that, you need more people. So it doesn't really answer some of our fears.

49. Yah I think what you are saying in terms of the cases where the relocation for some people might work , yes it can but it could be around 1% and the whole 99% is negatively affected and only 1% is the one that benefits form this situation .

50. If I understand correctly there's not a lot of relocations they are proposing, but again it's because we don't know so everybody just thinks what if they want to move me? (So you start panicking, worrying and being anxious). Yes, it's because you don't have all the information that you are wondering what if I move?

Wendy: So there is a lack of information or the lack of right information

51. Maybe they also don't have the information at this stage and this process you can't just do in one week, that's the problem, it's not an easy process to do. And what kind of information do you give people that they don't panic? If you give too much they panic, if you give too little they also panic. So the amount of information that you give people is also not easy

52. And what makes us doubt that they don't have information, I believe they do because how can you come up with a date of maybe a new structure if you don't have information. I just can't come up with a date, I must first know what's happening and first consult and know what the people want is then that I can have a date , if I already have a date that say by July all the positions must be advertised, how do you come up with that? So you already know by now what's gonna happen.

Wendy: I think it goes back to that question of open and honest (communication) so I'm hearing you that there's probably a perception that the higher levels of the people involved in this process are not necessarily being as honest as they should be, which is probably. We can't prove that but ok.

53. I guesse also as you said they don't wanna create an expectation that they cannot deliver on as well, so the less they give the less expectations we have, but I guesse negatively, the more we get anxious and everything

54. You know what they did with Standard Bank restructuring, they basically phoned the people up and said...sorry you don't have a job anymore, on one day. Yes it wasn't one day it was last year and apparently all the people know that if the big boss phoned that day, you are out. But at least it's over and done with. You don't want to answer the phone maybe.

55. Their strategy was hit hard then face the consequences later (yes), with Exxaro it's like they still, even though we feel that they don't feel for us they still helping by taking us through the process, calming us down and giving us self care and then the BIG BANG. So they are doing it differently but I think they are trying to be people focused but at the same time it's not an easy thing. I mean I worked in Billiton I was there where Standard Bank was, where I sat and here is a retrenchment letter you got 3 weeks to move, thank you bye bye and you know. I did that, it's not easy but these tough decisions have to be made. Sometimes its wham bang and sometimes it's like with Exxaro they , even though we feel its bad, it's actually not that bad

56. I think it's like the information not sharing enough or sharing too much, I think it's trying to get the right balance but then how long have we been, nobody can even remember when Siyaya started, that's how long it's been

57. It's been a year

58. No it's longer than that, since the initial one started its like 2008 (when they structured the top)

Wendy: So the time factor is a big issue also, not just the communication

59. Coz I believe the initial objectives they had when they started has changed so much, they must restructure the restructuring. Coz every 3 years things change and you cannot just keep having the restructuring

Wendy: If we go back to the social aspect, remember you mentioned that your social habits change, you not spending as much, you are not eating out as much. One of the things that came out is that people are really saving more. Can we look at that a bit, are people really saving more? If you look for example at the bonus that we got. Looking at the uncertain future that we are facing and the possible changes that are coming there's a perception that maybe your social aspect is going down, you not going out as much, you are saving more. Is that happening, do you think that's what's happening or?

60. I think it will depend on your personality because some people would say ok, let's say a more responsible person would say I don't know what's going to happen in the next few months maybe just put this money on my bond, I can always take it later if the opportunity is there, and other people will say, well, while I've got the money might as well spend it, don't know if there will be more later, it will depend on your personality

Wendy: What are your views on that?

61. On the social aspect I find that I am in an open plan office and we all like friends but I feel like certain people especially those who are not very very certain what's going to happen to them tend to, they are not as social anymore, you know what I am saying, they are worried. The environment is not as how it used to be, they've withdrawn, they don't know what's gonna happen especially some older people, they feel like they are gonna lose their jobs and the younger ones are going to take their jobs or something like that

Wendy: Interesting that you are bringing that up coz it did come up that what she's talking about in terms of people withdrawing, they are feeling that they shouldn't befriend you too much because that sense of loss remember the one I mentioned before that maybe you will lose this person. If you've got a good relationship with your supervisor also maybe the fear that if you are moved from this place to that place then you lose that relationship, so people tend to withdraw, do you guys agree with that or have you experienced any of that?

62. I can tell you an instance when the last time they took out the structures, one of the ladies that I work with she actually cried the whole day that day not because she was affected but because the people she was working with the people that were close to her were affected, some of them were going to lose their jobs, some of them were going to be downgraded so she actually cried that day not because she was losing her job, so it affected her very badly emotionally

Wendy: I think human beings being the social animals that we are do you think that is what results in such behavior?

63. You work with these people 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. You get close, you get to know the people and when they go through a hard time you go through a hard time, so I can understand if you cry for another person because they are losing their job and as well you know that you are not going to see that person everyday anymore when you might be sharing a lot with that person

Wendy: And in terms of your relationships with your family, friends, coz just now we touched on the colleagues/supervisors because if you look at the definition of social wellness they talk about it being characterized as "...provide definition here"

If you look at one of the examples from the questionnaire, they were mentions of example decreased care and empathy and not having time for family and friends I think that can allude to what you said maybe in terms of working longer hours, working harder. In terms of the relationships with your family and friends, do you feel there is support there, are they better now

than before. One of the responses said the relationship with their husband is better now because it has forced them to come together and stand together in terms of making sure they save money and just to prepare for the future. What do you think about those kind of relationships outside of the workplace?

64. I think that in my case for instance, I think my family supports me well and every now and then they would ask me again ok, have you heard anything more and even my friends, so I think that's a good aspect. But I think what tends to happen when you're stressed you might take it out on your family members, not intentionally but after working a longer day than usual, coming home and you know having a Siyaya session again or heard another rumor and you get home and you're edgy you tend to take it out on your family, not intentionally so I try my best to not do that not intentionally

Wendy: Please tell me do you think people are sharing what's happening at work, are they taking that message back at home or maybe sometimes do you feel you need to protect your family so you don't necessarily tell them there is a possible retrenchment or possible change to my work. Do you think people are sharing those with their family, open and honest?

65. I personally don't, I don't put it bluntly as it is, I put it light because I don't want stress to also affect my wife, so it must at least be minimal as much as possible and maybe I've got some denial ways of dealing with it. When I leave this gate it's off, I am another person, I think about other stuff

Wendy: That's if I can put it in psychological words is disengagement

66. Yah, that's what I do, for me it works because if you take everything home it affects your life at home and all so for me under normal circumstances even I'm working overtime and all that when I leave the gate Exxaro is left behind, it works for me.

67. Normally you know, I'm like the way he treats it, I don't tell them. At home I don't tell them because I know that I can deal with it my own way but if I tell them then they are going to make it even worse and then it will go out of proportions and then you start talking things

68. I don't want me having dinner then they remind me what happened at the office, no, it's gone, leave office alone, we are home now let's talk about home

69. Even when you've gone for dinner the children start looking and saying don't order expensive things, then you know it's bad

Wendy: So that's quite interesting, we are almost done just two more questions and we will round up. This factor of communication is really interesting because if you go back we are expecting some sort of communication from the Siyaya team or the Exxaro management and they are not giving that information as much to us yet when we also go home we don't necessarily give out that information. Does that mean that maybe make you understand why this team here at Exxaro might not necessarily give you all the info now? If you can link your situation at home plus what is happening here. Do you think maybe it helps you? I know it's different situations but ..

70. No, it's not the same, I've got the right to now what's going to happen about me

71. But doesn't your wife have the right to know as well?

72. No, wait a minute I've got the right to now about me, so for me I cannot communicate half information. What I'm going to tell her, if I myself am not certain about what I'm telling, coz when you communicate you must be clear but what I got from this side is not clear as yet and if I communicate that half information more especially to a person who is not even around who would even make it worse or think even the worst because they won't even think the best, they will think about the worst.. what if what if and we are not even there yet

73. I think the reason I would come out with the whole cacoodle is when we sat, it's not lekker when you sit in that auditorium and your boss sits next to you, we only two people in the HFM department, we only two people, so it's quite easy to see where we are and your boss leans over towards you and says we've both been downgraded. Just after you've built a new house last year, so I was crying and I phoned my husband and told him you know this is what's

happening. And later on it came out, it was a mistake, you know that's not lekker. What happened is the Siyaya team did suggest to downgrade us but because it is a specialized environment they can't really find anybody, there is not a lot of HFM people, they said no sorry you can't downgrade them but because of the communication versus consultation process they couldn't update the structuring. So I was told, I could see I was downgraded but that's not the truth after consultation picture

74. Just to add on what he's saying you said that the fact that Exxaro is not disclosing enough to us and why are we also not disclosing enough to our families, my response to that is look we are also not happy that Exxaro is not disclosing to us that's why we not happy to tell them something that's gonna make them worry like we worrying. So if for example they say in two months time you retrenched or you are downgraded then you can communicate clearly and say look in two months time I will be retrenched or I will be downgraded to this level and this is the impact of my salary and stuff like that. That is fine you you've got information, you don't need answers or anywhere for something you don't start thinking about whatever might happen, you got clear information, clear message then you communicate clearly with others. So we don't want them to keep worrying about what is worrying us by the current views from Exxaro

Wendy: I think we are just left with a few minutes, 2 minutes, to round up is there a relationship between these dimensions?

75. Yah

76. It's all interlinked because sometimes physically sometimes you get sick, people do have stress, headaches and all that. I wonder how many absenteeism with regards to the records of absenteeism- how's that? And emotionally people now using their medical id to go and see a psychologist and all that so yah it does affect

77. Also road rage can also be there as well because if you are a person who takes it away, takes it with you are so edgy and when someone drives you so bad you snap, it's interesting

Wendy: SO it stretches beyond what we see with our eyes, the obvious

78. And as we saying, the longer the process you bottle it too much up to a stage you cannot hold it anymore and you just crack one day

Wendy: Last one, so what do you think we can do to better this process or what can the management do or the Siyaya team do to make this a better process firstly and secondly how can then we make sure we are managing ourselves in the sense that our wellness is not so, it will be impacted, but maybe not to such a great extent because remember we have now looked at these factors, we've now looked at the impact on our health and our mental, emotional, social. In terms of suggestions because remember this will also be part of the discussion and recommendations. What do you think can help improve this process and can then help employees manage themselves better in terms of the wellness part.

79. Well I am not so sure, I'm not sure about that, will this thing be implemented or not because I think Exxaro has made a decision already, but if I were to make a proposal or suggestion I would say Exxaro should have actually invited those people who want to take packages and make attractive packages especially for the guys that go on retirement 55 years of age, 60 years of age and look at how many are gone and from there say that maybe you've got another year to relocate to other areas if you want to and if after that year nobody hasn't found something then they can start doing this process. And they say if somebody resigns we don't fill the post then that's where we gonna relocate people and stuff like that and if by the end of twelve months nobody hasn't, people didn't get some jobs somewhere then maybe this process can kick in. This should actually have avoided these guys that were brought in to come and work on this Siyaya process and spend lots of money that we should have paid all these guys from Exxaro. That's my suggestion on management side, on the people I don't know

80. I think the process maybe to modify it to suit us both us employees and management is to make sure that the content of the communication is quite clear and they minimize the doubts that we come out of these sessions. If it means we need to meet every fourth month it doesn't

matter than to meet twice a quarter and you don't have any tangible thing to take home, it just doesn't help to have communication for the sake of communication. You need to know what's next; you need to see where you are

81. I just want it all to end

82. Yes, that's what I mean everybody in our department, now they say of I have a job or not let me know

83. The other thing I find is management are sending mixed signals, I mean we have been spending millions on contractors here, we have contractors that have long term contracts and yet we all here at Exxaro are sitting around this table talking about our jobs being aligned. So it just for me sends mixed signals to people. We've got money to spend millions on brining contractors and having huge contracts for the top consultancies yet we don't really look after our own people. We are struggling to see whether we have jobs or not but they have long term contracts. So for me that's, for me personally that's conflicting

84. Adding to that is, how can you have people being retrenched and downgraded and other people being promoted? I don't understand it. If you want to save money keep them on the same level, I don't understand it.

85. Just to add on the consultants thing, I know that Exxaro has a lot of consultants that are paid a fortune and if you look at what they are actually doing, it's actually what you are trained to do. They said they need two years experience and half this experience is what you are doing but they get someone to come and do the same thing. Why can't we do this thing ourselves? And now we want to retrench our own people just to ensure that the contractors, sorry the consultants are coming in.

86. And by the looks of it, it looks like the number of contractors is more than the number of employees, so they must sort out that

CONCLUSION

Thank everybody for coming

Results will be transcribed and analysed for discussion

Results will be made available to everyone on request

Might contact people for one on one sessions

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

11 APRIL 2011

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon everyone, I am Wendy and I would like to thank you all for taking the time to come here

Discussion will be recorded, Confidentiality will be maintained, Reason for recording is to capture all data

Feel free, open environment

This is for academic purposes

Keep to time limit

I then had an explanation of my research purpose, methodology, data analysis purpose, objective of the focus group

FEEDBACK ON QUESTIONNAIRES

I sent the questionnaires to almost a 100 people, within corporate office and the response was about 20%, so it is not a very high response rate, but because it is a qualitative study that is why I am also doing the focus groups

Question 1: 80% Yes, 20% No

Read the definition of the dimensions and then gave feedback on them

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

QUESTION 1: As a first starter, the first question is : Can you please tell me about this exercise and what do you guys know about this restructuring exercise? What do you think is happening, why do you think it's there? What is the purpose? Can someone just explain ?When I say restructuring exercise we are talking about Siyaya but what do you guys think that is?

Responses

1. Well, it's the reason for the restructuring was to improve, increase profits and reduce costs
2. I think, what's the word now, it's to improve the services that are under discussion, you know the services provided like Finance, service delivery you can call it
3. The other issue at the same time is that we don't know who's delivery the service, who's the core of the company, so we need to differentiate the two you know

Wendy: So we, if I understand correctly we want to differentiate between the core and the services (yes). And if I may paraphrase , the fact that, so determined this difference is so that we can have what you call increased productivity, decreased costs, and improve the delivery because now we have a distinction between the two , so we know who's doing what , am I correct?

4. Yes, the other issue what is important if you remember in 2009/2008 there was, what do you call, Siyaya project if I am not mistaken whereby we saved quite a huge amount you know. So as a company I mean if we can focus on those savings obviously the company can make a profit and a lot of things can be improved you know and again when you think of restructuring some of us think of things like retrenchment, we are going to lose our jobs and all those things but at some stage some view it as opportunities that it will come with opportunities

Wendy: Alright I pick up some interesting things here, but ok we can look at them. I just want to understand, you mentioned that the company can do a lot, if we save we can have profit. So do you think an exercise like this is necessary or can we follow what you are saying maybe that if we can start saving more currently we might not need an exercise like this? Do you think this exercise is needed?

5. I think somewhere since the start up to now, their focus shifted because the first Siyaya was purely to save money, and after the Siyaya proposals, the argument was put on the table is not for saving money anymore, it's for optimizing services and streamlining services and cost is not the final target anymore so is some of this stuff costs more afterwards it's not a problem because it's more effective. It's the way that the industries do it and not to say it's the way we do it

6. Ja, initially it was a cost saving but now after all the presentations and things and the restructuring process that's carrying on and all the people that are in this building working on this new model or system, it's costing much more money than we saved , it seems to us.

Because we don't always know what, ja

7. So at the end of the day the reason is to improve our service then, that's the idea really

8. That's the argument yes, to improve the services but now if on the one side you say you going to in the end retrench 300 people but you appointed just in HQ 260 consultants already. Then it defies the purpose because the tariff of the consultants in any case is way higher than the tariff of the full time employees that you're going to move out of the company so what's the

case in the end, and I mean and when we were in some discussion it was admitted that it's not about cost anymore

9. It's about improving the service and restructuring so that you can do more with less people. That's what we understand

10. It's the ideal model that they hope to implement

Wendy: So there is a bit of, you understand what is going on but maybe it's not as clear, we can find out why this is not as clear. So I think you have a fair understanding of what the restructuring is. So my next question is? Does this restructuring exercise have an impact on your wellness. I mean if you take a look at what is currently happening, do you think it has an impact on your wellness? And remember this differs from person to person

11. I would say it does because if you were told on the 1st of December that you're no longer going to be in the structure and you still here at the of March beginning on April and you still don't know what's happening, it does impact.

Wendy: In what way?

12. All those things that were said there, the metal- you don't have motivation, you are getting depressed, you get stressed out because and you are getting frustrated because even in the discussion you don't always get straight answers

13. like we had in the Finance department, we had a sort of a meeting with Wim where they told us how far the process was going and things like that and when you will get your letters and things like that. They mentioned March then they turned in the next meeting and said they little bit running behind so you've the structure in December, you've seen that you are affected, now you're waiting, you're waiting for March now March came, no, we little running bit behind April. April is almost finished and nothing has been done and you know, you know something is actually going to happen but you want it to happen now because, move on

14. The other thing, to what must you committee to now? Because in a one sense you possibly learned that, they said your services is going to be contracted out this..so why must you keep on doing that work now to the one side, and on the other side your users, your customers they tell you they haven't been consulted in this process on getting that service from somebody else in the end. I mean they used, they do their plans and now they learn via their service provider that the service is going to be terminated and they didn't know it.

15. Just to add on that again, you know like through the presentation that we had in HR whereby they show us the structures, I mean personally if you see that your position has been downgraded now you start to think, ok, if my position has been downgraded they might apply certain Acts (legal/law) and say look, if your position has been downgraded and your salary will go down just to match or to benchmark against the grading that they downgraded your position, of which that has an impact on me, and my salary and will impact in my family and you see I'm starting to think now, what am I gonna do with this salary and maybe I've got some debts and all those things obviously it's impacting, the impact is quite huge there

16. Ok with the downgrading also, they also said your salary is not protected which is actually demoralizing

17. Are they going to expect you to do what you have been doing at a lower salary or what?

18. What they said to us is that if your position is sort of downgraded some work will be taken away from, whether it's going to happen..it's to be seen

20. It never happened in the past, when a colleague left that work added to you. So how are they going to put you in a different position and say ok, you're going to do less because you're being paid less

21. But then by law again if you downgrade my position and my external grading it should remain there, because remember now each and every year I am performing and now if you downgrade me of which I have worked for this money, I have worked for this salary, I mean how do you justify that? I mean for me it's a little bit unfair because I have worked for that money

22. I think on that issue on downgrading, I think some people will start looking out for other jobs some of them have left the company because they can't work with this uncertainty and you can't, I mean you've got your security and all of a sudden you hear you are going to get less money
23. But you don't know how much less
24. And you don't know when, so you can't, and good people are leaving the company because of uncertainty (do you know of people who have left? Ask the participants?)
25. And again in terms of the impact, you know communication the way it's coming to us as employees, it's coming bit by bit you know, we don't get that "yes, this is what we are going to do now. I mean it's coming little bit and it's not coming out clearly
26. And in the sessions the message you get "this is a proposal, it's not final yet, it's just a proposal "
27. Up until when?
28. we don't know what, how the HR presentation but the Finance because we report to Finance, the Finance ones were, sometimes questions were asked in the audience, that, you get the impression that they don't really know what to say, they can't give you a clear answer
Wendy: Who is they? Management or?
- 29 The Siyaya team
30. I got the impression, this, they don't want to divulge everything, they holding back and whether it's good or bad I don't think you should hold back
31. Exactly
32. And have a huge impact on all your people
33. And on one instance you say it's discussions or negotiations and on another end they say well this is the proposal and it has been approved by the Steercom. If the Steercom did approve it, then from our side the vision is final because if the Steercom already approved it. Will they go with new proposals to the Steercom now, I mean must they go back and say, we made a mistake to the first proposal that you as Steercom okayed but because we forgot about this, we forgot about that, so we've got new proposals now. Is that going to happen?
Wendy: Do you feel that this communication that we are getting, because lot's of people, I'm getting it from the group that the communication is not clear, there is maybe an element of management or siyaya you say withholding that information and aah..am I correct to say that the information we getting or employees are getting is not enough? And how do you think this information should come or what do you think should be involved (included)
34. It should be more often, because we had something in December then we had something in February, now... it's too far apart, they should rather have on a monthly basis because I'm sure that Siyaya is working on a day to day basis and a lot of things are happening on a week to week basis so
35. One can also maybe get the impression that the Siyaya people or the people who are advise them don't know exactly where they are moving to, where they are moving, what they want to achieve, they want, they've got this vision of a model that they want the company to operate on but they don't know how to get there and in the process they are doing a lot of damage
36. They've got this model but they don't know the business of the company so they can't from their side visualize the model and the business as one.
37. And the other issue is now, as part of the communication, the consultation as they call us, if they take the decision on that board, steering board or whatever, I mean they need to remember there are stakeholders hence now the union themselves are dragging the process now, its taking some time now, and I understand there are still some negotiations with the unions. The issue is as part of the communication they need to involve the stakeholders from the start so that this thing can be, what do you call it?, in agreement with everyone. Maybe some can come with good ideas

Wendy: Who are the stakeholders, you said unions and..?

38. The employees

39. Yes, that are not unionized

40. You will remember now we had consultation , we were given the opportunity to put some suggestions, you see now that period was short, it was not enough and they came back again and said guys this has been extended and remember now I'm sitting and I say oh I don't have time to give them those reasons or suggestions to say guys please if you do one two three I think the company will do better in this and that but now that's why I said involve the stakeholders from the first. Ok, lets say the process is gonna take twelve months, first I's the top guys, the sponsors but second week try to engage with the stakeholders then and you will see how the process will move smoothly. So that those who are impacted will know from the first what to do and where to go.

41. And I mean as you say, now you tell them on the final date of submission is the 15th and then on the 18th they tell well the submission date has been extended to the 28th. I mean how do you, everybody rushed to get their submissions in on the 15th so who's going to go back on their suggestions and alter that now, because you can't get that stuff that you gave and say ok I'm going to modify this or whatever.

42. The question I have, sorry to cut you, is when now let's say you put a suggestion will they come back to us and say we got a such such suggestions and few of them were implemented. Are they going to tell us? It's a question again

43. It's the communication again, feedback on what proposals were decided (or put forward)

Wendy: So you would have liked something like? Which goes back to what she was saying that it's nice, or it would have been nice to get continuous monthly feedback in terms of where are we, what have we received and what did we do with what we received?

44. And we've studied this proposal and this far we can say we agree with this proposal but these were decided it's not going to materialize or whatever and we still have 300 proposals that we have to work through and you know that ok at least some of these things...

45. The other thing that I have picked up also, is actually I heard it on Friday where they said, the unions sat with them last week or something like that. I can recall right if on that chart it was saying 15th of March was the last day the unions were going to sit, that was the last day. Last week was April but there has been no communication to say it was extended, no that I know of, I might have overlooked , I don't know if you people saw anything, but I don't remember seeing something that says unions are gonna sit at a later stage.

46. Just to add on that, what happened last year, I remember that 1st of April was implementation , what's going on now, nothing.

47. That's it, that's why I'm saying 31st of March we would have received letters , I know it was said we were running a month behind, so April, but, if you take from next week April is finished with all the compulsory closure, so I don't know whether the intention is going or not

48. Another thing that's bothering people is the good results of the company, I know that Pieter said, the financial, it's not financial saving anymore, the good results that the company has can they justify retrenching 300 people but I think they can say, they can justify it with this model that they are going to work smarter with less people

49. Ja, they can do that actually, they can do that

50. But I can understand , ok with the 300 there are a lot of vacancies and I know in our department we've got one vacancy and one person is doing two people's work its little bit pressurizing but maybe if that work was spread out amongst the others we could say ok, we don't need that position . You know some of the positions it has been vacant for some time, so we can ok, maybe do away with and maybe that is also with the 300 people

51. What's the real loss of not having a person in that position, I mean if you could run a department effectively for 6 months or a year with a vacancy then actually that vacancy proved itself redundant

52. That's a saving for our department now each department has a similar situation or somebody decided I'm going on early retirement, we not replacing, we not filling that position. That's another saving so..

53. Ja, we still do that because there is a moratorium that came that now guys we not gonna advertise any positions and then now we need to sit and wait for that proposed structure

54. But they are still advertising

55. They are still advertising, so it's like there's ups and down, it's not clear

Wendy: So what kind of communication do you guys want, or would you prefer. Like

56. I mean it's not consequent (consistent) I mean on the one side positions and appointments are freezed and then you see the ads for appointments so how can one business unit appoint people and another business unit are not allowed to appoint people? I mean it doesn't make sense

Wendy: And how, you mentioned earlier that the communication is not consistent or the processes. I mean who, in terms of communication who would you prefer to come and sort of give you these answers, these questions that you have now, or who would you want to come or in what method would you prefer that to be given to you?

57. The line manager, the line manager must know clearly what's going on there and they must give us all the information so that we can now where to go and what to do. But then if they come there, ja it's still Siyaya we're not sure what's going to happen, then I'm like.. what do you really know here?

Wendy: Ok then, given this impact that you are mentioning are you finding that it's easy then to cope or handle the day to day stresses. So in terms of the work itself, because you mentioned that sometimes you might have a lot of work to or in terms of family, outside life. How do find the coping?

58. It's impacting quite widely in the sense that certain people really go into a don't care mode, I mean I'll help you if it's not too much trouble and then you get the other people they believe they must help you because that's going to prove their worth so that they retain their job. So certain people might produce even better and but then other people say well I'm not going to do anything new until I know what I'm going to do

59. But look, look we all human we all have emotions, if you know you are going to be affected you're going to have your down days and you are going to have your up days. I think it comes, It comes with the territory of the way you are. If you're a strong person you are not always going to be strong, maybe you can handle that situation. I mean maybe because nothing is really happening now so your emotions are not really showing as such

60. You are getting insensitive in certain situations

61. You do, I mean as Pieter says, you gonna feel why must I help the next person, what is it for me, what am I going to benefit from it

62. I mean to put the joke on the table we haven't got our performance review letters yet, so I went to manager and say what are they going to say, what are they going to write down in my letter, because are they going to thank me for a job well done not needed in future?

Wendy: yes that is a concern

63. For me it's like sort of contradictory in a sense that you getting sort of an increase but next month you might not have a job. Then why give me an increase because you know I am going to be affected, rather tell me look, you are going to be affected I can't give you an increase or whatever

64. I don't even give you a job

65. You know it goes back now when we see on the news into other companies whereby people they work lesser days, some their salary is reduced, some they are forced to take leave, so obviously for them it's quite strenuous, it's a difficult situation for them coz there for me the company just came straight forward with them, guys this is the problem we are facing, this is what is going to happen. They didn't go, like instead of going direct for us they go indirect which

it takes time. Hence you said that we are making profit, we are making money then it's still contradicting

Wendy: So would you agree with the statement that people's mental wellness is being affected (for sure, definitely) e.g. uncertainty resulting in stress, worry, anxiety, motivation and morale.

Do you agree with this? Share personally from your point of view

66. Ja, look, you feel but why must I get up and come to work? That is, I'm gonna look for an excuse to be, just to stay away from work or something or prolong my duties or something, I can't care whether my deadlines are met or whatever

Wendy: That's an interesting point you are putting because research shows that sometimes in processes like these the sick leave, absenteeism rate increases. Do you guys agree?

67. Ja, and I mean to a certain extent one gets the feeling of sit back and see them experience the failure of their plan

68. Coz the other issue is , if I'm given a task knowing that things will change , I mean I don't have that oomph, I don't have that courage that this thing will be like this. Why I'm saying this because the process will change, they are going to change the processes and procedures. I'm not going to work the way I used to work. So it's a little bit difficult that's why I'm resistant to do that job. For instance Succession Planning, we are busy plotting the people and things will change again, you see what might be the problem

69. Well I can see the effect this whole uncertainty thing has on my colleague, I see it, we see it, also demotivated, almost in denial in the first place, I think hoping things will change and something good will come out of this. That is not what they told us is going to happen, that's the first thing, and then stressed out.

70. I mean the situation is different for every person but I mean for a person in her case maybe any case it's just a small movement of the final date in one person's, the other person is really his, it's crucial for him to have a job and an income so for him its crucial. And then if you're beyond a certain age your reemployed in a different direction with equal salary is virtually impossible to comprehend that you can do that, so for that person it's a stressful situation. And then maybe some other people say I wanted to move on and this is the excuse that I need to move on. So the one, you get the first denial I'm not worth anything for the company so that's why they scrap my position, and afterwards you say ok, it's not that bad I would have to leave in 2 years time so what's the difference, so it's not that bad. I mustn't take it personal and the other person say well, this is real serious stuff I've got kids that must study, I've got bond to pay and I don't where and what is going to happen

Wendy: But do you think a process like this, I'm just trying to think, we said it's got an impact on people which you alluded to now. But there were some responses for example you see there on that 20% where people said no this process does not have an impact on me. Do you think there is some positive in this process? Do you think that those who are saying no, for example we said we all experience things differently. Can you maybe share the positive or not so affecting side of it?

71. The 20% might be because they are not affected, that is where, but then I had in the back of my mind also, what if you're not affected but your line manager or senior person is affected doesn't that attitude of that senior person come down to you although you not affected, I don't know

72. Your reporting line changes

73. I mean you don't know who you're gonna report to next month or something like that and whether you're going to be able to work with that person or not

74. The 20% people that say no, might also be people who are in a good position to have, or they can move on or like ladies who have husbands that can look after them . I think it won't affect me but I'm retiring in a year's time. SO it's not such a big impact, but still it's a loss for me to think

75. Especially if you still feel you've got the energy to work

76. But the 20% could be a lot of reasons why , not because, maybe because they sort of just go with the flow

77. I need a package all those things, I'm going on pension

Wendy: So it depends on your personal preferences maybe your life situation , your home set up, your personal and financial needs. So there is a variety of factors that influence that make this impact great or not so great that's what I'm picking up.

Wendy: So if we look at the physical side where we say there is change in those patterns for example, do you think, do you feel that you are managing your physical wellness and maintaining a healthy lifestyle

78. Look, it's gonna be on a day to day basis, today I might feel good, tomorrow down and out. I don't want to speak to anybody, I hate everybody .That's how it's gonna be

79. Well I can't say that it affected me physically that much, I mean I exercise still everyday , I try to at least 4 times a week. It hasn't really affected my physical but maybe becoming a little bit depressed or what's the word, also not frustrated, anxious, it's almost despondent, I wanted to say disgusted but it's not that bad

80. Look I don't think it will happen right now, because things are going slow

Wendy: You don't think - what will happen now?

80 Cont.. Your emotions will be running high and wide and things like. It's still latent, I think once letters come out and positions start advertising then it's really gonna be

81. Now you start feeling it is here now

82. But to a certain extent I mean stuff that happened in our smaller environment is, affect they decided our service is going to be discontinued then some people from different departments come and they want job descriptions of people working here, why would that be.? So we got the impression that somebody else is going to create positions like these that they are going to scrap here at another place. Will that position be available for people in this or are they going to appoint other people. So to a certain extent we think that maybe the proposals that they put on the table they going to change that because why would one want the job description of a position that's scrapped

83. Ja, you know, then you also, I know you mustn't listen to rumours but then you hear from somebody that they are revisiting this decision the Siyaya team took, but we don't get informed or you know we are kept in the dark so we don't believe the words that we hear. For us, I think for me the decisions that were made before the 1st of December is going to stay. That's what I think

Wendy: So you don't think the consultation or maybe the... that they have asked from employees inputs do you think they are going to use that?

84. That's just a formality because they have to do, but law they have to do so, they must have records that they did the discussion they had the consultation, here's the record everybody attended everybody had a chance to say ok we done it but we are the owner of the company and the final decision is ours

Wendy: But I'm just thinking we mentioned earlier that there's a lot of things that keep coming, they keep saying we will revisit this, we will think about this, they'll come back. So, I think someone mentioned earlier that they don't really know what's going to happen, so they've got this vision, this model but no one really knows how to get there. So where do you think the gap is there? Do you think the gap is with top management, the consulting teams? Where's the gap? because as you mentioning there seems to be a gap that's there, there's no straight line. B7ut do think a process like this should be as easy as that or what are the gaps? Coz it looks like there are gaps and one of them you mentioned is communication or not knowing

85. I don't know, one could think that there's maybe a gap between the consulting team and Siyaya team. I don't know

86. Brenda mentioned something that, for me the gap is between the stakeholders and the Siyaya team whoever is involved there. You know why I'm saying this, like I said they confirmed

everything last year now they want to implement why? Because of that other party, it's not willing to buy in, really not

Wendy: Which is the other party?

87. Unions, they are not willing to buy in, because last they declared a dispute if you remember, they are not willing to buy anything there. The reason was that they started things and they didn't involve us, they forgot about us that is the dragging line, that is the gap between the two

Wendy: So that involvement...and in terms of if we move to the next dimension I can pick up that in terms of our mental side, impact, physically there is some challenges communication.

And then in terms of eth social part of it, how is the social aspect of your life being impacted, if there is an impact?

88. I think there is an impact to a certain extent; some people have a friendship, relation with some of their colleagues now you have the idea that some of your colleagues might not be your colleagues in future. Some people have difficulty in getting to his social area, they tell them well, I am redundant at my work now, one idea can be you're not good enough for the job or the rest of the social group can say, ok, somebody, someone will ask more favours from me because he can't get it himself to a certain extent

89. I read in an article on retrenchments the other day and this person said that, and I think that's where the social, I don't maybe if its mental also but it's like a grieving process when you lose a job. You know first its denial and shock, then denial, anger and acceptance of what is happening to you and that can be a, that can have an impact on the social side of your life because you, some people might stop spending money, others might go on a shopping spree or spending spree

90. One other thing also in the social area, when they started with Siyaya they deliberately definitely said it's not about retrenching people and now 2 years later it's about retrenching people and that's the big problem. So now your friend, you say, they say we've got the Siyaya money saving thing and now all of a sudden you tell them Siyaya is going to cost you your job. Is your company not honest with you?

91. It's questionable for other people outside there, for me socially obviously I will limit on some other stuff and for me to talk about issues to my colleagues and obviously some will help me, there's a terms that says when days are dark friends are few. That's why I'm saying, I remember from my previous company I was working there as a contractor, I was doing training you know when the contract lapsed all the friends just flew away, I was left with four friends and those guys were there for me. Some didn't understand why the company couldn't appoint you, well I gave them a reason and they were trying left and right to find something for me and indeed after a few months I went back to work at the same company, while I was working there I got another job. See now it shows that if you socialize, if you're open to your friends, some might help, you can get help, some say there's a guy that I know he's been retrenched due to company restructuring, some they do understand why restructure the company for certain reasons not say you're not the best but because of they are forced to do that I mean somewhere somehow they will sympathise, somewhere somehow they will not. Socially it is important to socialize and talk about other things and then stress will be less there you know, there won't be that much of emotions

Wendy: So I'm getting from you that there is support in, from friends maybe your colleagues, it's not always about not getting support or not getting any help, but if you share and open and communicate you can actually get assistance to deal with any issues

92. Look, I agree with him in the sense that it says that you know, if you do don't be afraid to talk about it because it might just be the time to say you know I'm going to be retrenched and somebody else to say by the way there is a position maybe you can consider it, now you keep it to yourself and people don't know really, there might be a door, another door opening for you

Wendy: So communicating to your friends sometimes its good not to bottle things up. Is that a coping mechanism?

93. I think that's a coping mechanism, I , when the first time we heard about it I mean when we as eth company heard about the retrenchment I spoke to my friends outside the company and then I said look I am going to be affected but now I'm calling in favours, I was joking about it , I said one of these days I might be without a job and then they said but don't worry you will get work very quickly. It doesn't always happen that way but you never know it might, luck might strike and you just opened your mouth at the right time at the right place and another thing might pop up for you

Wendy: Ok, I get a lot of, I hear the support or speaking to your colleagues, friends and in terms of family life any impact? How are the relationships there?

94. Look, I think, family will support you no matter, I told my family this is going to happen to me, I might be without work , my husband said look what comes we must just, look I know I must work so if it's not Exxaro it will have to be somewhere else. It might take me longer to look for a job but I hope to get something

95. We need job security, it's important

96. Ok, there's no guarantee

97. Not here, I mean somewhere else...you know they might start things later. If you look at Maslow

98. Oh ja the hierarchy...psychological needs

99. I mean I like the way Maslow put the things in that hierarchy, you know like for me it states clearly for people that people want one two three, but then because of the other side it's not always possible .Like for instance, job security, this is not my company I'm working for Exxaro obviously there are owners there so there's no job security there you know

100. Sometimes it's difficult here we go into a savings exercise and then you read in the newspapers of the bonuses that the bosses get, it's difficult, I mean that bonus can pay four people like me till I go on pension (More than 4 people actually) and that maybe it difficult because you can't get together ...Is he getting paid to fire me?

101. If you look at the case of Eskom, there were guys, top guys that were getting huge bonuses, unfortunately it was not part of restructuring the company of Eskom, but, the union guys were complaining that these guys are getting fat benefits and they are doing nothing they just sit and talk and cascade. But the guys there on the floor that is doing the work is getting peanuts you see, it's one of those things

Wendy: I pick up that a lot of these issues that we are discussing, probably they are relevant to us because we are currently at Exxaro and we are experiencing this, but probably do you think the extent outside and beyond, do we expect this process to be any different, do we expect it to be any better than other companies? DO we expect management to handle this better?

102. Look I think it's in both companies the same, how it's dealt with might be different

103. But I mean one thing, when they started with Siyaya they said we around the table need to save the money, now it's not we around the table have to evaluate the jobs, it's somebody else that has to evaluate the jobs but they still call it Siyaya

104. But again while you are there, have you seen the consultants that are around the building? How much are we spending to pay those people there? It's huge amount, whereby we can share the job and keep the company going

105. I mean one must accept that if you implement a new system that will make the working of the company, it's a project and you might not have the knowledge of your workers inside to implement or to establish that system inside. You need somebody to come and establish that system and get it running and then they move out again. But then to a certain extent it would be much easier to understand that if they say, this is what it's going to cost to implement it and that is our savings projected for the net five years. So don't worry this is going to cost us 50million but we are going to save a 100million. So this project is going to pay for itself, then you can say I am comfortable with this thing, it makes sense to do it like that. But now we don't see, we hear from the people that have to arrange accommodation that they have to accommodate close to

300 people extra in the building already. So now you start asking, in the whole of the company they want to get rid of or they foresee that 300 people is going to lose their jobs but then they already appointed and there's no completion date communicated. I mean till when are these people going to be here? They want to implement SAP in the net year so these people are going to be here for the net part of this year

Wendy: SO , I pick up that there is a lot of questions not always answered in this process, clearly there's an impact on all these dimensions. Do you think there is a relationship between all of those then?

106. Ja the one has an effect on the other one, like say for instance your physical, I mean you maybe don't sleep well now you tired, you don't feel like working which is your mental, and also your social you might not want to talk to your colleagues, or you might be miserable at home you don't want to socialize with your family or something like that because this is playing on your mental

107. And mentally you try to work it for yourself, amongst yourself that keeps you awake because you worry about this or you not sure how they get to that and then in the end it don't make sense to you so you fail to understand why they do it because it don't make normal financial sense or operational sense or whatever the case may be

108. You know you mentioned also how is it affecting your family, I through experience have always noticed that your family will be with you through thick and thin. Friends come and go in your life, so if it's going hard they will help you through it. Look, I don't know if it's all family situations but I know with experience of my, our family we will stick through and thin, we will help each other where we can. It doesn't necessarily mean your immediate family but your extended family will always be there for you also

Wendy: We are almost closing, just a few more questions- do you think there's an awareness of this change; we mentioned earlier why do you think this is happening. Do you think people are aware of why this change must be, they or why we going through this. We've mentioned what you think

109. Thus far you know we had a session in the last week and it was from various departments in the company and each one seemed to be knowing not a 100% but the basic they are aware of it, the impact I don't think, they don't see it that serious as I said they might not be affected so they don't take it that serious

Wendy: And the desire for this change? Because in one of our last sessions one of the impacts that people kept bringing up is maybe you have to change your position, change your location, change who you report to, you mentioned that here. Do you think there's that desire to go through this change and to work in a different way? So now you are working in a certain way then there's a process which is restructuring, do you think people have the desire, do you have the desire to change the way you are currently working and report somewhere else?

110. I don't think that would be such a bad thing, I mean you adapt and carry on

111. There is so much new technology coming in and we need to keep up, with cell phones, you used to have just a cell phone, now the blackberry, now it's...if you also want to be sort of with it, you have to change, it maybe takes longer but if you really want to change you will change

Wendy: So would you be comfortable...

112. I mean normally one would expect ok, it's one thing if a service is discontinued in an exercise like this but if its changed for the better then it might create new opportunities for the people in that area, so maybe somebody who are at the end of their career scope and now with this new thing they might have new scope, but I mean that is only in a department that they do envisaged there's some changes and I mean there's a lot of new positions and managers and stuff that needs to be filled so obviously there will be opportunities for some people to move up or to move to a different discipline. So maybe those people are some of the 20% they can't wait for this because I want that position and that position wasn't in the company before, so yes, they might be happy

113. But then if you tell yourself that you want that position, it's not guaranteed that you will get it

114. There's also, at Exxaro we've got various generations and I mean with the new generation we are coming with new ideas, new concepts and things like that and it's easy to be up to date ...I mean I've got a son of five years old and he comes with ideas and I feel stupid and he tells me no not like this, like that, so in the work situation also if you can improve it, let it work effectively

115. But I mean, to mention something way different, one of our own requested consultation sessions before they were formally consulting it was mentioned to us the purpose of this thing is to change the old culture

Wendy: The purpose of this restructuring exercise?

116 Yes, it's to change the old culture because the way that Iscor did the stuff is not right we need to move on

117. But I don't think all the old cultures are wrong, I mean you know, there, even on a religious point of view we still, we still go and do our traditional cultural way and the younger generations are still accepting that, some of them say but why do we have to do it but if it does work and if we maybe improve on the culture it can also work

118. I mean since Iscor now that it has been mentioned things have changed so dramatically to Kumba then Exxaro, I don't know if there are, maybe the elder people like me who worked for Iscor still, the older, I mean now that's the very old generation who might still think Iscor way but I don't the majority of employees in Exxaro don't think like that

119. There are colleagues in my department that came from the Iscor days but they have changed with the company, they were prepared to change

120. But also, then one can see some stuff were implemented and done in Iscor time like what they call SPI, Standard Operating Procedures that they had, and they did away with that, and the people are now again starting to compile standard procedures because it was the better way to do that thing so that you know if you've got that thing this is how we do it in this company otherwise everybody do it his own thing and then in the end when there is trouble then how could you do something like this because that operating procedure wasn't written down

121. That is a good example because I know when I did get into my position, not the position that I'm in, the previous one, the person that was before me left the company there was nobody actually to really guide me as to how to do, there was no standard operating procedures it's like you had to feel your way and to ask this one, how's this done, ask you're the IT people how is this done and you know actually I always believed you can leave this office today you cannot come back you can maybe die or something who's gonna be able to know what you did besides maybe your subordinates or something that stands in for you but if there is a standard operating procedure at least it's a step, one step forward for the net person

122. You know I'm just sitting thinking here again, sorry to go back is that that in the issue of retrenchment or restructuring you know here comes Exxaro it's creating some opportunities like Medupi and Growth with the Energy might come out and now if you think that they want to retrench people aren't they going to need those people? Aren't they going to start afresh and re-recruit those people you know, so it comes to me now why don't they wait for this, what do you call these two what do you call these projects to come to implementation and see if maybe those people can move there. I mean they can just do the changes in terms of the core and the services just to optimize those two but then ensure that those projects are pushed so that other people can be deployed of which will save a lot coz to recruit start afresh its costing guys you know

123. And then another thing they've done...well that's got now nothing maybe nothing to do with this but the implementation of this model and this new structures are most important because if they are not implemented properly five years down the line we will do the same thing. They

must implement and have very clear guidelines of what happens where and what the implementation somebody must sort of see the process through

CONCLUSION

Wendy: Shoo I think we have gone over the time

We received many recommendations and I will be sure to include these into my discussion

Thank everybody for coming

Results will be transcribed and analysed for discussion

Results will be made available to everyone on request

Might contact people for one on one sessions