# Appendix A: Interview sheet for focus group participants to interview colleagues

The following cover letter was sent out to introduce the invitees to the concept of focus groups and the content of the study. The rationale for the study, the role that they have to play and the confidentiality was addressed in the letter.

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**Thursday, June 26, 2003**

Dear participant

**Re: Immersion into the eLearning system**

> *A bonsai artist must continually respond to their trees' additional growth or damaged branches. Brian Kelly uses this as a metaphor for eLearning – You have to keep working on it, evaluating, and often adapting your vision to changes*.

Thank you for indicating that you are prepared to participate in creating a new future for Absa eLearning. This communication includes some preparation work for you in order to participate to the fullest extent in the focus group.

Please follow the instructions closely, as it will make your work much easier.

**Instructions for immersion**

The questions on the next page have been designed for you to guide you in broadening your understanding of eLearning contributing to business performance. Please do the following:

1. Arrange an interview with at least four colleagues.
2. Ensure that you understand the questions on the attached form. Should you have queries please do not hesitate to contact isabeauj@absa.co.za.
3. Complete the biographical data on the form.
4. Capture as much of the interviewee's answers as possible. You don't have to disagree with the interviewee. Just capture his or her answer in as much detail as possible. You will get your chance to share your opinion during the focus group.
5. **Bring the completed forms to the systems thinking session on 8 July to hand it in**.

Kind regards

Isabeau Korpel

---

Attached to the letter was an interview sheet detailing the immersion process that the focus group participants had to go through.

# Interview sheet

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name of Interviewer:** | |
| **Name of person that you are interviewing:** | |
| **Date:** | |
| **Time:** | |

**Questions**

1. Have you participated in any eLearning intervention in Absa?
    a. Yes
    b. No

2. How did you feel about it?

    _____

    _____

3. How do you feel that eLearning can contribute to business performance?

    _____

    _____

4. What are the issues that you experience with linking eLearning to business performance?

    _____

    _____

5. What improvements or suggestions do you have to ensure that eLearning contribute to your business performance?

    _____

    _____

6. Who are the stakeholders that determine the value of eLearning to Business?

    _____

    _____

7. Which criteria do you use to determine the value of eLearning?

_____

_____

8. What is the order of importance of the criteria?

_____

_____

The end

# Appendix B: Moderator guide detailing the focus group inquiry process

The moderator guide outlined the conversations that the moderator had to facilitate with the focus groups. During the focus group sessions, the content of the moderator guide was presented to the focus group participants on slides.

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**Group People Management**

**eLearning and Business performance**

**Intervention Identification Process**

**Classical problem solving methodology is based on the following assumptions:**

- There is a problem and we have the answers for the problem.
- Solving problems will improve the situation.
- To improve is to get rid of problems.
- Ideal/normal situations are without problems.
- We can separate the solving of problems and the implementation of the solution.

**Principles related to a systemic approach to problem solving:**

- The symptom is seldom the cause; the problem is seldom the symptom. In most cases symptoms are only messengers.
- There are interlocking systems requiring management to improve them.
- We need to change our level of thinking to improve systems. A problem cannot be solved at the level of thinking that created it.
- If we assume something is simple, then we are most probably already mistaken — specifically in the case of soft situations with a high people impact.
- Becoming aware of our own assumptions is the vital first step to improvement.

**Problems and solutions:**

- Knowing the solution does not mean we know how to solve the problem. Knowing the solution often inhibit us from solving the problem.

- Group dynamics is such an overriding factor that it may destroy all the benefits of knowledge, methods and procedures.
- To become empty of pre-dispositions towards a solution enhances the process of problem solving.

**Mental traps inhibiting mind shifts:**

- Changing mental models, our own thinking and learning continuously is difficult in practice.
- We are trapped in a situation, firstly by the way we think about it.
- Conceiving a whole new way of thinking is extremely difficult.

**Expected outcomes of a group learning process:**

- Primary
  - ➢To establish which systems need to be managed.
  - ➢To establish their respective measures of performance.
  - ➢To indicate 3-5 important interventions required to improve the overall functioning of the section, group or system.
- Secondary
  - ➢Shared understanding of the dilemmas faced by the group.
  - ➢A better understanding of the factors that influence behaviour in the system.
  - ➢Greater alignment on what actually affects performance in the system.
  - ➢An understanding and agreement on priority actions.

**Rules of the game (IIP):**

- Equality: all views are valuable.
- Respect new and other voices.
- Time management is important to create continuous momentum.
- Focused and concentrated efforts enhance the end product.
- Diversity creates space, new perspectives and leverage.

**People Management**

| **Despite our best efforts there are still issues related to improving business performance through eLearning. Why is this so?** |
|---|

**What are the problems (or symptoms) related to our inability?**

- Individually list using Post-it notes.
- One problem description per Post-it note.
- Descriptive statements contain a verb with 3-5 words.
- 7-10 descriptions per person (at least).
- Duplication is fine.
- Put Post-it notes on flipchart.

**Group problem statements into clusters of strongly linked themes:**

- Group or sort same factors together.
- Do not talk for first 5 minutes. Sort in silence to focus on the meaning behind and connections amongst all the ideas, instead of emotions and history that often arise in discussion.
- Write a problem statement per grouping — Don't interpret the data — Work with it on the same level that it was created. Simply describe it in a statement with 3-5 words using a verb that combines the grouping's central themes. If you take the data a logical level up, you are already working towards solutions.
- Write one summary/theme/problem statement per grouping of Post-it's.

**Diagraph the Interrelationships:**

- Transfer statements to a clean flipchart and arrange in a circular format, leaving as much space as possible for drawing arrows.
- Start with statement 1. Does it influence 2, or is it influenced by 2 - which factor is dependant on which? Is there a cause-effect relationship?
- Show the strength of influence by drawing an arrow from the stronger to the weaker statement. Is this problem influencing that problem more, or vice-versa?
- If same strength or no relation, no arrow.
- Document the reason for your decision.
- Continue to evaluate statements in clock-wise fashion until all statements have been compared to each other.
- Identify driver problems from statements with the most arrows going out.
- Choose 2-3 most important drivers.

**System in Focus:**

- This is the diagnostic phase in the process. Look **through** the driver problems (like looking through glasses — you don't see the glasses).
- What is the underlying system connecting/linking the driver problems — find the system that will alleviate the driver problems.
- This can be an already identified but malfunctioning system.
- Often it is not yet defined or identified in organisational terms.
- Write as: It is a system that will …….
- Or: It is a system that will do X for Y (client/beneficiary) in order to achieve Z (purpose).
- Select one system that will contain all the driver problems.

**Examples:**

- It is a system that will create an aligned and focused capacity to ensure the delivery of PM information that adds value to business decisions.
- It is system that will: attract and retain high calibre (skilled) staff based on defined roles and required competencies(es)
  For: PM of Absa
  In order to: ensure adequate numbers of skilled resources (business and technical), which will enable appropriate system ownership and proper change management.
- It is a system that will:
  - cause ownership.
  - involve key role-players from all representative areas to ensure an effective people management information system to Absa, that will enable value adding service.

**Stakeholder analysis and rating:**

- Determine the primary stakeholders for the identified system in focus. Stakeholders can cause the system to fail if they don't support it.
- Can be within or outside the system. A stakeholder may choose to take a stake in the system in focus.
- Stakeholder analysis and rating (2/2).
- Can use criteria such as power to influence the system in focus and satisfaction level to identify key stakeholders.
- Select 2-3 most important stakeholders of system in focus.

**Identify key measures of performance (MOPs):**

- For each of the 2-3 important stakeholders, determine their measures of performance (success) of the system in focus. Consider how they will measure efficiency and effectiveness.
- What would indicate for the stakeholder that the system is producing the right things?
- Note: MOP should be measurable; if you can say the measure varies (increases or decreases) it is a usable variable. Common types of variables – next page.
- MOPs should be directly related to SIF and should not measure the bigger system, but the SIF.
- Choose the 2 most important MOPs. (If you cannot choose, refer to importance of stakeholder).

**Common Types of Variables:**

- Goals
  - ➢Desired level of …
- Thinking/Feeling/Perception.
  - ➢Level of commitment to …
  - ➢Level of alignment around …
  - ➢Level of clarity about …
  - ➢Perceived level of …
  - ➢Morale
- Demand
  - ➢Pressure to …
  - ➢Need for …
  - ➢Demand to …
  - ➢Gap between … and …
  - ➢Competitive pressure

**Examples of stakeholders:**

- Top management
- PM systems management forum.

**Examples of measures of performance:**

- Level of user satisfaction.
- Cost of delivery.

**Identification of co-producers:**

- For each MOP, determine 5-8 primary co-producers of the MOP. A co-producer is a variable that will cause the MOP to vary (change up or down).
- Guidelines for naming co-producers:
  - ➢ use nouns or noun phrases (not verbs or verb phrases).
  - ➢ a well named co-producer fits into phrases like amount of, number of, size of (See next page for common types of variables).
  - ➢ use neutral or positive terms where possible, eg. Job satisfaction rather than job dissatisfaction.

**Common Types of Variables:**

- Goals
  - ➢Desired level of …
- Thinking/Feeling/Perception
  - ➢Level of commitment to …
  - ➢Level of alignment around …
  - ➢Level of clarity about …
  - ➢Perceived level of …
  - ➢Morale
- Demand
  - ➢Pressure to …
  - ➢Need for …
  - ➢Demand to …
  - ➢Gap between … and …
  - ➢Competitive pressure

**Building a System Dynamics Loop:**

- Arrange the co-producers in a causal Systems Diagram.
- Start with one MOP and ask which of the identified co-producers cause the MOP; move to the next co-producer - is the relationship direct or through the previous co-producer.
- The co-producers should be arranged to show how they interact to produce the MOP. Develop a causal string that creates the MOP by using arrows. Never use bi-directional arrows.

**Example of building a System Dynamics Loop:**

- Complete the forward loop by identifying the consequences of the MOP (often money and resources). Name 5-9 variables.
- Close the circular causal loops. A loop is a closed circle of co-producers/variables.
- Check that the logic of the diagram represents current reality that causes the MOP to change up or down.
- Model for insight. Do not try to model full complexity.
- Repeat steps for second MOP.

**Build a Systems Dynamics Model:**

- Combine the two causal loops into one diagram.
- Start to look for variables that are the same in both loops. This may require re-defining some co-producers/variables so that they have common descriptions.
- Put the common co-producers down in the middle and build the causal diagram from that point. Use all the information from both loops. Search for new connections. Redraw diagrams when and where necessary.
- Ensure that the resulting diagram logically hangs together. Check that all arrows and paths make sense, and that the integrated diagram explains the original measures of performance.
- Define relationships between variables: S=change in the Same direction and O=change in the Opposite direction.

**Identify Interventions:**

- Using your SDM, determine 4-7 high leverage points that will change in a sustainable way the performance of the system in focus.
- Search for new connections to make the SDM work better.
- Identify appropriate interventions that use the leverage points. In other words, what can be done to “bring about” the leverage points.
- Identify which conversations have to take place to initiate these interventions.

# Appendix C: Observation sheet for collecting behavioural data on the focus group participants

The observation sheet was designed and implemented by the observers. An example of an observation sheet is shown below. Basic theoretical guidelines were provided to the observers. The observers reflected on the specific group dynamics, mental models (if evident) and the group synergy. These sub-classifications were only for the benefit of the observation session and were combined into a reflection on behaviour in the main research report.

---

**Observation sheet**

**Observer:** _____ **Session:** _____

| Behaviour classification | Behaviour observation | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|
| **Group dynamics** | | |
| **Mental models** | | |
| **Synergy** | | |

# Appendix D: Questionnaire for the electronic survey

The objective of the electronic survey was two-fold:

1. To collect biographical information of focus group participants; and
2. To determine the reaction of the focus group participants to the inquiry process.

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Dear participant

Thank you for your valuable input to improve the contribution of eLearning to business performance. We appreciate your energetic and passionate participation as well as the candour with which you gave feedback to each other. I can only describe it as a magic process and I am looking forward to working with you again.

In order for me to determine the process there are some closing questions that I would like to ask. The **first** part of the questions is about you and the **second** part is about the process. Please, again, be as honest as you like!

**Part 1: Biographical information**

1. Employee number:
2. Initials, name and surname (Optional):
3. Job description:

   _____

   _____

4. Male/Female:
5. Age:
6. Home language:

   _____

   _____

7. How long have you been in your current job position?

   _____

   _____

8. What are your qualifications?

_____

_____

9. What was your occupation prior to coming to Absa?

_____

_____

**Part 2: Post Focus group questionnaire**

**Instructions:**

Please circle the answer that you feel is most appropriate. In the open space please provide honest feedback.

**Question 1**

How did you feel about the Systems Thinking process?

a. I enjoyed the process.
b. I learnt new things.
c. I did not enjoy the process and felt that it was a waste of time.
d. I felt intimidated by the video being made.
e. I did not feel as if I could make a contribution.

**Question 2**

How did you feel about the logistical arrangements of the process? Please complete the percentages for each aspect:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. | Food: | Good | No comment | Poor |
| b. | Venue: | Good | No comment | Poor |
| c. | Arrangements: | Good | No comment | Poor |

**Question 3**

Did you clearly understand the objectives of the Systems Thinking process?

a. The objectives were clearly understood.
b. Some of the objectives were unclear.
c. All of the objectives were unclear and could not be understood.

**Question 4**

Were all your questions answered during the Systems Thinking process?

a. All my questions were sufficiently answered.
b. 70% of my questions were answered.
c. 30% of my questions were answered.
d. None of my questions were answered.
e. I had no questions.

**Question 5**

Will the results of the systems thinking process contribute to your working environment?

a. Yes, the content will definitely change the way I do my job.
b. Yes, but it will take some time to do everything suggested.
c. No, the content will not be useful at all.

**Question 6**

Which one of the following terms describes your overall learning best?

a. Excellent
b. Good
c. Fair
d. Poor

**Question 7**

Did the Systems Thinking process meet your expectations?

a. Definitely
b. Adequately
c. A little
d. Not at all

**Question 8**

Three days of participating in a focus group was…

a. Too long.
b. Adequate.
c. Too short.

**Question 9**

How much did you learn during the systems thinking process?
I increased my knowledge and skills about this topic by …

a. more than 90%.
b. more than 70%.
c. more than 50%.
d. less that 50%.

**Question 10**

Would you motivate your colleagues to participate in a similar session?

a. Definitely
b. Maybe
c. Not at all

**Question 11**

Which of the following topics did you learn most about during the Systems Thinking process?

a. The systems thinking process.
b. eLearning.
c. Business performance.
d. The relationship between eLearning and business performance.

## Closing

Thank you for sharing some more information with us. If you have any further suggestions, changes or additions, please note them below. We appreciate all help and every suggestion will be considered.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please complete this document before **25 July:**

1. Online and mail a saved copy to isabeauj@absa.co.za **or**
2. Fax your copy for attention: Isabeau Korpel **011 350 5364**

# Appendix E: Costs of the focus group research

The calculation of the costs for doing the focus groups was based on the model provided by Greenbaum (1988). The costs per item are reflected in Table E.1.

**Table E.1:** Costs of the focus group research

| Cost item | Description / Comment | Number of units | Unit price (R) | Total cost (R) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Facility costs | Facility included a room with video conferencing recording equipment. Thirty-two people can be accommodated in the facility. | 24 hours | 300[1] | 72 000 |
| 2. Screening costs | Screening of the learners was done by the contact centre co-ordinator. | 5 hours | 400[2] | 2 000 |
| | Screening of the other role players was done by the researcher | 10 hours | 400[3] | 4 000 |
| 3. Refreshment costs | **Day 1**: Includes arrival refreshments, two tea breaks and lunch. | 36 people | 55[4] | 1 980 |
| | **Day 2 and 3**: Includes arrival refreshments, two tea breaks and lunch | 25 people x 2 days | 60[5] | 3 000 |
| | Verifier sessions | 6 people x 2 days | 55[6] | 660 |
| 4. Video taping | Videos | 10 | 10 | 100 |
| 5. Moderator | Moderator is internal to Absa | 24 hours | 400[7] | 9 600 |

[1] Hourly rate of the video conferencing facility.
[2] Average hourly cost to company rate of the Contact Centre co-ordinator.
[3] Average hourly cost to company rate of the researcher.
[4] Cost per head.
[5] Cost per head.
[6] Cost per head.
[7] Average cost to company rate for the moderator. Only time and materials relevant.

**Table E.1:** Costs of focus group research, continued

| Cost item | Description / Comment | Number of units | Unit price (R) | Total cost (R) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. Observers | Two observers | 24 hours x 2 | 400[8] | 19 200 |
| 7. Verifiers | 3 Verifiers for two sessions | 8 hours | 500[9] | 4 000 |
| 8. Focus group participants | 36 participants[10] | 8 hours | 200[11] | 57 600 |
| | 25 participants | 16 hours | 200[12] | 80 000 |
| 10. Researcher | 1 Researcher | 48 | 400[13] | 19 200 |
| | | | **Total** | **R273 340** |

[8] Average cost to company rate for the observers. Only time and materials relevant.
[9] Average cost to company rate for the verifiers. Only time and materials relevant.
[10] Time of all the participants is calculated at an average rate.
[11] Average hourly cost to company rate of the participants. No co-op fees were paid.
[12] Average hourly cost to company rate of the participants. No co-op fees were paid.
[13] Average cost to company rate for the researcher. Only time and materials relevant.

# Appendix F: Résumés of the observers

Lee-Anne Deale is an Industrial Psychologist. She mastered in Industrial Psychology. She is currently an Organizational Development Consultant and an experienced qualitative researcher in the area of customer research.

Sophia Nawrattel has a Masters in Business Administration (MBA). She is associated with the SA Institute of Bankers (FIBSA). She has banking and general management experience within the financial industry for sixteen years.

# Appendix G: Résumés of the verifiers

**Verifier 1:** Lawrence Bongani Mlotshwa

Lawrence Bongani Mlotshwa is currently the Executive General Manager of People Management at Absa Bank.

Lawrence holds the following qualifications:

- B.A. HED – Fort Hare University
- EDP – University of Cape Town
- M.B.A. – Henley Management College – U.K.

Lawrence has worked for various organisations such as Unilever, Sun International and Nedcor Bank. Lawrence's extensive experience includes:

- Organisation Development
- Change Management
- Industrial Relations
- H.R. Development
- Competency based Management
- Performance Management
- Talent Management
- Leadership Development
- Marketing and Sales
- Coaching and Mentorship
- Strategy Development
- Project Management

Lawrence spends his leisure time, watching soccer and reads extensively about organisation strategy and change management.

**Verifier 2:** Dr Beatrice Horne, Learning Resources Solutions

| | |
|---|---|
| Academic qualifications: | B.Soc.Sci (Hons) RAU |
| | M.Soc Sci (Cum Laude) RAU |
| | D.Litt.et.Phil (RAU) |
| | MBL (Unisa) |
| Specialisation: | Human Capital Consulting |
| Position in firm: | Director: Sales |

**Professional experience**

Beatrice completed her Ph.D in November 1999. She was awarded a total of ten merit bursaries throughout the course of her studies. In November 2002, she completed the MBL program at the SBL (Unisa).

Her work experience involves part-time and full-time private practice work over a period of 7 years. In this business she was engaged in a variety of consulting for individuals, educational institutions and businesses.

Her formal employment experience includes work in a South African NGO, an international health communications company, as well as for Thomas International and Deloitte & Touche Human Capital Corporation. She occupied account management, marketing and business consulting positions in these businesses.

Over the years she has been exposed to local and international business consulting regarding human capital issues: leadership and management development, selection system design, executive assessment, performance management, change management, etc.

At the time of the execution of this study she was employed by Learning Resources as Director of the LRS division specialising in the areas of blended learning, eLearning and other areas of human capital development.

**Verifier 3:** Barry Vorster has been a member of the eLearning (computer-based training) fraternity since 1994 and holds a masters degree in Computer-Aided Education from the University of Pretoria. He began his career as a lecturer in Afrikaans Linguistics with the University of Potchefstroom in 1990. Since then he has worked at the University of Zululand, Absa Bank, Africa Growth Network, IBM/Lotus and AST, and has recently joined eGEDI Learning Solutions. He will be involved in business development and strategic consultancy services for eGEDI's clients.

Whilst at IBM he spent two years in Botswana as the regional manager for Lotus Professional Services (LPS) and was awarded the Lotus Professional Services Person of the Year Award in 1999 and 2000. As member of the LPS Intellectual Capital Management group, he taught courses on business innovation and engagement management to new LPS recruits at the LPS Academy in Brussels. He has also presented several papers on Knowledge Management and eLearning.

His clients include - Unisa School for Business Leadership, Rand Merchant Bank, BMW, DaimlerChrysler, Botswana Development Corporation, Vista (Orange) Cellular, Botswana Police Service, Botswana Department of Education, Botswana Power Corporation, Bank of Botswana, British American Tobacco, Kumba Resources and Absa Bank. His last engagement was with Eskom where he assisted them with the selection and procurement of a Learning Management System.

# Appendix H: Letter of invitation to the focus group participants

Learning and Development
2nd floor Towers East
Johannesburg
2000
Thursday, May 29, 2003

Dear [participant name]

**Re: Participation in the future of eLearning in Absa**

> *A bonsai artist must continually respond to their trees' additional growth or damaged branches. Brian Kelly uses this as a metaphor for eLearning – You have to keep working on it, evaluating, and often adapting your vision to changes*.

eLearning is part of the Absa strategy to obtain and maintain a competitive advantage through human capital. eLearning is also part of the eBusiness strategy of Absa that states that Absa wants to dominate this market. Absa eLearning, also known as ActiveLearn, has been in existence since 1999. Various lessons have been learnt and some 20 000 learning interventions has been completed.

It is now time to take eLearning to a next level of maturity. We would like you to participate in this process in order to co-create a future state for eLearning. The results of this process will also be used for an academic study to ensure that Absa is truly seen as having a benchmarked eLearning solution.

We require your presence at an eLearning Systems Thinking Workshop on 8 July 2003. Two further workshops will be held on 15 July 2003 and

16 July 2003. More details regarding the workshops will be sent out at a later stage.

Please confirm you participation in these workshops by replying to isabeauj@absa.co.za before 15 June 2003.

We are looking forward to your participation and valuable input in creating the future of eLearning for Absa.

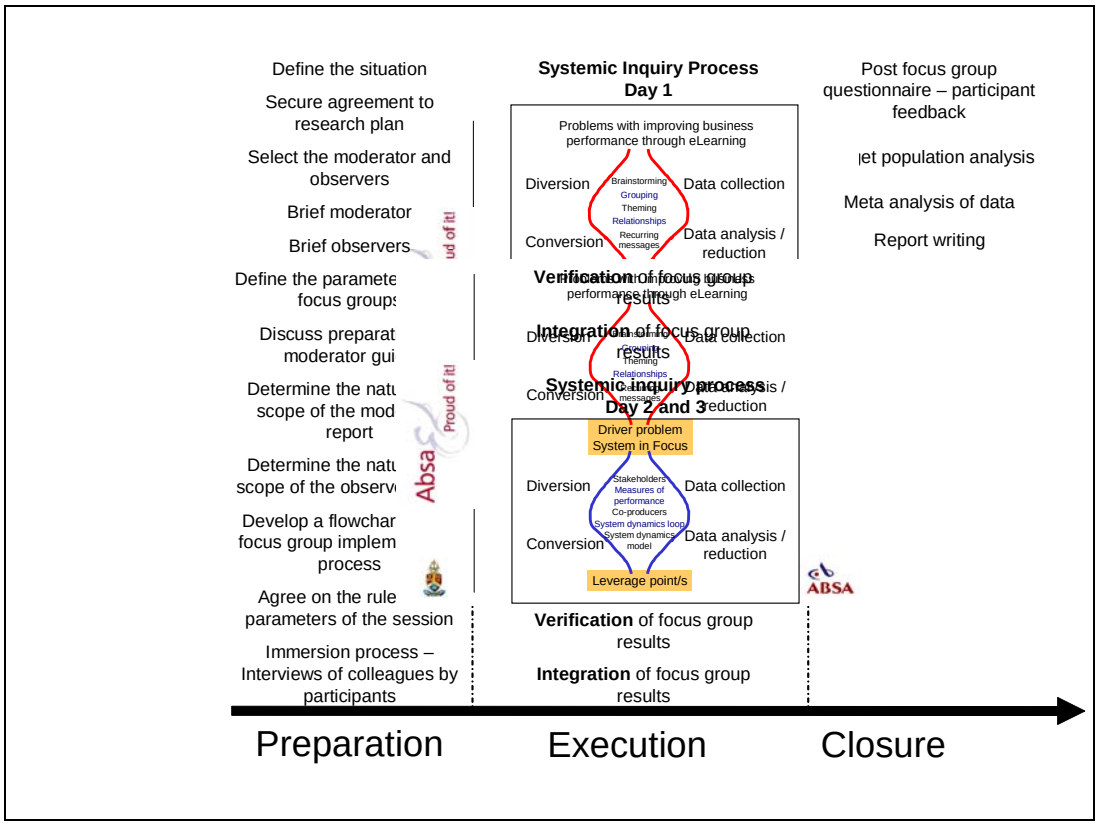
Kind regards

Bev Judd
Manager: People Management: Learning and Development: D&D
cc.
Murray Burger
Lawrence Mlotshwa

# Appendix I: Flowchart of the implementation of the research inquiry process

Figure I.1 is a pictorial flowchart of the 3 phases – Preparation, Execution and Closure of the implementation of the research study.

**Figure I.1**: Pictorial flowchart of the implementation process



# Appendix J: Phase 1: Preparation for focus groups

**Table J.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection – Phase 1

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 1: Preparation | Define the situation (Greenbaum, 1988) | • **Summary of the situation**:<br>Absa is a financial institution that deployed eLearning. The Absa Contact Centre specifically utilized eLearning as a solution to Socialization and Fraud Awareness. Specific feedback was given that the eLearning solutions did not add value. The feedback also included reports on resistance from middle management about eLearning as a solution. There seemed to be disagreements about the context of the value add of eLearning for business performance.<br>• **Purpose of the focus group sessions**:<br>The purpose of conducting this research is to determine a leverage point/s to improve business performance through eLearning. The systems inquiry process is used to create meaning from human interactions (conversations about the problem).<br>• **Utilisation**:<br>The information from the research is utilised in two ways:<br>1. To solve the practical problem that exist between the Learning and Development Department and the Business Unit; and<br>2. To add to the structure of knowledge that exists around the contribution of eLearning to Business performance in the field of eLearning.<br>• **Composition**:<br>The types of people who were included in the focus group were people:<br>❖ with exposure to the implemented eLearning programmes.<br>❖ who played a role during the implementation. These role-players were determined during a conversation with Bev Judd (Instructional Design manager on 2 April 2003 at Absa Towers North, Johannesburg). The role-players identified are needs analysts, instructional designers, implementers, online facilitators, technologist, learner support, learner administration, operational managers, team leaders and learners.<br>• **Budgets**:<br>Absa sponsored the total research budget. The traditional cost elements of the focus groups were calculated in terms of time and materials came to R 273 340 and are attached as **Appendix E**. |

**Table J.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection (continued)

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 1: Preparation | Secure agreement to research plan (Greenbaum, 1988) | • The research plan was contracted in formal meetings with the following stakeholders:<br>➢ Laetitia van Dyk: Group General Manager People Management for doing the study in Absa.<br>➢ Lawrence Mlotswa: General Manager Specialist Services, for doing the study in eLearning, utilising Absa data and resources and participating in the study as an internal verifier.<br>➢ Murray Burger: Head: Learning and Development for utilising resources in eLearning.<br>➢ Bev Judd: Manager Design and Development for participating in the study and contracting utilisation of resources.<br>➢ Elna Steyn: Business co-ordinator for contracting resources to participate in the focus group sessions.<br>➢ Esme Ehlers: General Manager: People Management Projects for allowing me time to do the research in working hours.<br>➢ Barry Vorster: Consultant for participating in the study as a verifier external to Absa.<br>➢ Beatrice Horne: Learning Resources (Pty) Ltd. for participating in the study as a verifier external to Absa.<br>➢ Johannes Cronje: Mentor for PhD programme. |
| | Select the moderator (Greenbaum, 1988) | The moderator was selected based on her extensive understanding and experience in people behaviour and effectiveness in conducting interviews. The moderator also displayed previous competent behaviour in handling group dynamics without becoming involved in the content being facilitated. |
| | Select the observers (Greenbaum, 1988) | • Two observers were selected based on:<br>➢ Knowledge of the Absa system;<br>➢ Competence in systemic thinking and observation of people processes; and<br>➢ Availability on the days of facilitation.<br>• The résumés of the observers are attached in **Appendix F**. |
| | Select the verifiers and scribe | • Three verifiers were selected. A scribe was also requested to document the details of the feedback provided by the verifiers.<br>• The first verifier was selected based on Absa experience. The verifier is also a stakeholder in Absa eLearning. The verifier was internal to Absa.<br>• The second verifier was selected based on industry eLearning expertise. The verifier was external to Absa, but had prior experience in the Absa system.<br>• The third verifier was selected based on pragmatic eLearning implementation expertise. The verifier was external to Absa (The résumés of the verifiers are attached in **Appendix G**). |

**Table J.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection (continued)

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 1: Preparation | Brief the moderator (Greenbaum, 1988) | • A meeting was held on 13 June 2003 to discuss the process with the moderator.<br>• The following topics were discussed:<br>➢ Background of the research project.<br>➢ Expectations were clarified in terms of the moderator's responsibility. It was agreed that the moderator would facilitate the systemic inquiry process during the focus group sessions. The moderator would be expected to participate in the post focus group discussion.<br>➢ It was also contracted that no research report would be expected from the moderator as the data collected and analysed would be captured by the focus group participants. |
| | Brief the observers (Greenbaum, 1988) | • A meeting was held on 1 July 2003.<br>• The objective of the briefing was to:<br>➢ Enable the observers to get the maximum possible out of the group sessions that they observed.<br>➢ Communicate the rules of the sessions relating to the observers.<br>➢ Ensure that there was shared meaning between the researcher and the observers as to the information that they should collect (Greenbaum, 1988).<br>• The following topics were discussed at the meeting:<br>➢ Who the participants were to be;<br>➢ Introducing the moderator and allowing a raport to develop between the moderators and the observers.<br>➢ Review of the moderator guide.<br>• Research documentation was provided to the observers as a basis to design the data collection tool (Morgan, 1989; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2000; Templeton, 1987). |

**Table J.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection (continued)

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 1: Preparation | Define the parameters of the focus groups (Greenbaum, 1988) | • The definition of the parameters of the focus groups was done in conjunction with the moderator, Bev Judd – manager of the Instructional Design Department – and Elna Steyn – the co-ordinator of the Business Unit resources.<br>• Due to the number of people responding to the research project, four focus groups were designed for Day 1. Three focus groups were designed for Day 2 and 3 of the research process. It was agreed that the research would take place within two weeks due to:<br>1. ensure the availability of the participants, moderator and observers;<br>2. accommodate the nature of the systemic inquiry process; and<br>3. maintain momentum in the research process.<br>• Due to practicality and time saving, it was decided to expose all the focus groups to the systemic inquiry process at the same time and place. The advantage was that all the groups would experience exactly the same process, venue and moderator behaviour. The disadvantage was that the external validity was compromised as the prospect of generalising the study reduced significantly. This disadvantage was countered by the argument that the systemic inquiry process is sensitive to context and that the research strategy was to be a bounded qualitative case study. A decision was made that the disadvantage did not greatly influence the contribution that the research could make.<br>• The focus group research was held at Absa Towers East, Johannesburg, based on:<br>➢ The accessibility of the venue to all the focus group participants; and<br>➢ The situation of the required video conferencing venue.<br>• Each of the focus groups consisted of a mix of role-players identified as participants in the study. Care was taken to ensure that the Learning and Development participants did not overwhelm the Business Unit participants. Further to this, the moderator ensured that there were no hierarchical reports in the groups, to limit intimidation. |

**Table J.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection (continued)

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 1: Preparation | Discuss preparation of moderator guide (Greenbaum, 1988) | • The moderator guide existed in the format of a slide show depicting the systemic inquiry process. The content of the slideshow is attached as **Appendix B**. The moderator developed the original slides. The researcher adapted the content of the slides to ensure that it was aligned with the aim of the research project. |
| | Determine the nature and scope of moderator report (Greenbaum, 1988) | • No moderator report was required as the focus group participants were accountable for capturing their thoughts and outputs. The researcher was responsible for writing the focus group report in the context of the longer research report. |
| | Determine the nature and scope of observer report (Greenbaum, 1988) | • The observers were contracted to provide a summary report after the total system process was completed.<br>• The observers were contracted to note:<br>➢ Group dynamics;<br>➢ Mental models; and<br>➢ Synergy within the groups.<br>• The observations were reported per subsidiary research questions. |
| | Develop a flowchart for the focus group implementation process (Greenbaum, 1988) | • A flowchart was developed for the focus group implementation process and is attached as **Appendix I**. This tool was used for contracting deliverables and tracking actions and dates. |
| | Agree on the rules and parameters of the session (Greenbaum, 1988) | • It was decided to utilise only one moderator. Two observers were requested due to the intensity and complexity of the observation process and the request for the development of an observation report.<br>• The moderator was briefed to facilitate the systems inquiry process and not to provide input towards the content within the process. The observers were requested not to converse with the participants regarding the process or the content. This rule was also valid for the researcher. |
| | Execute immersion process (Heroldt, 2003) | • An interview sheet was drawn up and provided to all the focus group participants on 25 June 2003, two weeks prior to the focus group sessions taking place.<br>• The participants were requested to bring the results of the interviews to Day 1 of the focus group sessions.<br>• The participants were requested to interview three to five colleagues.<br>• The results of the interviews were used to improve the width and depth of the participant's inputs during the system inquiry process (focus groups). |

# Appendix K: Phase 2: Execution – Day 1

**Table K.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 2: Execution - Data collection, analysis, observation and verification | Systemic inquiry process – Day 1 | • The first focus group session took place on 8 July 2003 at Absa Head Office.<br>• Coffee and tea was provided to the focus group participants prior to the interview. This allowed the delegates to communicate with each other.<br>• The session formally started at 9:00 am.<br>• The different role players were welcomed and introduced to each other:<br>➢ Researcher;<br>➢ Moderator;<br>➢ Observers;<br>➢ Video conferencing administrator; and<br>➢ Participants.<br>• The researcher set the scene and explained the process to the delegates.<br>• The moderator discussed the moderator guide with the participants, highlighting the principles of the systemic inquiry process.<br>• The problem statement was discussed:<br>Despite our best efforts there are still **issues** related to **improving business performance through eLearning**. Why is this so?<br>• The participants individually documented problems related to the problem statement.<br>• **Four** focus groups were formed. The problems of the individuals were put together. |
| Phase 2: Execution - Data collection, analysis, observation and verification (continued) | Systemic Inquiry Process – **Day 1** (continued) | • The problem statements were sorted into clusters of strongly linked themes.<br>• Each group discussed the reasoning for the clusters.<br>• The groups were then required to write a summary problem statement that represented the message of each the clusters.<br>• The participants then had a catered lunch.<br>• The participants used the clustered themes to draw **digraphs** depicting the cause and effect relationships between the clusters. A **reasoning statement** was recorded for each of the relationships.<br>• The **driver problems** were identified. |

**Table K.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection (continued)

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 2: Execution - Data collection, analysis, observation and verification | Systemic inquiry process – **Day 1** (continued) | • Each of the four focus groups developed a draft **system in focus**.<br>• The **observers** were present throughout the process and documented the contracted behaviour.<br>• The day was concluded and the participants were thanked for their participation. The next focus group session was contracted with the focus group participants. |

# Appendix L: Phase 2: Execution – Verification session

**Table L.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 2: Execution - Data collection, analysis, observation and verification | Verification of focus group results | • The verification session took place two days later after each focus group session, on 10 and 18 July 2003 at 8:30 at Absa Head office. Tea and coffee was provided.<br>**Figure L.1:** The verifiers (Barry Vorster, Lawrence Mlotswa and Beatrice Horne)<br>  <br>• The verifiers were taken through the same introductory content as the focus group participants.<br>• The data collected and analysed by the participants was presented step by step to the verifiers. The comments of the verifiers were attached to the data and a scribe documented the main themes in the conversations.<br>**Figure L.2:** The scribe (Wendy Sergel)<br>  <br>• The verifier session ended at 1:00 pm with lunch. |

# Appendix M: Phase 2: Systemic inquiry process – Days 2 and 3

**Table M.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 2: Execution - Data collection, analysis, observation and verification | Systemic inquiry process – Day 2 and 3 | • The second focus group session took place on 15 and 16 July 2003 at Absa head Office.<br>• Coffee and tea was provided to the focus group participants prior to the interview. The participants mingled and shared experiences from the previous focus group session.<br>• The session formally started at 9:00 am.<br>• The different role players were welcomed and introduced to each other:<br>➢ Researcher;<br>➢ Moderator;<br>➢ Observers;<br>➢ Video conferencing administrator; and<br>➢ Participants.<br>• The moderator set the scene and explained the process to the participants.<br>• The researcher presented the **integrated digraph** to the focus group participants in order to verify the content and create shared meaning regarding the work that was done.<br>• Feedback was given to the group regarding the **comments of the verifiers** on the process. |

**Table M.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection (continued)

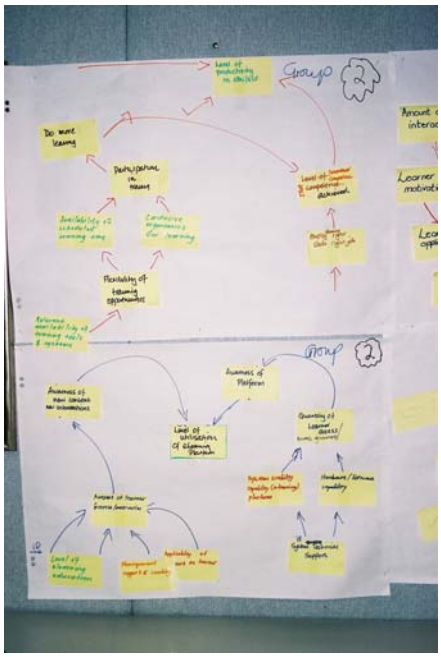
| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 2: Execution - Data collection, analysis, observation and verification (continued) | Systemic inquiry process – Day 2 and 3 | • The objectives for the next two days were set and the process and theory explained.<br>• The participants were divided into **three groups**. The groups were mixed to represent all the roles specifically business and learning.<br>• The **System in Focus** created in Session 1 was reviewed and one integrated System in Focus statement was agreed on. This was critical, as it formed the basis of the discussions for the next two days.<br>• The **primary stakeholders** involved in the System in Focus were identified. The two most influential stakeholders were prioritised.<br>• The **key measure of performance** for each one of the stakeholders was identified.<br>• The **co-producers** for each one of the measures of performance were identified.<br>• A **systems dynamic loop** was built for each of the measures of performance utilising the co-producers.<br>**Figure M.1:** Example of a systemic dynamic loop<br>  <br>• Combining the two systems dynamic loops created the **systems dynamic model**. One systems dynamic model was produced for each of the three groups.<br>• The participants were requested to tell their **system dynamic model 'stories'** and to document this on the model.<br>• The leverage point/s was identified by analysing the SDM and determining the start of the story or the variable that influenced the SDM the most. |

**Table M.1:** Description of systemic process for data collection (continued)

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 2: Execution - Data collection, analysis, observation and verification (continued) | Systemic inquiry process – Day 2 and 3 | • The **observers** were present throughout the process and documented the contracted behaviour.<br>• At the end of the session on Day 3, the focus group participants were requested for feedback on:<br>➢ The systemic inquiry process; and<br>➢ Their own learning during the process.<br>• The participants were thanked for their contribution and the session was closed. |
| | Post focus group discussion with moderator and observers | • The **discussion session** followed directly after the focus group sessions on Day 3. The following questions were discussed:<br>➢ What worked well?<br>➢ What could be improved?<br>➢ General open discussion. |

# Appendix N: Phase 3: Closure of systemic inquiry process

**Table N.1:** Closure of systemic inquiry process

| Phase | Step | Procedure |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 3: Closure of the process | Post focus group questionnaire | • The questionnaire was sent to the participants via email. Feedback was requested within one week. Two channels for feedback were provided:<br>➢ Email: isabeauj@absa.co.za; or<br>➢ Fax: 011 350 5723. |
| | Target population analysis | The first part of the questionnaire focused on obtaining the personnel number from the participants as well as information not available on the Absa personnel system. The personnel number was used to obtain more information from the personnel system regarding qualifications, age, etc. |
| | Meta analysis of data | • Some of the data collected during the focus group sessions was also analysed by the focus group participants. During the meta-analysis of the data, the researcher reported on the following themes:<br>1. What were the recurring messages between the focus groups?<br>2. What was the unique value-add of each focus group? |
| | Report writing | The focus group report was written in the period August to September 2003. Feedback was given to the eChannels Contact Centre and to Learning and Development. Both role players had follow-up sessions based on the outcomes of the research results. |

## Appendix O: Problem statements for Focus Group 1

**Note:** None of the problems statements were edited. They were typed as the focus group reflected it.

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**Theme 1: Lack of motivation due to learners being dependant on instruction to learn**

Problem 1

Motivation lacks when training is not compulsory and not in a class room environment.

Problem 2

It is not set as high importance and an exiting tool that can be used for self development improvement of business performance.

Problem 3

To have thorough feedback survey to see how practically is being going, Learning, gained & understand.

Problem 4

Learner's does not take ownership of the Learning.

**Theme 2: There is no consensus regarding the term eLearning and implementation there of**

Problem 1

Management does not understand the process of applying eLearning within their environment.

Problem 2

eLearning culture not embedded in Absa's "way of doing things". What is eLearning according to Absa?

**Theme 3: Technical support are not sufficient**

Problem 1

Turnaround time for problem solving on "e" could lead to learners getting demotivated specially if course has specified end date. Example - Compliance Certification.

Problem 2

Technical difficulties experienced by learners are demotivating.

Problem 3

Band-width problems (system keeps falling over).

Problem 4

The total business is not currently supported with the eLearning infrastructure.

Problem 5

Active learn should not be the one and only eLearning vehicle. What about e-mail (Absa mail), PDF files etc.?

Problem 6

Part time workers can not participate in learning.

Problem 7

Learner can not access the content from home.

**Theme 4: Management does not take ownership of eLearning**

Problem 1

Management does not support the eLearning experience.

Problem 2

Management are unable to sec the strategic importance of a learning intervention and does therefore not see eLearning as a priority.

Problem 3

Perhaps importance should be placed on eLearning e.g. The ease of use, availability and the value it can bring to staff. Value add course being the skills & information that they can gain from making use of the eLearning platform.

Problem 4

Lack of Management support.

Problem 5

Learners find it difficult to do eLearning at their workstations as management see work as more important.

Problem 6

Learner does not have time to work with the content on “e”.

Problem 7

Learners are responsible for their own training, when doing eLearning, learners are sometimes disturbed due to business importance matters getting priority above the set eLearning time.

Problem 8

Communication brought down between Management, Team Leaders and staff - need to highlight facts on what is important.

Problem 9

Learning should be in a controlled environment.

**Theme 5: Learners do not have time to do eLearning**

Problem 1

Learners to not have the time to do eLearning - prefer time out in class rooms.

Problem 2

Only specified times are given for eLearning and it does not support the 24/7 principle. (10 day window)

Problem 3

Learning time is not scheduled “MIS”. What about flexi staff?

Problem 4

Challenges and time frame needed to be completed in a certain time being flexi staff. Difficult (MLC)

**Theme 6: Management does not understand the ROI of “eLearning”**

Problem 1

Initial cost for eLearning is very high - Management may not approve.

Problem 2

Management does not see the benefit in time gained with learners doing eLearning versus workshop. (that includes travelling time, workshop time etc.)

**Theme 7: eLearning platform is not user friendly**

Problem 1

Computer literacy of learners are very low.

Problem 2

Frustrations experienced when trying to use the eLearning platform - leads to “negativity” towards future use.

Problem 3

Platform is not user friendly.

Problem 4

The site is not as user friendly - employees don’t know where to search for what.

# Appendix P: Problem statements for Focus Group 2

**Note:** None of the problems statements were edited. They were typed as the focus group reflected it.

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**Theme 1: IT Infrastructure/system is not always in place to support eLearning.**

Problem 1

All learners have access to the Employee Portal.

Problem 2

The “platform” needs to support the learning material.

Problem 3

The navigation through the site is not user friendly.

Problem 4

The site needs to be easy to access, e.g. Storing the Web address on Internet Explorer or on the Absa Website under a staff section.

Problem 5

System problems (Access, Off line, Support).

**Theme 2: We have not marketed / communicated the value of eLearning**

Problem 1

Management or training need to communicate eLearning with education of how the site can help, together with awareness campaigns.

Problem 2

A marketing strategy needs to be developed to inform employees what eLearning is about.

Problem 3

We have not communicated to SBU/GSF exco management what the various learning mechanisms in use in Absa are, what are their advantages/disadvantages.

Problem 4

We do not explain how eLearning fits into/supports the Absa learning philosophy.

Problem 5

A communication strategy, both long and short term needs to be developed to inform and keep informing the learners.

**Theme 3: Learners and Line Management are not ready to use eLearning**

Problem 1

Not as effective as being/learning in a “class room” environment.

Problem 2

Some people are scared to use technology to learn.

Problem 3

Blended approach so that each defining medium supports another. (Learners awareness & Learner readiness).

Problem 4

Learners/Line Managers are not ready to use eLearning. They want face to face class room training (It’s what they are used to and most comfortable with). We have the same problem with learning on the Absa channel.

**Theme 4: Designed learning material must be addressed - How do we support the learner? How do we make links back to business results?**

Problem 1

No artificial intelligence or human interactions whereby a user may pose questions, and the system will respond with the relevant text or point to the location of the information.

Problem 2

Do not benefit from other delegates (contributions/questions).

Problem 3

Limited learning aids e.g. slides, flip charts.

Problem 4

Design of learning is generally learner centred (outcomes based) and not necessarily business focussed.

Problem 5

We do not design, think about the required support for the eLearning learners. How can we make it easier for them. (How to study, how to plan your learning time and how to ask questions.)

Problem 6

We do not support the various learning styles on eLearning.

**Theme 5: The desired business results are not established right up front.**

Problem 1

Learning in general is not linked back to business performance. People don't understand why they are being training/responsible to implement knowledge.

Problem 2

The desired business results are not established right up front, when the need for the training is discussed/explored. So we at the end, don't know what to measure in terms of improved business performance.

Problem 3

"Line" does not give their support to the learners. "Line" does not give their co-operation.

Theme 6: Line Managers do not support & help learners learn via eLearning.

Problem 1

"Line" does not give their support to the learners. "Line" does not give their co-operation.

**Theme 7: Line Managers do not see eLearning as their responsibility.**

Problem 1

eLearning is seen as the ? Departments responsibility. Line Managers do not understand their role, responsibilities in using the medium.

**Theme 8: Learners do not have the time to do an eLearning self paced intervention. It is difficult for them.**

Problem 1

Despite our best efforts, there are still issues related to improving business performance through eLearning. Why is this so?

Problem 2

As Elearning is self paced sometimes learners do not find time to for learning as opposed to a face to face workshop. This poses a problem of the intervention not being effective.

Problem 3

Unavailability of facilitators.

Problem 4

Sometimes there might be a problem with learners not being able to get a response/feedback from facilitators at a time they want.

**Theme 9: We have not created the necessary enablement to support the use of eLearning**

Problem 1

A change enablement strategy needs to be developed to prepare the employees and their managers.

Problem 2

We have not created the necessary management to support the use of eLearning.

Problem 3

Whenever a new eLearning intervention is available it should only be implemented/used, if the required communication and change enablement has taken place.

# Appendix Q: Problem statements Focus Group 3

**Note:** None of the problems statements were edited. They were typed as the focus group reflected it.

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**Theme 1: Learning needs are not defined and therefore not measured in terms of business results/performance**

Problem 1

The need for learning is not defined/measured in terms of business results/performance.

Problem 2

On the fraud awareness section on the active learn you sometimes miss certain links or information which is important to the learning process. Links are not noticeable.

Problem 3

The eLearning process is an ongoing learning experience not dealing with only one aspect of banking like fraud awareness, therefore I think they are striving to have every sector e.g. Bankfin etc covered in this eLearning process.

Problem 4

Learning online not necessarily by intervention.

Problem 5

The eLearning concept is brilliant but not very many people know about it.

Problem 6

Most of my colleagues only knew of eLearning from seeing participate online. They now know there is an online chat as well as that they can write test online also.

Problem 7

Show me how this can add to my business and then it can work.

Problem 8

There is no real awareness of eLearning amongst our colleagues. I was amongst the fraud awareness group. I adapted and later accessed and enjoyed it, because I had to make constant contact on the discussion forum as well as the course material on the active learn.

**Theme 2: Scheduling of learning time did not accommodate for business impact**

Problem 1

Time - no little time allowed for learning.

Problem 2

Scheduling of people “Zain” took him away on the busiest times, therefore left a negative impression.

Problem 3

Impression - It takes long. This is an interruption to my business.

Problem 4

Line issue - Took advisor away at busiest time.

Problem 5

No time during work hours to use this, as the learning partakes time and my business cannot afford this time.

Problem 6

Impression of it takes very long to do when Consultant had to ask for time.

Problem 7

Time constraint when users must use it. Time not scheduled through line.

Problem 8

Line issue - Time not properly scheduled and it didn’t take my business into account.

Problem 9

Line issue - Time not properly scheduled. Negative observation make me biased in future.

Problem 10

Left a negative impression and now this will have to be overcome. (Time issue and Line issue).

Problem 11

Priorities - Business needs came before learning needs.

**Theme 3: The concept of eLearning being just another way of learning is not understood - paradigm shift**

Problem 1

Old paradigms - Dependency on facilitator. Leader to train or nominate learner for course.

Problem 2

eLearning guide/manual should also be introduced to show how the system can benefit as a first time user.

**Theme 4: Personal authority take up for learning**

Problem 1

Learners are afraid of taking risks, challenging leadership/management when they want to take ownership of own learning.

Problem 2

Dependency on leaders/others is encouraged through policing/coaches etc.

Problem 3

Learners are not emotionally mature enough to take ownership of own learning.

**Theme 5: Work environment in terms of peers/management is not conducive to learning**

Problem 1

A guide for first time user should also be introduced.

Problem 2

We are PC skilled and does not perceive working on a computer as a challenge.

Problem 3

If it was made known to us about eLearning then we would have been able to work on it. Communication was not involved.

Problem 4

If it can be made more visible and understandable to use, because Consultants do not know how to use it.

Problem 5

The availability of eLearning is not communicated to actual learner level. Learners that should be able to use this, does not even know about it and has barely been informed of its availability and functionality's.

**Theme 5: Work environment in terms of peers/management is not conducive to learning**

Problem 5

The availability of eLearning is not communicated to actual learner level. Learners that should be able to use this, does not even know about it and has barely been informed of its availability and functionality's.

**Theme 6: Orientation aids to the access/navigation of eLearning platform e-ready/enabled**

Problem 1

Navigation is not noticeable.

Problem 2

Don't know how to get to the web-site.

Problem 3

We don't know much about eLearning . I have never worked on it.

Problem 4

No facilitation has happened to make users familiar with it and to show first time users how to access it on the system.

Problem 5

Site is not self-explanatory in terms of what you can do / expect. It's not obvious and noticeable what it can do.

Problem 6

One interview said that the things that can be done on eLearning are not obvious and noticeable.

Problem 7

Learners are not e-ready or e-enabled.

Problem 8

A lot of time he information is available but people do not know or understand where to find information.

Problem 9

The accessibility to the eLearning also needs to be communicated, like which links to click on to actually access it. A direct link to the site would be user friendly.

Problem 10

Make it easier to access the active learn section of eLearning.

**Theme 7: Management mindshift from traditional training to eLearning**

Problem 1

Management don't see learning as value adding - rather it is a waste of time. Old paradigms/school learning does not help in real world.

**Theme 8: Past negative experience resulted in a Leadership resistance**

Problem 1

Lack of support from leaders.

Problem 2

Lack of involvement and encouragement from management.

Problem 3

Resistance to change to a new way of doing (learning) things.

Problem 4

Management and learners does not know what eLearning is or how it works and don't understand its significance for business.

**Theme 9: Design limitations disabled learners and learning**

Problem 1

Learning is equal with education, usually school education - Where what is learnt is not immediately useful in real world.

Problem 2

Not communicated - don't know the system. Not facilitated to make it user friendly for first time users. Reference guide to go back to. Lack of training.

Theme 10: Lack of explaining eLearning and its significance to business

Problem 1

Learners don't know what eLearning is and cannot shift their thinking to the fact that eLearning is learning differently .

Problem 2

Effect of learning is not immediately apparent, therefore business does not see the impact it is having on business performance.

Problem 3

The learning environment is not conducive to eLearning - learning cannot occur.

Problem 4

Lack of training as even the learners Team Leaders doesn't know how it works and cannot assist Consultants.

Problem 5

We need facilitators to just show us initially how it works.

Problem 6

People that has to facilitate the learning to Consultants, also doesn't know (Team Leaders)

Problem 7

No one has shown me how it works.

Problem 8

No material to go back to and check up how this works, where and how to do I access it and what it can do for me.

Problem 9

How does this enhance business performance and why will it help me? What outcome can I expect if I use it?

Problem 10

Site is not self-explanatory in terms of what you can do is not obvious and noticeable. What outcome can I expect if I use it?

Problem 11

We are uninformed about eLearning.

Problem 12

Most people interviewed asked me - What is eLearning.

Problem 13

There is a lack of knowledge about eLearning. We are barely aware of it.

## Appendix R: Problem statements Group 4

**Note:** None of the problems statements were edited. They were typed as the focus group reflected it.

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**Theme 1: Technical limitations/constraints when designing for e-platform**

Problem 1

System downtime.

Problem 2

System support doesn't get priority.

Problem 3

Objective not clear. Set goals and mission to know how eLearning fits in the bigger picture.

Problem 4

Not promoted enough create awareness.

Problem 5

Must make eLearning more noticeable.

Problem 6

There is a general lack of PC skills, this results in resistance to try to do a course via eLearning.

Problem 7

Management and Consultants need to know how to access and use eLearning.

Problem 8

Not sufficient training for new recruits and has to be ongoing.

**Theme 2: Workshop Interventions more valued than eLearning**

Problem 1

Learner do not always see the reason for eLearning in relation to Business Performance.

Problem 2

No clear link between the actual eLearning intervention and individual performance in relation to business goals.

Problem 3

Learner need to take ownership of their own development and careers, and be very aware that it is their own responsibility to develop themselves and assure their employability. (Even though it is a joint venture, the learner is primarily responsible.

Problem 4

Learners need to take responsibility for their own learning and not wait for “learning” to come to them.

Problem 5

Learner need to see that they can actually benefit from this.

Problem 6

Many learners still sees workshops as the traditional way of learning, rather than “self disciplined” self paced interventions.

Problem 7

It’s brand new to many learners, they are motivated, but it feels like they are waiting for someone to guide them (like in workshop training sessions).

Problem 8

If its not workshop based - its not important and not seen as training.

Problem 9

Learners prefer workshop/traditional learning and do not like self-paced learning because they do not see the link to business improvement.

Problem 10

Validation on contents.

**Theme 3: Management does not support learning in this medium**

Problem 1

Learning and business should be equally weighted. Learning depends on business and business depends on learning.

Problem 2

The course content does not link to the business strategy/business improvements.

Problem 3

Communication about eLearning. Everyone do not know about eLearning. Line Managers to Consultants. No knowledge about IT.

Problem 4

Guidelines on which courses the Consultant should do - job specifications.

Problem 5

Training of Team Leaders on eLearning to enable them to guide and support Consultants.

Problem 6

Consultants, Team Leaders and Managers are not aware of the business objectives.

Problem 7

Learners are very excited about this delivery method at the beginning. Line Management do not share/support their commitment. (Learners come in on their off days to take part in the eLearning fraud Awareness session).

Problem 8

Learners are excited but learners do not provide time/opportunities to do "Active learning". Managers will schedule and allow workshops but not allow "surfing" and learning online.

Problem 9

Consultants, Team Leaders and Managers are not aware of the measurements of business performance.

Problem 10

Line Management need to make the business objectives clear to Team Leaders and Consultants for all to understand/support/commit to the route forward.

**Theme 4: Difficulty in scheduling time to learn**

Problem 1

Availability - Scheduling needs to be informed of consultants doing a course on eLearning in order to book time for persons to go on to eLearning platform.

Problem 2

Consultants will have to sign off, which will impact our service levels.

Problem 3

Business doesn't see the importance of Consultants being able to access eLearning in their "own time", and not in a "class room" environment.

Problem 4

Management and learners don't make time, e.g. put in diary to do eLearning.

Problem 5

Lack of time in Call Centre environment.

Problem 6

In the Contact Centre environment eLearning needs to be a scheduled activity. Thus making it the same as a class room training. Experience that is electronic.

Problem 7

Many learners feel they have no time during working hours to partake in learning. (If not scheduled with a facilitator, they don't participate).

Problem 8

Do the learner have enough time to make use of eLearning? (In our environment they need to be scheduled for this).

Problem 9

It's more important to take calls in the Contact Centre than spend time on eLearning. (eLearning is not being given a priority in terms of daily tasks, scheduled in the Contact Centre.

Problem 10

Time for online facilitators.

Problem 11

E-Channel Contact Centre need to make more "separate" facilities available for all to participate in eLearning activities. (Consultants are seen as not busy when doing activities at their own workstations, and not taking calls).

**Theme 5: Technology problems inhibit participation**

Problem 1

Most people don't read what is on the monitor of their PC, so instruction is often not carried out, and the PC or programme are blamed because it doesn't work.

Problem 2

Firewall/bandwidth limit the optimal design of eLearning courses. Paper behind glass instead of interactive learning.

Problem 3

eLearning needs to be as exciting as Internet access perse. What you see and experience during "surfing" needs to be experienced during online learing - graphics, sound, animation, plug in.

Problem 4

Different ways of learning.

Problem 5

Computer literacy.

Problem 6

Lack of equipment available to all learners both at the office and at home.

Problem 7

Many learners lose interest whenever problems are experienced with technology.

Problem 8

Registering for a course not easy for inexperienced user. Learners/users could loose interest in tool and may not want to use it anymore.

**Theme 6: eLearning is not sufficiently marketed**

Problem 1

No knowledge about eLearning.

Problem 2

Certain learner feel that this method of learning is uninteresting.

Problem 3

eLearning must be marketed as a learning tool not a training intervention. Managers need to support the learning vs training) concept.

Problem 4

Active learn/eLearning needs to be splashed on the screen and forcefully marketed - make learners want to learn/excitement needs to be created.

Problem 5

We need to know who would be responsible for which products/course, in order to answer questions that we might have. Also how long before a question would be answered.

Problem 6

eLearning is seen as just another fun training initiative. The link between learning more and being able to apply the knowledge gained on your own, is not made.

**Theme 7: Logistical support not in place timeously**

Problem 1

Logistical problems cause learners to dislike the ePlatform because the system falls over or the system is not accessible.

Problem 2

eLearning, if not supported and pushed by Management has little significance to the learner (ie. Environment not conducive).

Problem 3

Currently logistical problems - access to the system (Passwords, etc).

Problem 4

Learners who are not computer literate are “scared” to attempt eLearning.

**Theme 8: What is in it for me - all stakeholders**

Problem 1

How will eLearning improve my performance - from a learner perspective.

## Appendix S: Detailed observation report of the behaviour of the focus group participants

The observation report includes the data as provided by the observers. The three classifications of behaviour, i.e. group dynamics, mental models and synergy, was combined in the larger research report to reflect on the behaviour of the focus group participants and how it affected the outcome of the research results.

What are the leverage point/s to improve business performance through eLearning?

# OBSERVATION REPORT

**By Lee-Anne Deale and Sophia Nawrattel**

**23 July 2003**

INTRODUCTION

**Purpose of observation:**

The researcher, Isabeau Korpel, requested Lee-Anne Deale and Sophia Nawrattel to observe the group dynamics and behaviour "in the here and now" over a period of three one-day sessions.

The observers were unaware of the participants' roles and job titles prior to the session.

Based on the methodology selected for the purpose of the study, the observers were also tasked to observe the facilitator and researcher to ensure that they in no way influenced the content and therefore the outcome of the study.

**Approach:**

A meeting was arranged prior to the session with the researcher and the observers. The purpose and methodology of the study was shared and the role of the observers was clarified.

The observers made use of the following sources of information to guide the preparation for the session:

Morgan, D. L. (1989). Focus Groups as Qualitative Research. SAGE Publications, United States of America

Saunders, M.N.K., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (19XX). Research Methods for Business Students. Prentice Hall: Financial Times

Case Studies
http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/cases.htm
Viewed 2003/07/03

Focus Group Research
http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/cases.htm
Viewed 2003/07/03

Participant Observation
http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/cases.htm
Viewed 2003/07/03

The observers prepared guidelines for observation for each of the sessions, as well as debriefing summary notes for the purpose of debriefing after each session.

Following the first session on day one, the observers provided the researcher with input to guide the selection of the participants for the second and third session. The input was based on each participant's contribution to the group and the roles they took up within the group. In addition, it was recommended that the participants be regrouped for session two and three.

**About the observers:**

Lee-Anne Deale
Industrial Psychologist
Masters: Industrial Psychology
Organizational Development Consultant and experienced qualitative researcher in the area of customer research

Sophia Nawrattel
Masters: Business Administration (MBA)
Fellow: SA Institute of Bankers (FIBSA)
Banking and General Management experience within the financial industry for sixteen years

**Structure of report:**

The report follows a logical structure as executed in the three sessions. It begins with observation on the activities for research objective one, followed by research objective two and research objective three. In addition, a short conclusion is provided at the end of the report. The detailed breakdown can be found in the table of contents below.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION – DAY ONE**

Research Objective 1: To identify the driver problem that prevents eLearning from improving business performance.

SRQ1: What are the problems related to improving business performance through eLearning?

SRQ2: How can the problems be grouped together as themes?

SRQ3: How can each of the themes influence each other?

SRQ4: What is the driver problem?

**INTRODUCTION – DAY TWO**

Research Objective 2: To design the systems dynamic model (SDM) that represents the driver problem.

SRQ1: What is the system in focus (SIF)?

SRQ2 & SRQ3

SRQ2: Who are the stakeholders in the SIF?
SRQ3: How can the influence of the stakeholders be described in terms of power and satisfaction?

SRQ4: What are the measures of performance (MOP)?

SRQ5: What are the co-producers for each of the MOP's?

## INTRODUCTION – DAY THREE

Research Objective 2 (Continuation): To design the systems dynamic model (SDM) that represents the driver problem.

SRQ6 & SRQ7

SRQ6: How does each of the co-producers influence .each other?

SRQ7: How do the co-producers within each of the sub-system influence each other?

*S.1. Part A: SRQ6 – day two afternoon*

*S.2. Part B: SRQ6 & SRQ7 – day three*

## CONCLUSION

## INTRODUCTION – DAY ONE

28 participants arrived at the session one. The venue was the Video Conference facility in the Absa Towers East building, 2nd floor. Although the venue was crowded, the participants were comfortable and had sufficient space to work with the task at hand. The equipment, namely microphones and videos, was unobtrusive and the observers are of the opinion that the equipment did not influence the group behaviour.

**Research Objective 1:**

To identify the driver problem that prevents eLearning from improving business performance.

**SRQ1:**

What are the problems related to improving business performance through eLearning?

**Group Dynamics:**

As one would expect, individuals responded to the instruction differently. Some immediately recorded their inputs, others pondered the question. One individual made use of foreign material as a reference for the exercise.

**Mental Models:**

As the exercise involved individual brainstorming using post it notes, no observation of the mental models is recorded.

**Synergy:**

The observers sensed that the group conducted the pre-work. High energy levels in the group were apparent and individuals were highly responsive to the instructions.

**SRQ2:**

How can the problems be grouped together as themes?

**Group Dynamics:**

There was a high level of sharing amongst group members. The outcome is reflective of collective input and not skewed to the contribution of a few dominant individuals.

**Mental Models:**

As one would expect in group dynamics, the natural leaders emerged and took up their roles. The group authorized the leadership role and accepted the allocation of tasks during the process.

**Synergy:**

There appears to have been a lack of “drawing in others” amongst the groups. The appropriate skill of the groups’ “facilitators” was inadequate, therefore resulting in non-optimisation of diverse members of group; namely language, culture, levels of authority and personality preferences.

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**SRQ3:**

How can each of the themes influence each other?

**Group Dynamics:**

The larger group was split up into four smaller groups.

### *Group One*

6 members

This group is seen as functional with all members contributing at least to a limited extent.

### *Group Two*

5 members

A dominant role player led this group. Although the process allowed for space creation, two of the members only contributed to a certain extent. The group dynamics were natural where role players supported the leader in her role.

### *Group Three*

7 members

This group was perceived as dysfunctional at this point due to poor self-organisation and clear emergence of two power players that dominated the group.

### *Group Four*

Largest group consisting of 9 members

The group was characterised by experts in the subject matter from both Learning and Development and from Business. The group was characterized by effective debate.

**Mental Models:**

### *Group Two*

It appeared that the presence of the observer may have had an influence on the facilitator of the group as attempts were made to draw in members of the group when the presence of the observer was felt.

### *Group Three*

Although the results of this group may be skewed toward the opinions of the two power players, the impact would not influence the outcome due to the nature of the process at this point.

**Synergy:**

Where individual participation levels were low, the duration of this exercise resulted in energy levels dropping amongst these individuals.

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**SRQ4:**

What is the driver problem?

**Group Dynamics:**

Groups one and two joined to form Group A.

***Group A***

This group functioned optimally in this exercise due to broader group participation. The emergent leaders from the previous exercise retained their role in this larger group.

Groups three and four joined to form Group B.

***Group B***

The facilitators from group four retained their leadership roles and the facilitators from group three participated and contributed within the realms of the larger group.

**Mental Models:**

This exercise created the opportunity for the groups to refocus and participation levels increased especially amongst individual participants that only contributed to a certain extent in the previous exercise.

The inclusion of the two power players in the larger group B resulted in the potential "skew" factor being reduced as they formed part of a refocused group.

**Synergy:**

Overall, energy levels increased within the two larger groups.

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**SRQ5:**

What are the causes and effects of the driver problem? (Fishbone diagram)

**Group Dynamics:**

The same two groups, namely group A and group B, conducted this exercise independently of each other.

Group A demonstrated their passion by taking the problem statement to a deeper level than required during this exercise. The group was functioning optimally at this point with high levels of participation.

**Mental Models:**

Some of the representatives from Learning and Development adopted a defensive role during this exercise and influenced the system with a number of what the observers perceived to be “excuses”. However, it did not appear that the groups authorized this behaviour.

The level of energy in the groups was still high at this point, possibly indicating the passion that was being released through this process.

**Synergy:**

The process was followed as per the instructions and is perceived to be representing the collective view.

**INTRODUCTION – DAY TWO**

The researcher introduced session two by requesting all the participants to share thoughts, feelings and feedback from the previous session. A number of participants shared the personal learning that had taken place on day one due to the process that was followed. In addition, some participants also shared their view of how the process enabled all group members to participate by choice.

The researcher conducted a verification process the day after session one. The researcher shared the results of the verification process with the group. The researcher is congratulated on her facilitation as she ensured shared meaning throughout the group during the introduction session. Although the group was influenced by the results of the verification process, they were not influenced by the researcher's personal view.

**Research Objective 2:**

To design the systems dynamic model (SDM) that represents the driver problem.

**SRQ1:**

What is the system in focus (SIF)?

**Group Dynamics:**

***Group A***

8 members

The group authorised the same natural leaders from the first session to take up their roles. The group was functional with only two group members contributing to a limited extent. Although the group was interrupted by two late arrivals, they accommodated them and allowed them the space to reach an understanding of the here and now.

### *Group B*

7 members

The natural leader from session one was authorised by the group to take up the leadership role despite her late arrival. The results of this exercise may well be skewed as a result of the strong influence of the leader, lack of participation amongst the group and lack of encouragement to contribute.

### *Group C*

6 members

This group functioned optimally during this session, with no single member adopting the leadership role. The variety of interaction that unfolded in this group resulted in true dialogue and therefore a collective view.

**Mental Models:**

The participants appeared to be more comfortable and responsive to instructions in comparison to the first session. Their levels of responsiveness appeared to be higher, perhaps as a result of their exposure to the process in session one.

**Synergy:**

The change in the group structure resulted in renewed levels of energy and participation. Certain members from the first session, who did not actively participate, took up their roles and actively participated in session two.

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**SRQ2 & 3**

In the execution of this exercise, namely the brainstorming, identification and reduction of stakeholders, the activities for SRQ2 and SRQ3 were done simultaneously. Hence the observations made below cover both.

**SRQ2:**

Who are the stakeholders in the SIF?

**SRQ3:**

How can the influence of the stakeholders be described in terms of power and satisfaction?

**Group Dynamics:**

***Group A***

8 members

In this exercise, the two late arrivals influenced the group by seeking the ideas and opinions of the other group members, and hence challenged the natural leaders role. Therefore participation in the group was high.

***Group B***

7 members

The leadership role in this exercise shifted from one dominant leader to a shared role between two members. This resulted in a higher level of participation within the group as the group authorised the new leadership role player. The outcome of this exercise was more reflective of the collective view.

***Group C***

6 members

The group can be described in this exercise as highly synergistic.

**Mental Models:**

Despite the consensus in the group during the introduction session that accountability resides with both business and L&D, the allocation of accountability that was required in this exercise was incongruent. The participants tended towards identifying parties other than line management (themselves) to take accountability for eLearning.

**Synergy:**

The variety of the interaction was observed to be well balanced and natural, although four to five participants chose to only passively participate. The high energy levels during this exercise are reflective of the combination of dealing with SRQ2 and SRQ3 simultaneously.

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**SRQ4:**

What are the measures of performance (MOP)?

**Group Dynamics:**

***Group A***

8 members

During this exercise, the leadership role shifted and the natural leader took up a more passive role. The levels of participation in the group were observed to increase as a result of this new leadership role player. The level of encouragement and involvement of all members was increased, resulting in increased dialogue and a higher functioning group.

***Group B***

7 members

The shared leadership role shifted to a new leader during this exercise, which resulted in new members participating in the process.

***Group C***

6 members

The synergy in this group was maintained, a clear indication of the levels of passion for this subject matter that reside in this group.

**Mental Models:**

The participants appear to have different levels of understanding of human behaviour. Certain assumptions made by the participants reflect a lack of understanding of the systemic impact of the human response to change and the reality of working with resistance to change. For example in one group, the single motivator of human behaviour was identified to be money incentives. This observation is believed to demonstrate the diversity of the participants in the group in terms of levels of work and emotional maturity.

**Synergy:**

Overall, the levels of energy and participation increased during this exercise through changes in the leadership role players and their associated leadership styles.

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**SRQ5:**

What are the co-producers for each of the MOP's?

**Group Dynamics:**

***Group A***

8 members

Following lunch, the leader of the group was absent for a period. This negatively impacted on the group dynamics and levels of energy, resulting in the previous natural leader taking up her role to rescue to the situation.

***Group B***

7 members

The new leader in the group maintained his influence over the group from the previous exercise. He initiated the move of the group to create a collective workspace, which sustained the levels of participation to achieve the objectives of the exercise.

***Group C***

6 members

During this exercise, the members of this group asked many questions and started to spiral in their thought processes. However, they achieved the objectives of the exercise and ensured collective input.

**Mental Models:**

There appears to be a fundamental gap between the methodologies used by L&D specialists in People Management versus the business understanding of human behaviour. Therefore business perceives the “value of money” as the driver of human behaviour and reduces the importance of the individual in the story.

**Synergy:**

Overall the group appeared to have reduced levels of energy after lunch. The researcher and the facilitator took cognisance of this and decided to close the session following this exercise.

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## INTRODUCTION – DAY THREE

The facilitator commenced with the SRQ6 exercise during the afternoon of day two. The group was not tasked to complete the exercise as the process was scheduled to continue on day three.

**Research Objective 2 (Continuation):**

To design the systems dynamic model (SDM) that represents the driver problem.

**SRQ6 & SRQ7**

The outcomes of the process followed for SRQ6 and SRQ7 were integrated and will therefore be reported below as such.

**SRQ6:**

How does each of the co-producers influence each other?

**SRQ7:**

How does the co-producers within each of the sub-systems influence each other?

**Group Dynamics:**

***Part A: SRQ6 – day two afternoon***

***Group A***

8 members

It appeared that the group battled with the task and were not able to settle down and function effectively. The natural leader was visibly frustrated with the situation and demonstrated defensive behaviour.

However, due to the manner in which some of the members of the group challenged and questioned the process, the group was still able to progress.

### *Group B*

7 members

Both leaders in this group appeared to have difficulty with the task and displayed similar defensive behaviour as observed for group A. The facilitator identified the need to assist them with the process and thereby enabled the group to proceed with the task. At one point, the group revisited their stakeholder analysis and was then able to progress, which illustrates the rigorousness of the process.

### *Group C*

6 members

As a result of the deep level of thought processing that was taking place in this group in the previous session, the group continued to function optimally in this exercise. However, the group engaged in high levels of constructive challenging, questioning and idea generation.

**Group Dynamics:**

**Part B: SRQ6 & SRQ7 – day three**

The group members remained in the same groupings as the previous day, the exception occurring for group C as one member did not return on day three.

### *Group A*

8 members

Due to the levels of frustration that occurred in this group the previous afternoon, the natural leader took it upon her to reorganize some of the work generated by the group. When the rest of the group arrived, it appeared that they had a sense of relief that someone had managed to sort out the task for them. However, both the natural leader and the new leader that had emerged on day two, spent considerable time ensuring that each of the group members had shared meaning and were in agreement with the new outcome of the task.

The facilitator provided the group with their next instruction. Again, due to the complexity of the task, the defensive behaviour patterns reemerged. One member of the group adopted the harmoniser role and facilitated the session so as to ensure the group would meet its objectives. As a result, the team managed to complete the task with a moment of celebration.

### *Group B*

7 members

When the group arrived, they appeared to have a renewed willingness to participate and displayed high levels of energy. Although it was apparent that they were battling with the task, it appeared that they were excited to work with the challenge. The participation level reached its peak in this session.

The group progressed well but not at the same pace as group A and C. As a result, they had increased pressure to complete the task before the end of the session. During the tea break, the natural leader took it upon her to reorganise some of the work generated by the group. When the group returned, the leader shared the new outcome of the task with them. The energy levels in the group were negatively influenced and the group appeared to loose interest in the exercise.

After the group received the final instruction for the session, they demonstrated fatigue and frustration. The group was not able to progress at all, and asked for help from the facilitator. As a result of increased involvement of the facilitator to assist them with the process, the group did manage to complete the exercise. However, it is questionable whether they would have managed to do this without the intervention of the facilitator.

### *Group C*

5 members

Although the group was short of one of its members, the synergy within the group continued from the previous day. The level of thought processing from the previous day negatively influenced the levels of energy in the group. However, their passion for the subject matter was still evident and the levels of dialogue and participation were still impressive.

By day two, this group had formed into a healthy functioning team and was therefore able to manage the complexity of the three-day session.

**Mental Models:**

It was apparent that in both group A and B, the members were spiraling in the "storming" phase of the groups' development, and hence were not functioning as effectively as earlier in the process, on day two.

Group B appears to have experienced greater difficulty with the tasks over the three days. This may be as a result of the variation in the participants' levels of work. This does not appear to be the case for group A and C.

**Synergy:**

Given the complexity of this exercise, the interpersonal dynamics within group A and B presented a challenge, whereas group C applied their minds collectively to the task as a high performance self-organising team.

Due to the difficulty experienced by the groups, the facilitator continually visited each group to check their process. At no point did she influence the content but rather the process by asking the right questions. Due to the level of complexity of the task and the groups' requests for guidance in terms of process, the researcher adopted a co-facilitation role at times. The observers are of the opinion that she did not influence the content at any time. Her approach was to ask each group to "tell their stories" to assist them to check their own approach.

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## CONCLUSION

The observers qualify the outcome of the three-day session as being a true and valid representation of the collective view of all participants. The methodology that was applied ensured open discussion on the topic and each participant was able to contribute to the shared working space.

The researcher did not influence the methodological process used in this study. The facilitator was an objective and neutral role player who executed the required steps of the selected methodology without influencing content.

The profiles of participants at this session represent both a 'Learning and Development' and a business view. This inherently resulted in participants from a

variety of different levels of work being present. The participants eloquently captured the value of this observation at the end of the session. Both L&D and business representatives reflected on the past three days and stated that their personal learning was to listen to one another and to really *hear* what each other's needs are.

The opportunity for the levels of true dialogue and shared understanding that took place between business and specialist functions in this process, is highly valuable in the business context and should not be underestimated. The process may be complete, but this component of the study has initiated an exciting journey ahead for Absa with regards to eLearning.

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Problem 5

Due to the needs of our client s that change regularly, eLearning needs to be updated. Not just as a learning platform e.g.. Product etc. but also maybe as an information platform.

Problem 6

Does not accommodate my learning style.

**Theme 8: Overall communication between all stakeholders is insufficient**

Problem 1

Communication from management about eLearning and what it can be used for.

Problem 2

Communication on how it can be used.

Problem 3

Maybe it should also be communicated in the sense where new employees, when in training are told about it, shown how it works & explained the benefits thereof.