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APPENDIX A

**LETTER TO SMME OWNER-MANAGERS AND
QUESTIONNAIRE TO SMMES IN THE RESEARCH AREAS TO
EXPLORE THE CAUSES OF FAILURE IN SOUTH AFRICAN
SMALL BUSINESSES: 2007**

A.1 LETTER TO SMME OWNER-MANAGERS

Dear Respondent

This questionnaire investigates the causes of failure of your small business. The main objective of the research is to establish “How?” and “Why?” your small business failed in order to inform policy formulation to reduce the high failure rates of South African small businesses.

It would be appreciated if you would answer the questions as thoroughly as possible. All information will be treated as confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. It is hoped that the research will provide input towards policy formulation aimed at understanding and reducing small business failures.

Thank you in anticipation.

Sincerely

P P Nemaenzhe

Doctoral Student

Department of Business Management
University of Pretoria
Tel: 082 461 1190

Instructions for completion:

1. Please answer all questions as honestly as possible.
2. When asked for comment, please keep it as short as possible.
3. Mark a cross in the space provided on the right side of the question.
4. Answer all questions, if possible, as this will enable an accurate analysis and interpretation of data, and thus lead to more effective recommendations and conclusions.

**A.2 QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE TO SMME OWNER-MANAGERS
EXPLORING CAUSES THAT WOULD HELP ENTREPRENEURS TO
SUCCEED**

A.2.1 Demographic information

Name of owner-manager: ...MR / MS

Name of business:
.....

Address of business:
.....
.....

		<i>For office use only</i>																		
Respondent number:		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">V0</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">1-3</td> </tr> </table>	V0					1-3												
V0					1-3															
1. Please mark type of business ownership you had with an "X"																				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3" style="text-align: left; padding: 2px;">Type of ownership</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="width: 5%; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">1</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Owner only (someone else manages the business)</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">2</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Manager only (someone else owns the business)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;">3</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Both owner & manager (you own and manage the business)</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Type of ownership			1	Owner only (someone else manages the business)		2	Manager only (someone else owns the business)		3	Both owner & manager (you own and manage the business)		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">V1</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">4</td> </tr> </table>	V1					4
Type of ownership																				
1	Owner only (someone else manages the business)																			
2	Manager only (someone else owns the business)																			
3	Both owner & manager (you own and manage the business)																			
V1					4															



		<i>For office use only</i>	
2. How long have you been the owner-manager of the venture? Please fill in the number of:			
Years		V2	5-6
Or			
Months		V3	7-8
3. Do you have business ownership-management experience? Please mark with an "X"			
1	Yes		V4 9
2	No		
If you answered "Yes" to the above question, please provide details of your experience 			
4. Please indicate the nature of your business with an "X"			
1	Retailer		V5 10
2	Wholesaler		
3	Transport		
4	Manufacturing		
5	Service industry		
6	Tourism		
7	A combination of the above options		
8	Other, please specify:		



					<i>For office use only</i>									
5. Have you ever worked in a business environment where you had exposure to a successful role model/mentor? Please mark with an "X"														
1	Yes				<table border="1"> <tr> <td>V6</td> <td></td> <td>11</td> </tr> </table>	V6		11						
V6		11												
2	No													
If you answered "Yes" to the above question, what business skills did you acquire?														
.....														
.....														
.....														
.....														
.....														
6. What was your annual turnover for 2001, 2002 and 2003? Please mark with an "X"														
	Turnover	2001	2002	2003										
1	Less than R150 000				<table border="1"> <tr> <td>V7</td> <td></td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>V8</td> <td></td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>V9</td> <td></td> <td>14</td> </tr> </table>	V7		12	V8		13	V9		14
V7		12												
V8		13												
V9		14												
2	R150 001 to R500 000													
3	R500 001 to R1 000 000													
4	R1 000 001 to R5 000 000													
7. Please indicate the total number of employees in the failed venture other than the owner.														
1	Fewer than 10 employees				<table border="1"> <tr> <td>V10</td> <td></td> <td>15</td> </tr> </table>	V10		15						
V10		15												
2	More than 10 employees													
8. Please mark with an "X" how often the failed venture did planning														
	Frequency				<table border="1"> <tr> <td>V11</td> <td></td> <td>16</td> </tr> </table>	V11		16						
V11		16												
1	Not done at all													
2	0 to 6 months													
3	6 to 12 months													
4	12 to 18 months													
5	18 to 24 months													



			<i>For office use only</i>		
9. Please mark with an "X" how often the failed venture did cash-flow budgeting					
	Frequency				
1	Not done at all		V12		17
2	0 to 6 months				
3	6 to 12 months				
4	12 to 18 months				

A.2.2 Factors responsible for failure of SMMEs

10. Entrepreneur's business management skills
Please think about the failed venture and then mark the best possible answer with an "X"

Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
1. More venture start-up experience would have halted failure in the venture					V13		18
2. More experience within the industry would have halted failure in the venture					V14		19
3. More planning would have halted failure in the venture					V15		20
4. A proper opportunity analysis before starting would have identified possible issues					V16		21
5. Previous experience as an owner-manager would have halted failure in the venture					V17		22
6. More managerial experience to manage workers would have increased success of the failed venture					V18		23
7. Managing the venture under the guidance of a successful mentor would have helped me steer the venture to success					V19		24
8. Obtaining expert advice would have saved the venture from failure					V20		25

Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
11. Income (revenue) / product demand / sales Please think about the failed venture and then mark the best possible answer with an "X"					

Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
1. Declining customer traffic is an important reason for the failure that was experienced					V21		26
2. Ignoring price competition was an important contributory factor to the failure that was experienced					V22		27
3. Comparatively too expensive prices of goods contributed to failure					V23		28
4. Ignoring customers complaints significantly influenced the venture failure					V24		29
5. Lack of product advertising fuelled venture failure					V25		30
6. Bypassing newly constructed toll road diverted consumer traffic from the failed venture					V26		31

Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
7. Losing sales during recessionary times contributed heavily to failure					V27		32
12. Cash-flow monitoring and control Please think about the failed venture and then mark the best possible answer with an “X”							

Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
1. Regular cash shortages were typical of the venture before failure					V28		33
2. Fluctuations in sales made it difficult to control cash flow in the venture before failure					V29		34
3. Slow-paying customers contributed to the venture not being able to pay its monthly bills					V30		35
4. Bad debts resulted in the venture running out of cash before failure					V31		36
5. Slow conversion of goods into cash contributed to					V32		37



Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
failure							
6. Inadequate initial financing contributed heavily to failure					V33		38

Statement	1	2	3	4	<i>For office use only</i>		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
7. Excessive cash withdrawal for personal use drained money from the business before failure					V34		39
8. "Dipping of fingers" into company cash registers was one of the contributory factors to failure					V35		40
9. Banking both personal and business monies in one business account contributed to failure					V36		41
10. Delays in debt collection reduced the venture's cash levels before failure					V38		42
11. Difficulties in paying monthly bills were typical of the venture before failure					V39		43
12. An increase in uncontrolled expenses was typical of the venture before failure					V39		44
13. Failing to pay government company taxes was typical of the failed venture					V40		45

Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
13. Owners' decisions and actions to results from control systems Please think about the failed venture and then mark the best possible answer with an "X"					

Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
1. Better response to sales records could have contributed to better money flow in the venture					V41		46
2. Monitoring of inventory records would have helped improve sales of slow moving stocks before stock became redundant					V42		47
3. Accurate record keeping would have helped us to take immediate corrective action					V43		48
4. Regular monitoring of cash receipt books would have halted venture failure					V44		49
5. Continuous monitoring of cash payment (disbursement) books would have forewarned me of possible misappropriation/mismanagement of funds					V45		50



Statement	1	2	3	4	<i>For office use only</i>		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
before venture failed							

Statement	1	2	3	4	<i>For office use only</i>		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
6. Monitoring of monthly financial statements (results versus budgets) would have helped arrest decline in venture's profits					V46		51
7. Managing weekly cash flow projections/forecasting records would have stopped failed venture from running out of cash					V47		52
8. Monitoring of stock levels (daily records) would have aided me in identifying redundant /slow moving stocks					V48		53
9. Monitoring of stock losses /shrinkage records would have helped to stamp out theft before venture failed					V49		54

14. Poor business management

Please think about the failed venture and then mark the best possible answer with an “X”

Statement	1	2	3	4	For office use only		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
1. Too low prices of goods contributed to the venture's failure					V50		55
2. Too high prices of goods led to lower sales turnover					V51		56
3. Incorrect costing was responsible for poor profits					V52		57
4. Undercapitalisation was one of the fatal reasons for the venture's failure					V53		58
5. Excessive use of credit contributed heavily to the venture's failure					V54		59
6. Too high expenditures overwhelmed the failed venture					V55		60
7. High, uncontrolled running costs contributed to the venture's failure					V56		61

Statement	1	2	3	4	<i>For office use only</i>		
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree			
8. Acquiring more assets to offset declining sales accelerated the venture's failure					V57		62
9. Financing of the venture's assets using high-interest-bearing, short-term debt, is one of the reasons the venture failed					V58		63
10. Inability to pay interest on debt was typical of the venture before failure					V59		64
11. Evading tax payment was one of the business practices in the venture before failure					V60		65
12. Over-reliance on only one large customer was one of the reasons the venture failed					V61		66
13. Overstocking of products contributed to failure					V62		67
14. Frequent reprocessing due to inferior product quality contributed to the venture's failure					V63		68



15. Overall rating
Please think about the failed venture and then rank the following statements from 1 to 5 (where 1 = least important and 5 = most important) that in your opinion contributed to the venture's failure

Statement	Ranking	For office use only	
1. Better fit between the entrepreneur and the venture would have made the venture successful (for example, better management, vision, skills, know-how, opportunity evaluation)		V64	69
2. Higher product demand would have made the venture successful (for example, more sales would have meant more cash, profits, turnover)		V65	70
3. Improved cash flow would have made the venture successful (for example, cash for stock readily available, cash for operating expenses always available, cash always available to service debts)		V66	71
4. Proper reaction to information from control records/systems would have increased the venture's success (for example, from sales records, income statements, stock control information, stock theft control systems)		V67	72
5. Better venture management practices would have increased the venture's success (for example, avoiding running a business using high, debt-bearing finances, collection of credit on time, constant lowering of expenses, frequently servicing debts).		V68	73

APPENDIX B

PILOT STUDY QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE: 2006

Please think about the failed venture; study the suggested reasons on the next page that might have caused it to fail; expand on why you believe the venture failed and then mark with a cross (X) to indicate whether you feel it was a “major” or “minor” cause of the failure:

Type of reason	Explanation	Major	Minor
Leadership and experience issues			
Sales issues			
Cash-flow issues			
Recordkeeping systems issues			
Business management			
Marketing issues			
Financial management issues			
Self-management and motivation issues			
Other management and business skills issues			
Trust/relationship issues			

APPENDIX C

PRE-PILOT STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE: 2005

During the pre-pilot study in 2005, several issues emerged which were incorporated into the pilot-study questionnaire (Appendix B) to obtain a deeper understanding of the underlying causes of failure and its consequences for business owners.

The following topics were probed:

- The implications which the failure had for the business owner
- How business owners coped during the process of failure
- How the businesses finally failed
- The psychological effects of the failure on the owner and the community at large
- The kinds of jobs the owners-managers are doing after their business failed
- If given a second chance to be in business and an opportunity to raise capital and receive further business management training, what would they recommend to ensure their business would remain successful.