

**Leadership strategic thinking preferences and how strategic
changes are implemented in professional services firms**

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Abstract

It is known that approximately 70% of strategic organisational initiatives fail. The business environment is becoming increasingly complex and ambiguous and continuously relies on strategic thinking initiatives to remain competitive. Therefore it has become vital for leaders to be well-versed in strategic thinking elements and organisational change systems and how to apply the two concepts simultaneously.

A qualitative study focused on the lived experiences and perceptions of leaders involved in strategic thinking. A total of 11 semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected leaders. The leaders are all employed by a company, Company X, which is currently undergoing organisational change.

The findings contributed to the development of a conceptual model. The model consists of the leaders lived experiences juxtaposed with academic literature. The model suggests which elements of strategic thinking leaders have learned based on their experiences. These elements resemble the properties of Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking model which consists of systems perspectives, intent focused, thinking in time, hypothesis driven and intelligent opportunism. The model similarly indicates which of the above strategic thinking elements the leaders use during different phases of organisational change. Kotter's (1995) eight-step organisational change model was utilised for this research. The leader's experiences and perspective on the above literature models were also verified. The model further demonstrates the different leader-to-stakeholder relationships required and leveraged during the different organisational change phases.

The study aims to guide leaders on vital strategic thinking elements and how these elements are to be expended during diverse organisation change stages with distinctive stakeholders as required to ensure successful organisational change implementation.

Keywords

Strategic thinking, organisational change, leader, change management

Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Iwouda Zanandi Coetser-Venter

1 November 2022

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Chapter 1 Problem Definition and Purpose

1.1 Introduction

It is known that a large volume of strategic initiatives, typically around 70%, initiated in organisations fail. Therefore it is critical for leaders to obtain a better understanding of organisational change processes as well as the strategic thinking considerations and the development thereof (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Stouten et al., 2018; Zubac et al., 2021). Most leaders in organisations are highly educated within the organisation's field; however, very few leaders have formal training in strategy and strategic thinking. Consequently, many leaders have developed strategic thinking through metacognition and past experiences (Franc et al., 2012; Goldman, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2011). The business environment has become increasingly complex and ambiguous, and it has become incumbent upon leaders to be able to develop and implement new strategies to ensure the organisation retains its' competitive advantage (Olalekan et al., 2021; Zubac et al., 2021). Leaders rely on past experiences when initiating significant strategic changes in an organisation in order to develop changes and while implementing processes and systems in an attempt to sustain these changes (Mitchell et al., 2011; Pisapia et al., 2005).

The research aims to assist in closing the gap between real-life phenomena and theoretical literature models. The key focus of the research is to deepen understanding of which strategic thinking elements develop naturally in leaders and what processes the leaders utilise to implement organisational changes based on past experiences. The research will be exploratory by nature by understanding and gaining perspective from the leaders involved in strategic thinking (Mohajan, 2018).

1.2 Background of the Problem

Currently, in South Africa, in Quarter 2 of 2022, the economy faces complex challenges. South Africa is experiencing the highest unemployment rate to date, and the second-largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) province, Kwa-Zulu Natal, has experienced excessive rainfall leading to considerable infrastructure damage. This resulted in the government declaring the occurrence a disaster and releasing emergency assistance funds. Due to rising inflation and to aid consumers, the

government temporarily decreased the fuel tax by 40% and on a positive note, Moody upgraded South Africa from Ba2 rating to stable (*South Africa Economic Outlook, 2022*). The South African economy is experiencing multifaceted challenges, and organisations need to adjust their strategy accordingly.

Historically leaders in organisations have been known to be at the forefront of an organisation's strategy and strategic thinking activities. However, it has been identified that top leaders have been absent in these processes, which significantly affects the performance of the organisation (Goldman, 2012). The business ecosystem is characterised by fast-changing technological, environmental, political, economic and social developments. Organisations need to be able to rapidly recognise and adapt to the ever-changing business ecosystem in order to remain relevant in their industry. An organisation's competitive advantage in the industry is closely related to its organisational strategy developed and implemented by its management team (Goldman et al., 2015; Gross, 2016; Liedtka, 1998).

No organisation, independent of its financial turnover, geographical footprint or industry, is immune to change (Olalekan et al., 2021). The higher the organisation's comfortability is to adapt to change, and the more sustainable the change is, the greater the organisation's competitive advantage, resulting in a higher probability of success and achieving excellence (Grant, 2003; Olalekan et al., 2021). The driving force for organisational change is constant; the nature of the force might change however the need to change constantly is always prevalent. The driving force for change can be internal: financial resources, culture, structure, processes and employees. The external factors can be environmental, legal, technological, social, economic or political by nature. (Olalekan et al., 2021). Leaders need to be able to develop strategies which consider the above factors. Once the strategy has been determined, the changes have to be implemented by the leaders. Leaders need to be aware that strategic changes are not a single event in time in an organisation but rather a process that is initiated, supported and solidified in an organisation. Leaders are crucial in determining the direction of the future of an organisational and integral in implementing the changes required to move the organisation in the direction of the future (Goldman, 2012; Kotter, 1995; Mitchell et al., 2011).

1.3 Description of the Problem

The business environment has become more convoluted and ambiguous, requiring even more strategic thinking and implementation from leaders (Stouten et al., 2018; Zubac et al., 2021). Most leaders in organisations do not have formal training in strategic thinking and rely on past experiences to guide them in this regard (Franc et al., 2012; Goldman, 2012). The practical problem is then further aggravated due to the fact that once the strategy is determined and is required to be implemented, up to 70% of organisational initiatives fail (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Stouten et al., 2018; Zubac et al., 2021). The problem attempting to be addressed by the research is to provide a deeper understanding of how leaders have developed strategic thinking elements organically from past experiences and how leaders use this knowledge to successfully implement strategic changes based on experience.

1.4 Purpose of the Research

The research aims to deepen understanding of how leaders develop strategic thinking through experience. The research seeks to close the gap between real-life phenomena and literature models by comparing the results with literature models to determine which elements of the strategic thinking literature model are favoured organically by the leaders from past experiences. The study will also link the method by which strategic thinking is naturally developed and how the leaders have gone about successfully implementing these changes. The objective of the research is to understand the following:

- i. How is strategic thinking naturally developed by leaders from previous experiences?
- ii. What elements of strategic thinking are developed by leaders from previous experiences?
- iii. How have the leaders used their strategic thinking to implement organisational changes successfully?

Based on the vast spectrum of strategic thinking and implementation, the study will take the form of an exploratory approach.

1.4.1 Business Need for the Study

Strategic thinking in an organisation contributes significantly to its competitive edge. The business environment constantly evolves, creating a complex ecosystem that challenges client expectations. This set of variables requires managers and leaders to be more astute in integrating knowledge and experience with the environmental conditions to create a strategy that maintains and expands the organisation's competitive edge (Shaik & Dhir, 2020; Smriti et al., 2021). Leaders embedding strategic thinking practices into employees increase the organisation's awareness of aspects affecting competitive advantage (Haycock, Cheadle & Bluestone, 2012; Shaik & Dhir, 2020; Smriti, Dhir & Dhir, 2021).

Leaders and managers can use the research to understand how strategic thinking is taught from experience and use the knowledge to update/develop developmental programs for identified up-and-coming managers. The leaders can also use the information as a self-study to improve their understanding of strategic thinking and how to implement change leadership effectively to get strategic decisions implemented successfully (Goldman et al., 2015).

For an organisation to remain competitive and successful in an industry, it has to adapt and change accordingly depending on the complexity and ambiguity of the external environment. It is well known that up to 70% of organisational initiatives fail (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Stouten et al., 2018; Zubac et al., 2021). Therefore the study will be able to guide leaders on how to implement significant organisational changes successfully.

1.4.2 Theoretical Need for the Study

The previous studies focused on leaders and managers in the United States and the United Kingdom, and the data was collected during training courses and by self-completed questionnaires (Adzeh, 2017; Goldman, 2012). With the majority of strategic thinking studies being performed in the United States of America and the United Kingdom, by contributing to the literature from a South African perspective, the research aims to provide a deeper understanding of this area (Shaik & Dhir, 2020). The existing literature focusing on leadership traits is centred around the

healthcare industry in the United States and will benefit from studies from other fields and countries (Goldman, 2012).

Although the previous studies provide insight into how strategic thinking practices affect organisations, little is known about how the practices affect individual leaders and lower social levels (Smriti et al., 2021). The research also suggests deepening the understanding of how strategic thinking develops naturally in leaders from experience; the leaders themselves and their experiences need to be better understood (Goldman, 2012). In the literature, the respondents were limited to only one of the possible strategic thinking frameworks, which consequentially narrowed the responses, leaving the organic and natural choice of which strategic thinking framework is favoured unquestioned. To date, there have been two accepted frameworks proving some consensus regarding strategic thinking: Liedtka's (1998) five-factor model of strategic thinking and Pisapia et al. (2005) Three-Factor model of strategic thinking (Adzeh, 2017; Gross, 2016; Muriithi, Louw & Radloff, 2018; Pisapia, Reyes-Guerra & Coukos-Semmel, 2005). The research will focus on determining which elements are preferred organically by leaders and how they use these experiences to implement strategic changes in the organisation.

1.4.3 Research Outline

The research will commence by summarising the most relevant literature sources in the next section. After that, the research design and methodology will be discussed. The research methodology will take the form of an explorative study with open-ended interview questions. Leaders will be identified and interviewed, and their answers will be analysed with thematic analysis and quality checked. The results will be compared to the literature and discussed.

A research plan and a consistency matrix are attached (Appendix A) to this proposal as part of the research process. The research plan or timeline will provide an overview of when each of the various aspects of research will be performed and completed. This timeline will also include additional responsibilities to be completed in parallel with the research, such as electives and the global module. The consistency matrix will also be included, ensuring that the research's different elements and sections are addressed throughout the project.

Chapter 2 Theory and Literature Review

2.1 Strategy

Strategy has first been discussed and implemented by military operations and dates back to 500BCE (Haycock et al., 2012). Since then, a substantial amount of research has taken place in this field; however, in the 1980s, terms such as strategic thinking, strategic management, and strategic planning were used incorrectly and interchangeably (Goldman & Casey, 2010). Literature regarding strategy is still in the developing body of knowledge phase; since 1983, the definition of strategic thinking has constantly been evolving (Adzeh, 2017; Smriti et al., 2021). Strategy can be expressed as a synthesis of fundamentals guiding the long-term objectives of an organisation while concurrently considering the resources at hand and applying the necessary steps to achieve the organisation's goal. With this being said, a successful strategy must be robust and agile enough to adapt to complex external evolving environmental conditions (Grant, 2003).

Over the last 70 years, organisational strategy has developed from a linear planning process to an informal and mutative process. This change has given rise to two views: planned versus emergent strategy. Although the process is distinctive and not mutually exclusive, they differ in formulation. The planned strategy process utilises specific tools and techniques to understand the environment and assess specific paths to an organisation's goal. In comparison, the emergent strategy focuses on perspective-taking to understand the environment and its context and perform experiments in these environments to determine the direction of the strategy. The art of crafting a robust strategy is in the individual's ability to apply both planned and emergent thinking in strategy (Goldman et al., 2017).

2.2 Strategic Thinking

Strategic thinking is commonly identified as an individual's cognitive ability to react to the context of a situation to determine the best path to achieve an organisational goal (Goldman et al., 2017; Haycock et al., 2012). Strategic thinking is a process required to find patterns and a common thread between complex external factors and organisational goals and objectives. (Dhir et al., 2018).

Strategic thinking is separated from strategic planning according to modern business literature. Strategic thinking is interpreted as a creative, intuitive and subjective mental process that focuses on innovative and open idea-sharing to gain a competitive advantage in a dynamic and complex economy. On the other hand, planning is interpreted as a structured and organised application of strategies (Haycock et al., 2012). Strategic thinking is paramount to an organisation's future, and due to the nature of strategy, thinking can also be classified as rational or intuitive. Intuitive thinking is characterised by subconscious pattern recognition and quick response to achieve previously successful results. The intuitive thinking process is faster than rational thinking, as it is not limited by linear and logical reasoning. Although the two methods are different, they are essential to strategic thinking practices (Calabretta et al., 2017).

Strategic thinking was always thought of as a top management obligation; however, since the business environment has become complex and unpredictable, strategic thinking has become a requirement on all levels of the organisation. Often strategic thinking is considered to be similar to operational thinking; however, the concept of strategic thinking is more abstract and multifaceted and more reflective thinking than reactive thinking (Goldman, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2011).

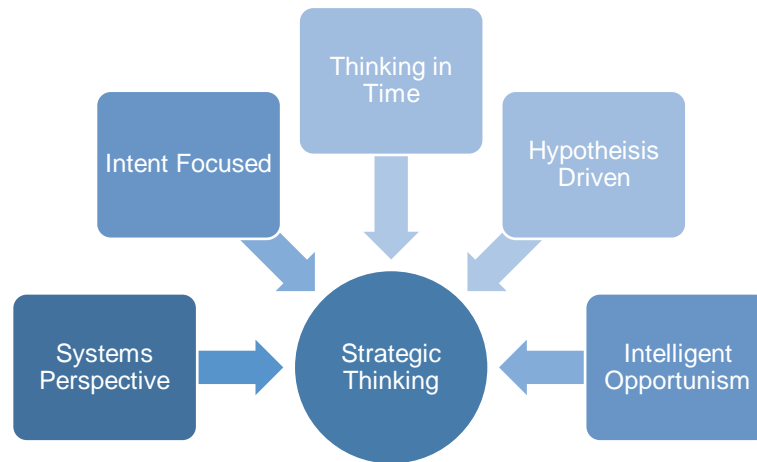
Currently, there have only been two accepted frameworks providing some form of consensus regarding strategic thinking, namely, Liedtka's (1998) five-factor model of strategic thinking and Pisapia et al. (2005) three-factor model of strategic thinking (Adzeh, 2017; Gross, 2016; Muriithi et al., 2018; Pisapia et al., 2005). These models have formed the basis of further strategic thinking research topics in the last couple of years (Adzeh, 2017; Goldman, 2012; Goldman & Casey, 2010; Gross, 2016; Muriithi et al., 2018; Shaik & Dhir, 2020).

2.2.1 Description of Liedtka's five-factor model of strategic thinking

Liedtka (1998), in the 1990s, noted that strategic thinking was defined as a general term to denote all aspects related to the area of strategy and decided to redefine strategic thinking instead as a particular "mode" of thinking with specific characteristics. Liedtka (1998) outlined a model consisting of five elements that form the basics of strategic thinking, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Liedtka (1998) Elements of Strategic Thinking



Strategic thinking is built based on *systems perspective*, where the strategic thinker has a complete mental model of the various options and complexities in the system. *Intent focused* conveys the dedication of individuals in an organisation to harness and leverage their energy to achieve a goal, provide a sense of direction and not be deterred by distractions. *Intelligent opportunism* allows the organisation to focus on the determined strategy to achieve its desired goals; however, it remains susceptible to alternative strategies that adapt to evolving environmental aspects. *Thinking in Time* refers to the philosophy in which even though the strategy is future goal-orientated, organisations needs to be highly aware of the current climate and always be aware of past historical experiences. *Hypothesis driven* refers to the individual manager's ability to speculate an idea, test it in practice, and learn from mistakes (Liedtka, 1998).

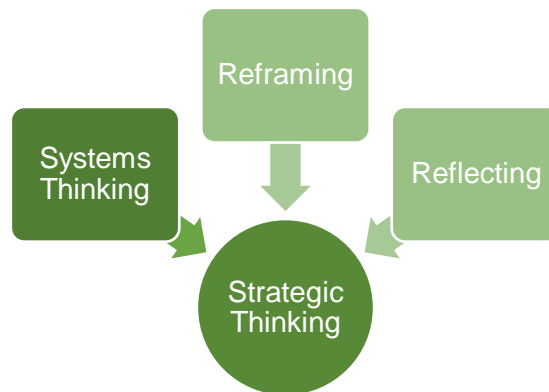
Liedtka (1998) model has been widely accepted and utilised as a basis of strategic thinking (Alhatmi, 2020; Dhir et al., 2018; Goldman et al., 2017; Grant, 2003; Gross, 2016). Even though the model is commonly used, it has never been statistically or predictively validated (Adzeh, 2017). Further study of this suggested framework is required as due to the ambiguous nature of strategy, the concept itself of strategic thinking is not fully understood (Goldman & Casey, 2010; Liedtka, 1998). Similarities in the thinking of the Liedtka (1998) model are seen in the Pisapia et al. (2005) model.

2.2.2 Description of Pisapia et al. three-factor model of strategic thinking

Pisapia et al. (2005) developed an alternative framework for strategic thinking for leaders, which has similarities compared to Liedtka (1998) model. Pisapia et al. (2005) model is shown below in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Pisapia et al. (2005) Three Factor Model for Strategic Thinking



Systems Thinking is one of the concepts the two frameworks mentioned above have in common. Reframing is described by Pisapia et al. (2005) as the leader's ability to consider a range of perspectives, mental models and paradigms as part of the process of developing new insights and possible paths to achieve the organisational goals. This part of Pisapia et al. (2005) model closely relates to a combination of *Intelligent opportunism* and *Thinking in Time*, two of the elements highlighted by Liedtka (1998).

Reflection, the third concept described by Pisapia et al. (2005), is related to understanding information, extracting knowledge from the information and using the knowledge to make future decisions. This concept of Pisapia et al. (2005) related closely to a combination of *Thinking in Time* as well as *Hypothesis driven*, two of the elements highlighted by Liedtka (1998). Pisapia et al. (2005) developed a 38-item instrument in the form of a questionnaire, which has been used in isolated cases to determine the level of strategic thinking in individual leaders. The questionnaire was empirically validated, and from the results, it was found that vital cognitive elements required for strategic thinking were not measured in the questionnaire and, as a result, are not fully covered by the three-factor model suggested by Pisapia et al. (2005).

For this research, Liedtka's (1998) five elements of strategic thinking will be used.

2.2.3 Liedtka's five elements of strategic thinking

A high-level overview of Liedtka's (1998) five elements of strategic thinking was shown above in Section 2.2.1 and will now be discussed in more detail. Liedtka's (1998) five elements of strategic thinking consist of systems perspectives, intent focus, thinking in time, hypothesis driven and intelligent opportunism.

2.2.3.1 Systems Perspective

Systems perspective has formed the basis of system thinking (Liedtka, 1998). Systems thinking requires the development of a complete mental model of a system from end to end. System thinking is focused on explaining the unrelated outcomes due to the interconnectedness between organisational and external macro environment (Grewatsch et al., 2021). This systems thinking perspective is aimed at understanding the interconnectedness of aspects to understand "how the world works" (Liedtka, 1998). This thinking element involves understanding how various factors, internal and external, affect each other and the organisation.

The business environment is highly complex, with internal and external aspects that are constantly changing, requiring a system thinking mindset. As part of system perspective thinking, it is imperative that the leader also identifies their location as well as their organisation's location with this system. An additional feature of this system thinking mindset is understanding how the client fits into the systems and how they are affected by the organisation and other external aspects. Typically a systems thinker is able to cognitively see links in the system from different perspectives, including corporate level, organisation level, function level as well as personal level as well as external factors (Liedtka, 1998).

2.2.3.2 Intent Focused

Intent focused strategic thinking provides the purpose driven mindset capability. This is a mindset of a specific intent or a point of view which is long terms focused and provides a sense of direction for the future. This intent focused long term view is from an intentional decision to be competitive in the long term and therefore involves

strategic intent. This intent focus on achieving a goal over a long term can imply to employees that leaders are focusing on new opportunities to remain competitive and to explore new regions.

This intent focus, or clear intent, has a psychological connection that allows an individual to achieve a form of “psychic energy” that can be used as a beam of energy. This energy can either be used by the individual to achieve the goal, or this energy is seen by others and motivates them to have the same energy to also achieve the goal. This intent focus allows the individual or others to avoid distractions and focus their energy and concentration for longer periods to achieve a goal. During times with everchanging conditions and aspects, intent focus and energy are incredibly rare in individuals and, consequently in organisations (Liedtka, 1998).

2.2.3.3 Thinking in Time

The thinking in time mindset requires individuals to consider the future strategy while considering the current reality together with the story of the past. Thinking in time has historically meant leaders use to attempt to strengthen the organisation's capabilities by stretching limited resources even further. Thinking in time consists of three sectors, the past the present and the future. Leaders are always looking towards the future; however, it must be noted that the future can only transition from the present which transitions from the past, resulting in situations where the past is repeated and the future has some form of predictive value. Another aspect of thinking in time is the thought process in which there is a continuous comparison between the past stories, the present situation and limitation, and the future prospective views (Liedtka, 1998).

An essential element of thinking in time is using both organisational knowledge and memory with a broader macro environment context. This type of thinking requires the capability of choosing and selecting the correct story from history and others' history to form connections. The mindset capable of pivoting between past, present and future is of utmost importance when considering strategy development, formulation and implementation. It has also been noted that due to the ever-changing environment of business, it is important for the individual to remain conscious of the past. This consciousness of the past assists the individual in feeling

a sense of control during the present changing times as well as the futuristic direction of the business environment. With this in mind, this type of thinking assists the leader in determining what is currently needed to get to our future goal or direction while still considering our past (Liedtka, 1998).

2.2.3.4 Hypothesis Driven

Hypothesis driven thinking requires leaders to be open to developing new hypotheses or ideas and testing the activities. Most business managers or leaders are extraneous to this type of mindset, especially in the business environment. This can possibly be attributed to historically rigid business environments. With an ever-changing business context, the ability of a leader and organisation to be open and comfortable with this type of mindset is crucial. Strategic thinking, predominantly hypothesis driven, is creative and analytical requiring critical analysis. For leaders to obtain and gather information is the easy part of the mindset, the leaders then require the support and courage to test ideas generated from the information (Liedtka, 1998).

Hypothesis driven thinking is the process in which creative questions such as “what ifs?” are combined and staggered with analytical questions such as “if...then?”. This type of thinking and discussion are required at different levels of the organisation. These questions are then used to develop ideas, test them, and analyse the results obtained. These types of questions and tests develop an organisational culture of ongoing learning and continuous learning (Liedtka, 1998).

2.2.3.5 Intelligent Opportunism

Intelligent opportunism requires opportunity within an intent focused type of mindset and thinking, which was discussed above in section 2.2.3.2. Intelligent opportunism requires the mindset and opportunity during the process in which intent focus is used to achieve a goal; however, an open mindset is required to be able to identify new pathways or possibilities along the way to accomplish the goal (Liedtka, 1998).

2.3 Organisational Change

Due to the complex and ambiguous business environment, at some stage in an organisation's life space, significant organisational change is inevitable as it will be required by an organisational leader to guide and steer the organisation successfully through that change process. It is widely known that a large volume of strategic initiatives, typically around 70% of initiatives for change, initiated in organisations fail. Therefore it is critical for leaders to obtain a better understanding of organisational change processes and the strategic thinking considerations and the development thereof (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Stouten et al., 2018; Zubac et al., 2021).

Pisapia et al. (2005) postulate that organisational change is not just a process to be followed; it also requires leaders to alter their approach and thinking to a strategic mindset. He expands by explaining that as the business environment is constantly evolving, so too must the leader's mindsets continuously evolve. Leaders are required to drive change but still maintain organisational stability, practise both linear and nonlinear thinking, think about the immediate regional environment but also be cognizant of international markets and trends (Pisapia et al., 2005; Shaik & Dhir, 2020; Smriti et al., 2021)

Organisational change takes a considerably long time; it is not uncommon for significant organisational change implementation to large five to seven years (Kotter, 1995; Stouten et al., 2018). This can add to the leader's challenges in that learning from experience becomes difficult and limited (Stouten et al., 2018). From a theoretical lens, the historical research regarding organisational changes has been disjointed, making it more challenging for leaders to know which theory to use and how to action and implement the organisational change (Stouten et al., 2018). Due to the fragmented research on organisational change leadership, very few frameworks have been scientifically proven, and therefore it has become customary for change managers practitioners to select a theory based on popular writers' opinions. Accordingly Kotter's Eight-Step Change Model will be used due to its popularity (Stouten et al., 2018).

2.3.1 Kotter's Eight-Step Organisational Change Model

In the earlier years of strategy, change was referred to as an organisational component to be managed, referring to change as a process that needed to be managed and kept under control. Managers and leaders often spend most of the time developing strategy through strategic thinking and far less time implementing the strategy, which often leads to strategic initiative failing (Kotter, 1995; "On Leading Change: A Conversation with John P. Kotter," 1997). If change is not implemented correctly, it can have detrimental effects on the organisation's performance, culture and, ultimately its competitive advantage. However, due to the transformative nature of the business environment, organisations cannot remain stationary; they must change to stay relevant. It has been noted that Kotter's approach can be viewed as a top-down approach, limiting actual participation and directing people more towards change (Olalekan et al., 2021).

Kotter (1995) changed this view by describing how any transformation requiring significant change is something that needs to be led by a leader and not managed by a manager. Kotter (1995) stated that during a time of significant change, leadership in terms of communication, creating a vision, and a common goal, empowering people and creating a shared sense of comradery is required. Kotter (1995) explained eight steps to implement significant change successfully. These steps are shown below in Figure 3.

Figure 3
Kotter's 8-Step Change Model



Kotter (1995) further divides the eight steps into three phases which will be discussed in more detail.

2.3.1.1 Organisational Change Phase 1: Creating Climate for Change

The first phase of Kotter's (1995) organisational change model consists of the first three steps (Steps 1 – 3), which are essential in creating a platform, essentially setting the scene from which something new can be created. When implementing changes, especially during these first steps, no change will be seen; however, without following the steps in sequence, it will not be possible to successfully initiate, implement and sustain substantial change in an organisation.

2.3.1.1.1 Step 1: Creating Urgency

During this step, leaders and groups of individuals, have identified a need for a significant organisational change generally due to decreasing competitive advantage or decreasing financial performances. After the need is identified or arises based on external macro conditions, this need for an urgent change must be communicated to the leader or from the leader to its coalition members. Without urgency for the required change, the change will most likely not be prioritised and will not be implemented. This stage is critical due to the fact that almost 50% of

organisations fail during this first step and either fail to generate or fail to communicate the urgency of the change. This step is difficult due to the human nature of people, and the resistance to change that most humans have. People do not want to deviate from their comfort zones and generally steer away from change (Kotter, 1995).

2.3.1.1.2 Step 2: Form a powerful Coalition

Once an urgent change has been communicated, a powerful coalition is required to develop and implement this change in the organisation. These powerful coalitions generally consist of the organisation's leader, the next level leaders and selected individuals from the organisation. Successful coalitions commonly consist of a group of people with the correct titles, knowledge, credibility and relationships. Generally, the leader of the organisation is the person that assembles and mobilises the coalitions to achieve a goal. If the coalition is not strong enough, they will fail to implement the new change in the following phases (Kotter, 1995).

2.3.1.1.3 Step 3: Create a vision for change

The next step requires the creation and development of a new vision. Generally, the leader or individual that has identified the need for the change commonly shapes some form of vision that is communicated and shared with the powerful coalition. The powerful coalition assists the leader in refining and reforming of the vision in order for the new vision to be more focused and easily communicable to the large organisation (Kotter, 1995).

2.3.1.2 Organisational Change Phase 2: Engaging and Enabling the Organisation

The second phase of organisational change consists of the following three steps (Steps 4 – 6) and is focused on communicating and obtaining critical mass buy-in from multiple levels in the organisation.

2.3.1.2.1 Step 4: Communicate the vision

This step is often underestimated when the new vision is under-communicated by a factor of ten. Generally, the leaders and the coalition develop an excellent vision however the communication of the new vision is not often enough. Typically the

proposed vision does not get communicated nearly often enough, generally the vision is communicated between 0.0001% to 0.0005% of the total yearly communication; this consequently results in limited buy-in from employees, confusion, refusal to commit to the new vision, disbelief in leadership and cynicism among the employees. It is recommended that in order to successfully communicate the vision to the organisation, every communication opportunity and method must be utilised. This includes but is not limited to daily conversations, newsletters, billboards, meetings, performance reviews, training opportunities, etc. During this stage, it is also vital for the leader and the leadership team to start visually showing the vision by leading by example (Kotter, 1995).

2.3.1.2.2 Step 5: Empower Action

During this stage, leaders and the coalitions provide an environment for employees to action the required steps to achieve the goals and visions. This requires leaders and managers to actively remove obstacles from employees' paths that hinder progress towards the vision. One of the most considerable risks is that certain leaders are not convinced of the new proposed vision, which negatively affects the overall organisational effect to achieve the vision. This disagreement can signal an undermining of the organisation's leaders' vision and can seriously halt the actions of the vision (Kotter, 1995).

2.3.1.2.3 Step 6: Create Quick Wins

The focus in this step is for leaders and managers to be aware of situations which can be pivoted to quick wins. These quick wins create momentum for the organisation to continue with the actions required towards the new visions. The quick wins also indicate to the organisation that the new proposed vision is, in a sense correct, and for the benefit of the group. If the quick wins are not developed and created by leaders, the employees can lose sight and motivation for the new vision and will require the leadership team and coalitions to restart the process (Kotter, 1995).

2.3.1.3 Organisational Change Phase 3: Implementing and Sustaining change

The third phase consists of the last two steps (Steps 7 & 8) and shifts the focus into cementing the changes and solidifying the changes into the culture of the organisation (Kotter, 1995; “On Leading Change: A Conversation with John P. Kotter,” 1997)

2.3.1.3.1 Step 7: Build on Change

During this step, leaders and the coalition need to focus on building on the change after quick wins are obtained and to be wary not to declare a false victory. After actions have provided quick wins, it is typical for leaders to think the proposed changes are successfully implemented; however, the process is not yet complete. As part of this step, the leaders and coalition learn from the journey’s lessons and start focusing on developing or updating systems and processes that support the transformation. Leaders need to be cognizant of the fact that a successful organisation change process happens over long periods of time and can take years to complete. Kotter (1995) states that an organisational change process can take up to seven years.

2.3.1.3.2 Step 8: Make it stick.

In this step, the focus is on ensuring the new change is now seen as part of “how things are done” and is deeply entrenched in the organisation's culture. In this stage, it is crucial for the leader, coalition and the rest of the organisation to actively and consciously live the new changes. It is also essential for the leader to ensure that the next generation of the leadership team truly understands the need for the change and becomes the new change champions for this vision (Kotter, 1995).

2.4 Leading from Experience

The adult learning process consists of a metacognitive experience, and therefore no individual strategic thinking process will be identical. An individual's experience in strategic thinking and change management plays a significant role in future strategic decisions due to the past experiences being the frame of reference of the individual leader (Mitchell et al., 2011).

A leader's strategic thinking capability and the manner in which they implement change are highly influenced by work experience (Goldman, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2011; Pisapia et al., 2005). Historically strategic actions such as thinking and implementation were only performed by top management of organisations; however, with the increasing complexity of the business environment, strategy has to be considered by all levels in an organisation. Generally, significant strategic change events do not happen very often in most organisations, and therefore leaders have limited experience in the practice of strategic thinking as well as the implementation and consequently have less opportunity for feedback regarding the process. This generally limits the individual leader's experience with strategy and its various aspects. This limiting effect is greatly enhanced when the leaders have no formal training in strategy to start the process with and are performing at a disadvantage (Goldman, 2008; Gross, 2016).

Strategic thinking depends on the individual leader's mindset (cognitive ability) and previous work experience (Adzeh, 2017; Goldman, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2011). By better understanding the individual leader's cognitive ability and experiences, the concept of strategic thinking can be better comprehended (Goldman, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2011; Smriti et al., 2021).

The research attempts to address which method or elements of the strategic thinking framework have been developed organically by leaders through experience. This will aid in better understanding the strategic thinking ability of the individual leaders. Most leaders in organisations do not have formal training in strategic thinking and have developed strategic thinking through decisions made from experience (Franc et al., 2012; Goldman, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2011). The secondary question the research aids in addressing is how the leaders, also based on their experiences, manage the organisational change process required to implement the strategic decisions. The research aims to close the gap between individual leaders' experiences and the links to academic frameworks developed.

2.5 Stakeholders involved in strategic thinking and organisational change

Strategic thinking forms part of an individual's cognitive ability, which is highly dependent on the individual's mindset and experience (Goldman, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2011; Smriti et al., 2021). However, Kotter's (1995) change model is positioned within the context of an organisation which consists of various stakeholders. Stakeholders can be described as individuals or groups of individuals who are affected or who can affect the organisation's operations and actions. The typical stakeholders include directors, management teams, shareholders, employees, clients and suppliers (Mainardes et al., 2012).

Upon closer inspection of Kotter's (1995) change model, it can be seen that different stakeholders are included and discussed during the various stages of the organisational change process. When considering the first phase of the change model, creating an environment for change, the stakeholder involvement in initiating the changes fluctuates from individual to group focused. Kotter (1995) has documented that during Step 1, in which urgency is created, typically, this urgency is created by the leader or individual leaders or even a management group. This step which is the initiation of the change is often driven or initiated by an individual or a small group of people. This step is often underestimated, in which the individual overestimates their success in communicating the urgency to a group and underestimates people's general resistance to change. This group, specifically, is generally the leader's confidants and the direct next leadership level from the leader. During this phase, it is vital for the leader to be able to communicate urgency to the selected group.

Step 2 of the change process requires the formation of a powerful coalition. This powerful coalition group size highly depends on the organisation's size and can vary from 5 to 50 people. The coalition often starts with an individual, then transitions to another individual, forming a group that again transitions into growing the group into a sizable cohort capable of initiating this urgent change. During Step 3, in which a vision for change is created, the idea for change and vision typically stems from the individual leader that initiated the change. This vision is then reworked, refined and moulded by this powerful coalition. Generally, when the vision is obtained from the

individual, the vision can still be blurry; the coalition assists in adding further definition and refinement into this vision (Kotter, 1995).

When considering the second phase of the Kotter (1995) organisational change model, when empowering the organisation to initiate and enable change, the stakeholder involvement also fluctuates from individual to coalition to organisation focused. Kotter (1995) has documented that during Step 4, communicating the vision, the communication is typically done by an individual, generally the company's leader or by a group of people such as senior executives. In both the options mentioned prior, a common mistake is that this stage of communication is highly underestimated. The proposed vision does not get communicated nearly often enough, generally the vision is communicated between 0.0001% to 0.0005% of the total yearly communication; this consequently results in limited buy-in from employees, confusion, refusal to commit to the new vision, disbelief in leadership and cynicism among the employees. The communication stems from the individual leader's vision which is further reworked by the coalitions; after that the communication can either stem from the individual or from the group to the large organisation.

Step 5 of Kotter's (1995) organisation change process, empowering others to take action, involves removing obstacles from employees' paths to achieve the required steps for the new vision. This empowerment is supported by the individual leader as well as the coalitions. The leader must support the coalitions, the next level leaders, and the larger organisation to remove obstacles as required. The coalitions and next level leaders also need to support their leader, their teams and the larger organisation in achieving their goals. This stage requires large volume organisational alignment and cooperation to achieve the goals. In step 6 of the process, planning and creating quick wins, leaders and managers are required to actively focus on identifying quick wins to maintain momentum for this change. The focus utilises the leader to next level leader relationship and leader to coalition relationships. Once the success is identified, it requires all relationships to communicate the win to the large volumes of the organisation to ensure every person is aware of the win.

When considering the third and final phase of the Kotter (1995) organisational change model, building on the change and making it stick, the stakeholder

involvement also fluctuates from individual to coalition to organisation focused. Kotter (1995) has documented that during Step 7, build on the change, it is important not to declare victory too soon but to build on the change to ensure it gets implemented continuously. In this stage, the leaders generally claim victory too soon; therefore, in this phase, the leaders need to keep each other accountable on an individual level and in a coalition. The relationships that are leveraged at this stage, are the leader to leader relationship, leader to coalition relationship, and the leader and coalition to organisation as the organisation still needs to settle with implementing this change. Step 8, making it stick, ensures the changes are anchored into the culture of the organisation. During this stage, the leaders and the coalitions need to ensure the changes are genuinely entrenched into the organisation's culture so that it becomes the new "way we do things". In this phase, the leaders to coalition as well as leader to organisation as well as coalition to organisation relationships are leveraged.

As discussed above, various relationships are required and leveraged during different steps in different stages of organisational change.

2.6 Conceptual Model of how leaders strategic thinking changed during a time when an organisation goes through change

Research questions were developed by considering the above literature and systematically comparing Kotter's (1995) organisational change phases to the different Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements. During Kotter's (1995) organisational change phases, it can be speculated that different stakeholders are engaged during different phases of the change process. This results in the leader leveraging different relationships with stakeholders at various stages. It is speculated that during the change process, the leader, firstly, has an internal cognitive initial function to develop a strategic decision through strategic thinking that needs to be implemented. Secondly, the leader will have to leverage relationships with a group of stakeholders closest to the leader, named *followers*, to create urgency, form a powerful coalition and create a vision for change, creating an environment for change. After that, the leader will leverage relationships with further placed stakeholders in the organisation, *leader to organisational relationship*, to communicate vision, take action and celebrate quick wins resulting in empowering

the organisation. After that, the leader will have to leverage the relationship with the rest of the *business ecosystem* to build on the change and make it stick, resulting in the incorporation and sustainability of the change implemented. These various stakeholder engagements required during the different organisational change process is further discussed in terms of strategic thinking.

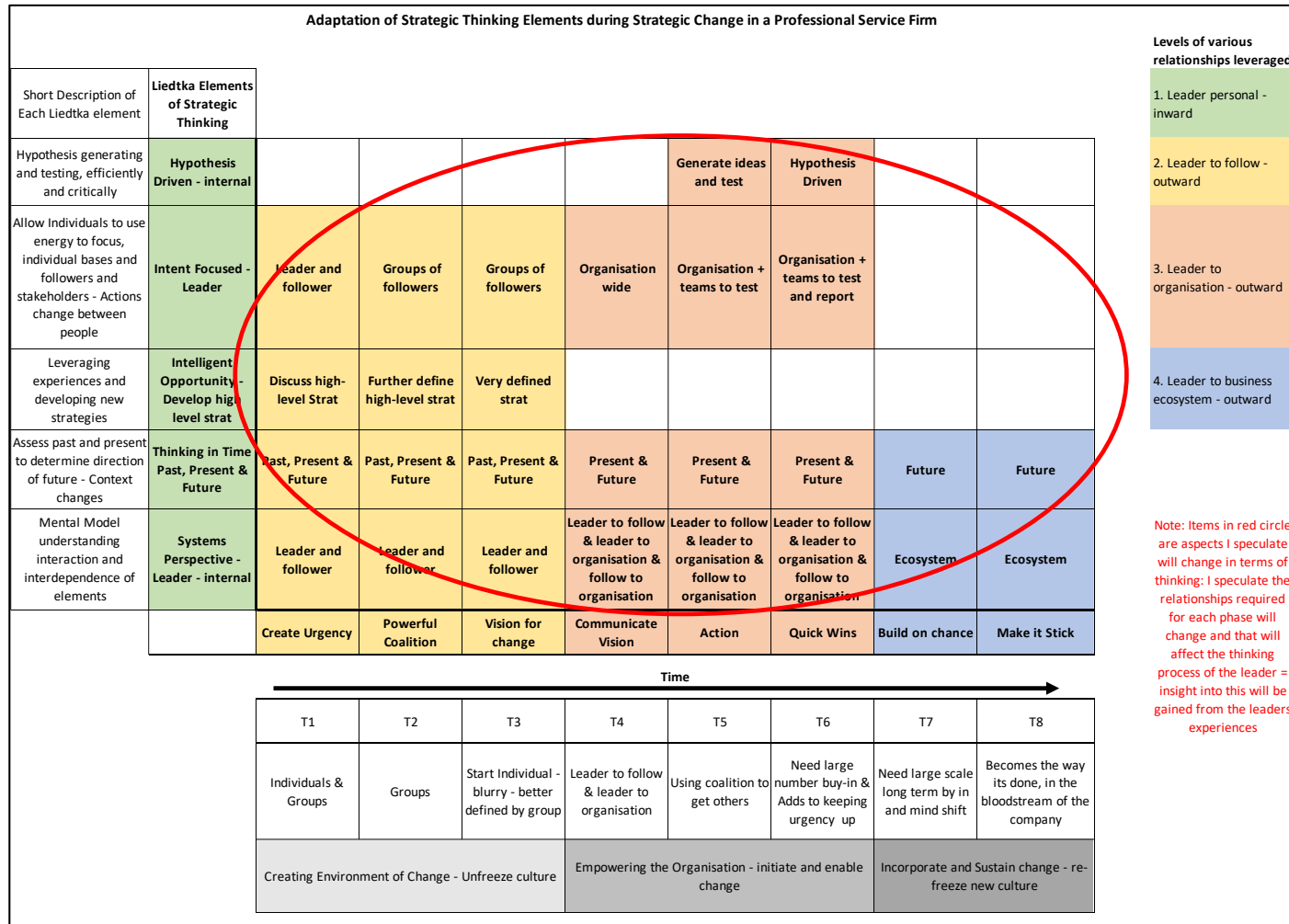
One of Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements includes systems thinking; it can be speculated that as Kotter's (1995) organisational change process progresses through its time period, the system's thinking boundaries and stakeholders change and evolve in the individual strategic thinking of a leader. It is suggested that similar changes in boundaries and stakeholders in each of the strategic thinking elements will develop and evolve as the change process progresses. A graphical representation of the above description of the items the research attempts to address is shown below in Figure 4.

In order to systematically consider the relationship between the theories of Liedtka's (1998) Elements of Strategic Thinking and Kotter's (1995) Change Model, a matrix was utilised to allow the theories to be juxtaposed to consider how a leader's strategic thinking elements are expected to alter during different periods of change in an organisation, as informed by the theories. On the vertical axis of the matrix, Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements were placed, and on the horizontal axis, the different phases of Kotter's (1995) change model were placed to populate the matrix. After that, the array of intra-organisational relationships that leaders would be required to leverage during the various strategic thinking models to manage change in an organisation effectively was added. During this process, I followed the line of thought that during different stages of organisational change, leaders are required to adjust their strategic thinking to include different aspects of the organisational system, which is focused on the different levels of people involved in the organisation, as alluded to in the theories mentioned above.

This resulted in the theoretical observation that leaders need to change their strategic thinking in each phase of the organisation change model in particular ways, which includes; adjusting how the leaders think and engage with different aspects of the organisational system, where the system consists of the different relationships the leaders have with their teams.

Figure 4

How Strategic thinking elements of Individual Leader changes during the different organisational change phases



For example, as depicted in Figure 4 when considering the first phase of change leadership, namely, creating urgency T1, the leader is required to adjust their thinking where systems consist of the leader and his immediate followers, and when thinking in time, the leader needs to utilise the past, present and future of the organisation to convince their team of the immediate urgency for change, as contemplated by Kotter (1995). It follows that for intelligent opportunism, the leader first develops the high-level strategy that must be followed and uses this strategy to build urgency, this strategy can then be amended as the immediate followers provide inputs into the previous thinking of the leader

During the process of creating urgency, the leaders are then required to leverage their relationships with their immediate followers to form an intentional focus among the followers on achieving the strategy. The same thinking process has been followed throughout the development of the matrix, resulting in a series of theoretical observations that underpin the conceptual approach of the study.

2.7 Conclusion

The literature study described above indicates that in terms of strategic thinking, many leaders develop strategic thinking through experiences. It was also indicated that even though specific academic theories are highly supported and popular, they are not yet verified by scientific methods and require more research, such as both Liedtka's and Kotter's models.

The literature study was utilised to develop the suggested matrix/model as discussed above in section 2.6. The model developed can be interpreted as a visual summary of the literature.

Chapter 3 Research Questions

The research is focused on the leader's individual experience. The research first focuses on understanding how leaders have developed strategic thinking skills from experience and then is further supplemented by understating how the leader's individual strategic thinking process had to change during a period in which an organisation was going through strategic change.

The researcher used a systematic thinking process to develop research questions and interview questions to test the researcher's conceptual model. The researcher aims to use the matrix shown above in Figure 4 to understand from leaders' experiences and perspectives how their individual strategic thinking skills have to change in each element as the organisational change process develops. The researcher speculated which relationships will be leveraged during the strategic thinking element at a change phase. The researcher has used the above matrix to develop the following research questions.

Research Question 1: How have leaders' strategic thinking in the professional services developed through past experiences?

Research question 1 aims to understand how leaders have developed strategic thinking aspects through individual experiences. The leader's experiences and perceptions are then compared to theory to understand how their experiences compare to the literature.

Research Question 2: How does leaders' strategic thinking change during the process of creating an environment susceptible to change?

Research question 2 aims to understand how the leader's strategic thinking elements, which are based on experience, need to change when an organisation is in the first phase of significant organisational change, specifically during creating an environment susceptible to change.

Research Question 3: How does leader's strategic thinking processes change during the cycle of empowering the organisation to initiate and enable change in the change process?

Research question 3 aims to understand how the leader's strategic thinking elements, which are based on experience, need to change when an organisation is in the second phase of organisation change, specifically during empowering the organisation to initiate and enable change.

Research Question 4: How does leader's strategic thinking change during the final stage of the change management process where the change is embedded in the company's culture?

Research question 4 aims to understand how the leader's strategic thinking elements, which are based on experience, need to change when an organisation is in the third and final phase of organisation change, specifically during the implementation and sustaining change phase.

The interview guide has been developed and is shown below in Appendix D. In Appendix D, the researcher has linked the interview questions with desired results and the research questions.

Chapter 4 Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The chapter describes the process used to answer the Research Questions as listed above in Chapter 3. This study used a qualitative mono-method approach to study how leader's strategic thinking methods had to adjust during periods in which an organisation was going through a time of strategic change. A specific organisation was selected for the research. The organisation's details will remain confidential and be further referred to as Company X for the duration of the study. Semi-structured interviews were performed with leaders involved in strategic changes in Company X. The data collected were analysed to identify and report patterns and themes.

4.2 Choice of Methodology

The research is qualitative mono method cross-sectional, focusing on the leaders' experiences at a specific point in time (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The timeframes for the research requirements are relatively short; therefore, a snapshot approach is utilised (O'Connor, 2008). The qualitative research is exploratory by attempting to deepen understanding and gaining perspective from the leader's point of view involved in strategic thinking (Mohajan, 2018). Open-ended questions were asked during an interview to gain further insight and a better understanding of the topic (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

Due to the complex nature that human behaviour brings into strategic thinking, the research was focused on building on existing theory to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The approach was inductive by nature; from the interview results, notes, and observation, patterns were seen and linked to existing theory along with the added perception of the individual leader, adding to the existing body of knowledge (Mohajan, 2018).

The strategy for the research is Phenomenology. The research attempted to better understand the relationship between leaders' strategic thinking and how leaders adapt their strategic thinking during a strategic change in an organisation. The research is primarily based on the participants lived experiences and how they

overcome this phenomenon (Mohajan, 2018). Phenomenological studies allow the researcher to ask open-ended questions and carefully listen to the responses from the leaders. During this process, the research seeks to identify and deepen its understanding of underlying meanings in the individual leader's experiences. The focus is on understanding and appreciating the leader's subjective reality (Goldman, 2008).

The research is Interpretivist philosophy. The research focused on different leaders' perspectives of strategic thinking and their reality and experience of strategic thinking in a context of an organisation (Company X) undergoing strategic change. The research also focused on better understanding the real-world problems and how they can be explained by theory. To gain a better understanding, multiple realities and interpreting words are some of the underpinning assumptions of Interpretivism (Petty et al., 2012; Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The research involved a naturalistic approach, which allowed the researcher to develop a deep understanding at a high level of detail, which is explored and interpreted during the analysis phase (Mohajan, 2018).

4.3 Population

The population targeted for this research includes a set of people who can contribute to answering the research questions; therefore, the population of the research are leaders or managers who are frequently involved in strategic thinking and who have experience in significant organisational change (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The individuals identified who meet the criteria are employed at a single organisation, which due to confidentiality reasons will be known as Company X. Company X which is undergoing organisational change is discussed in more detail in Section 4.5. The leaders identified are individuals that have been involved in an organisation change in the last 12 to 24 months. The leaders and managers that were targeted can be described as C-Suite Leaders, directors, middle managers, general managers, and senior managers.

4.4 Unit of Analysis

For this research, the unit of analysis is the narratives of the lived experiences of individual leaders. The leaders are at a level in the organisation which requires them

to think strategically and who have also implemented changes from strategic decisions. For phenomenological studies, the unit of analysis is the individual leaders and, by extension, the narratives obtained for the interviews (Creswell, 2012; Moen, 2006).

4.5 Sampling Method and size

The research is focused on a deeper understanding of social reality and how it relates to the theory of strategic thinking and how it changes during a time of organisational change. The leader's perceptions are focused on an experience at a certain point in time; therefore, the purposive sampling method was used (O'Connor, 2008).

Being a leader in the organisation, strategic thinking is part of their daily cognitive process (Smriti et al., 2021). The selected leaders are from a professional services background, are centralised around the oil and gas industry, and have diverse experiences and backgrounds. With this range of candidates, the purposive sampling variety was homogeneous by nature, allowing for a deep understanding of how these individuals think strategically. The selected leaders have experienced how their strategic thinking had to adjust in the organisation, which has undergone significant changes due to strategist decisions. Purposeful sampling identifies information-rich leaders with intensive experiences and study the information obtained in detail and depth (Patton, 1999; Suri, 2011). The results were then compared to the academic models (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

The participants for the research were selected based on their position within Company X. Company X is a proudly South African organisation established in 2016 in Pretoria, specialising in consulting and construction services in the Oil and Gas sector. Company X initially had a rocky start, before initially finding its niche segment in the market. Thereafter the company experienced unprecedented growth and doubled its annual turnover year on year from 2016 to 2020. In 2020 the company was affected by COVID-19 and its associated affects. During this time and in order to sustain the extreme growth, the company's management team realised that another level of management was required. Thereafter five middle-level external managers were brought in to each manage and leader crucial operational

departments. Between 2020 and 2022 various aspects affected the operations of the company which the directors and top management was convinced was due to the new externally sourced managers, consequently the managers were removed from their positions and have intern left the company. Since then the remaining managers have been attempting to rectify the damage caused. Company X is undergoing significant organisation change aspects such as development and implementation of new operational and financial process and systems, re-building of deteriorated organisational culture, developing and implementing new organisational structures. The leaders of Company X were therefore purposefully selected as the research sample based on their experience in strategic thinking and significant organisational change.

Qualitative studies' commonly accepted sampling size criteria are determined when the sample has reached saturation. However, this method had provided difficulty in the past when researchers prematurely closed data collection activities stating false saturation; therefore, a guideline is provided (Gentles et al., 2015). The research focused on obtaining twelve to fifteen interviews. When performing a phenomenological research design, it is recommended to have between six and ten interviews; however, for data collection, it is recommended to have a minimum of twelve interviews (Gentles et al., 2015; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). It was also recommended that the sample size not be too small to make data saturation challenging; however, it is also recommended to limit the sample size to avoid obtaining excessive information, making the in-depth study analysis difficult (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

4.6 Measuring instrument

One of the key characteristics of qualitative research is that the researcher is an essential measuring instrument. The researcher also made use of an interview guide. The interview guide has been developed (Appendix D) and was piloted before the participant interviews. The interview guide contained open-ended questions and included ample recording space for participants. The interviews were also recorded for ease of transcribing (Creswell, 2012).

Open-ended questions are far less formal and add flexibility to the interview process. The interview guide was developed for the researcher to be utilised if needed to provide structure to the interview. The interview guide contained the elemental concepts from the literature to assist the researcher however still offered the participant freedom and flexibility in answering. The interview guide assisted the researcher in ensuring consistency throughout the data-gathering process (Turner, 2010).

4.7 Data Gathering Process

The primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to ask the participant the same questions within a flexible framework to enable the participant to talk freely and naturally (Dearnley, 2005). The open-ended questions encouraged the participant to speak about their own experience and not limit them to providing pre-selected answers. This method focused on adding depth to the study and making allowances for new concepts to enter the research (Dearnley, 2005).

The research is focused on understanding the actions and experiences of leaders currently in strategic thinking positions and how strategic thinking alters in an organisation undergoing a strategic change. These topics warranted open-ended interview questions. It was envisaged that a minimum of ten to twelve semi-structured interviews would take place and that the average interview time would be sixty minutes.

An interview guide, as well as interview questions, was developed and is attached in Annexure D. The interview questions consisted of leading questions, follow-up questions, and probes. The main questions were comprehensive and introduced the central theme of strategic thinking during organisational change. The participant then answered the main question, which required active listening from the researcher. While the participant responded to the questions, the researcher listened to the participants' responses actively and was cognitive of non-verbal responses. The researcher then asked follow-up questions to understand their experience and perceptions further. The researcher also focused on probes during the interview to ensure the participant remains engaged at all times (Roberts, 2020).

Once ethical clearance (Appendix B) was obtained, the interview questions and guide were piloted to test the participants' reactions and question understanding before the interview commenced (Roberts, 2020). It was envisioned that the interviews would take place in person in face-to-face interviews in a natural setting. With the participant's permission, the interviews would be voice recorded and used for data analysis.

After the initial participants were identified, they were contacted initially via telephone followed by email. In this email, a high-level overview of the interview process was given; this included but was not limited to a description of the research topic, the purpose of the interview, confidentiality, the planned venue and time, along with an estimated interview duration for planning (Turner, 2010). Before the interview, each participant was asked to sign a consent form (Appendix C) as proof that the information had been received ethically.

Before the interview, the researcher prepared accordingly. As part of this preparation, the researcher ensured that the recording device was fully charged and working, arrived at the venue early, waited for the participant to arrive, and had a casual discussion to build some comfort with the participant. Before the interview commenced, the researcher asked the participant's consent to voice record the meeting for ease of reference. The researcher then again highlighted the reason for the research and the interview and asked the participant if they were ready and had any questions before they started (Turner, 2010). Then the interview commenced. After the interview, the researcher sent the participant a follow-up email expressing thanks for their time and attention.

4.8 Data Analysis Approach

Once the interviews were complete, the voice recordings were transcribed (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The interviews were analysed by making use of thematic analysis. A Thematic analysis focuses on identifying and reporting patterns, and themes, identified in data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

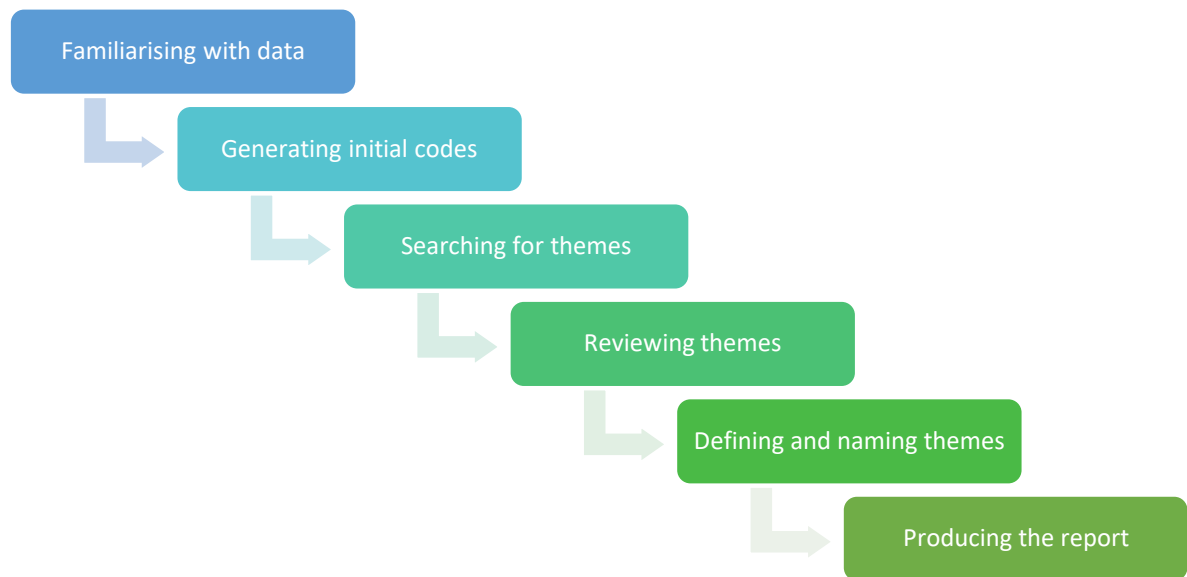
The research focused on providing additional insights into the two existing frameworks, namely, Liedtka's (1998) five-factor model of strategic thinking as well

as Kotter (1995) leading change model. With these frameworks in mind, the strategy of the pre-determined code list was used to analyse the data. This strategy required the researcher to have a pre-determined list of codes that were used for reference when searching through the interview data. Data that cannot be coded from the pre-determined list was identified and investigated to determine if the data required a new code or was a subcode to an existing code (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Once the codes had been finalised, the codes were grouped into categories. For the research, the categories will be a construct of the five factors of the Liedtka (1998) model and Kotter's (1995) model. The categories were then compared to determine if a theme was formed or if a category was possibly a subcategory of another (Saldana, 2013). By understanding which themes are dominant in the leaders' strategic thinking practices in the context of a changing organisation, insights were gained into how strategic thinking varies as the change process progresses.

The aim was to perform the thematic data analysis directly after each interview, which made the data collection and analysis stage a continuous ongoing process. After each interview analysis, the codes identified were documented and listed. Each succeeding interview was analysed and coded, and the codes were compared to the previous list of codes. This process continued until no new codes in terms of properties, actions, perspectives, dimensions, or conditions were identified, resulting in code saturation. Code saturation also contributed to the enhanced validity of the research (Saldana, 2013). The analysis phases of thematic analysis as described above are shown below in Figure 5 (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Figure 5
Thematic Analysis Phases



4.9 Quality Control

The research focused on one of the most widely accepted strategic thinking frameworks and the change leadership model, which consists of various concepts. To ensure and enhance quality in the research, criteria such as validity, reliability, and objectivity were included in the design and methodology (Patton, 1999). Theory triangulation was used to address the criteria mentioned earlier. The concepts identified from the interview process that do not entirely fulfil the recognised frameworks' requirements, and the additionally identified concepts can contribute to the identification or linkage to a separate or rival theory.

As part of this process, the research was constantly cognisant of the possible researcher effect, explicitly focusing on the participants' reactions and personal biases (Patton, 1999). The researcher focused on providing a natural interview environment in which prolonged engagement sessions could occur. The researcher also focused on delivering "thick" descriptions, which provides the findings' context, observations, details, experiences, and emotions. The researcher also focused on documenting every step of the data collection process, from interview responses, recordings, and transcripts, to ensure a completed auditable trail of the process was available and clear (Creswell, 2012).

4.10 Limitations

The research is qualitative by nature and requires a limited number of interviews, making it challenging to generalise (Patton, 1999). The research might not develop or contribute to existing theory. The researcher must be aware of biases and remain neutral and distant as required. The purposive sampling size might not provide useful information, which might require additional information (Mohajan, 2018). The sample will be limited to leaders based in Pretoria and Johannesburg in South Africa, who are employed by Company X.

Chapter 5 Results

5.1 Introduction

The interviews performed as part of the research projects provided deeper insights into how leaders adapt their strategic thinking elements when organisations go through significant strategic changes.

This chapter discusses how the interviews were performed, provides information on the participants, and also explains how the data gathered during interviews were analysed. The data collection process which accounts for accuracy and validation procedures and methods will also be described. The interview data will then be discussed in line with Chapter 3.

5.2 Summary of interviews conducted and the interview method

Before conducting interviews with the participants, the researchers performed a pilot interview with a confidant, as mentioned in Chapters 4.6 and 4.7. After the pilot interview, the researcher and the confidant reflected on the interview. The researcher became highly aware of their own biases as well as the requirements to be able and willing to provide further clarity on the questions, if needed by the participants in a manner that did not affect the participant's answers. After that, the researcher started scheduling interview times with the participants. The researcher had previously envisioned to performed the interviews in person; however, both parties' schedules did not allow for this option and the interviews were conducted online by making use of the Microsoft Teams Platform. The researcher, as well as all the participants are employed by Company X. Company X currently makes use of open floor offices; therefore, in an attempt to assist the participants in speaking freely, the researcher booked private meetings and boardrooms with each participant, in order for each participant to have a dedicated and private boardroom in which they would answer the questions freely.

The researcher planned to conduct twelve semi-structured interviews as recommended for data validity (Gentles et al., 2015; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). After the researcher performed nine interviews, no new codes seemed to be

generated from the interviews. The researcher transcribed, coded and analysed the data and reached code saturation. The researcher performed two additional interviews in an attempt to verify code saturation.

The researcher performed a total of eleven interviews, which were in line with the target sample population as discussed in Chapter 4.3. The interviews were conducted over a period of three weeks and were performed with the use of the semi-structured interview guide. The interviews were performed with directors, senior managers and general managers in management roles who were or are highly involved in strategic thinking in an organisation (Company X) while the organisation was going through a strategic change. A total of eleven interviews were performed, the average interview was 51 minutes long and had an average of 6 893 words per interview. All eleven interviews accumulated to a total of 556 minutes, approximately 9.3 hours with over 75 820 words. Table 1 below provides information regarding the participants and the interviews.

The researcher had previously envisioned performing the interviews in person; however, both parties' schedules did not allow for this option and the interviews were performed online by using Microsoft Teams Platform. The interviews were conducted online and were recorded with the consent of the participants. The recordings were downloaded and saved to the cloud for backup purposes. During the individual interviews, the researcher did not take additional notes and relied on the semi-structured interview guide with probing questions.

Table 1:
Participant and Interview Summary

Participant	Position in Company X	Duration of Interview (minutes)	Length of Transcription (words)
1	Director & Divisional Manager	58:01	7 897
2	Area & Senior Project Manager	52:30	7 299
3	Director	57:42	9 432
4	Director & Divisional Manager	56:42	8 251
5	Chief Operations Officer	39:05	5 585
6	Divisional Manager	52:57	6 077
7	Divisional Manager	52:14	5 782
8	Divisional Manager	48:51	5 600
9	Divisional Manager	62:08	9 067
10	Divisional Manager	42:46	6 077
11	Divisional Manager	34:59	4 753

5.3 Interview transcription and verification

The researcher made use of the Microsoft Teams meeting recordings to transcribe the interviews on the Otter.ai platform. Otter.ai is an online platform that makes use of artificial intelligence to produce real-time transcriptions from recordings (*Otter.Ai*, n.d.). Once a transcript was completed by the software, each transcription was verified by the researcher by reading the transcript while re-listening to the interview recordings. Any words, sentences or phrases that were either not clearly understood by the software or were incorrectly interpreted were corrected manually by the researcher. Common terms of speech such as “ja”, “you know” and repeated terms, were not altered and were left in the transcriptions. The researcher did not significantly alter any of the transcripts in order to ensure the original message of the participant is retained. The manual transcription verification took the researcher approximately 2 to 3 hours per interview transcript and approximately 25 to 28 hours in total.

5.4 Transcript coding and analysis in ATLAS.ti

Once the transcripts were verified as discussed above, they were coded by the researcher with the use of ATLAS.ti. ATLAS.ti is a qualitative data processing software that was used in order to attempt to add some sort of structure in terms of coding to unstructured qualitative data (*ATLAS.Ti*, n.d.).

5.4.1 Transcript preparation

The researcher verified transcriptions were added to ATLAS.ti programme. Each transcript was saved according to Participant identification code. Participants will be identified with the term Participant 1 to 11, as shown above in Table 1.

5.4.2 Transcript coding

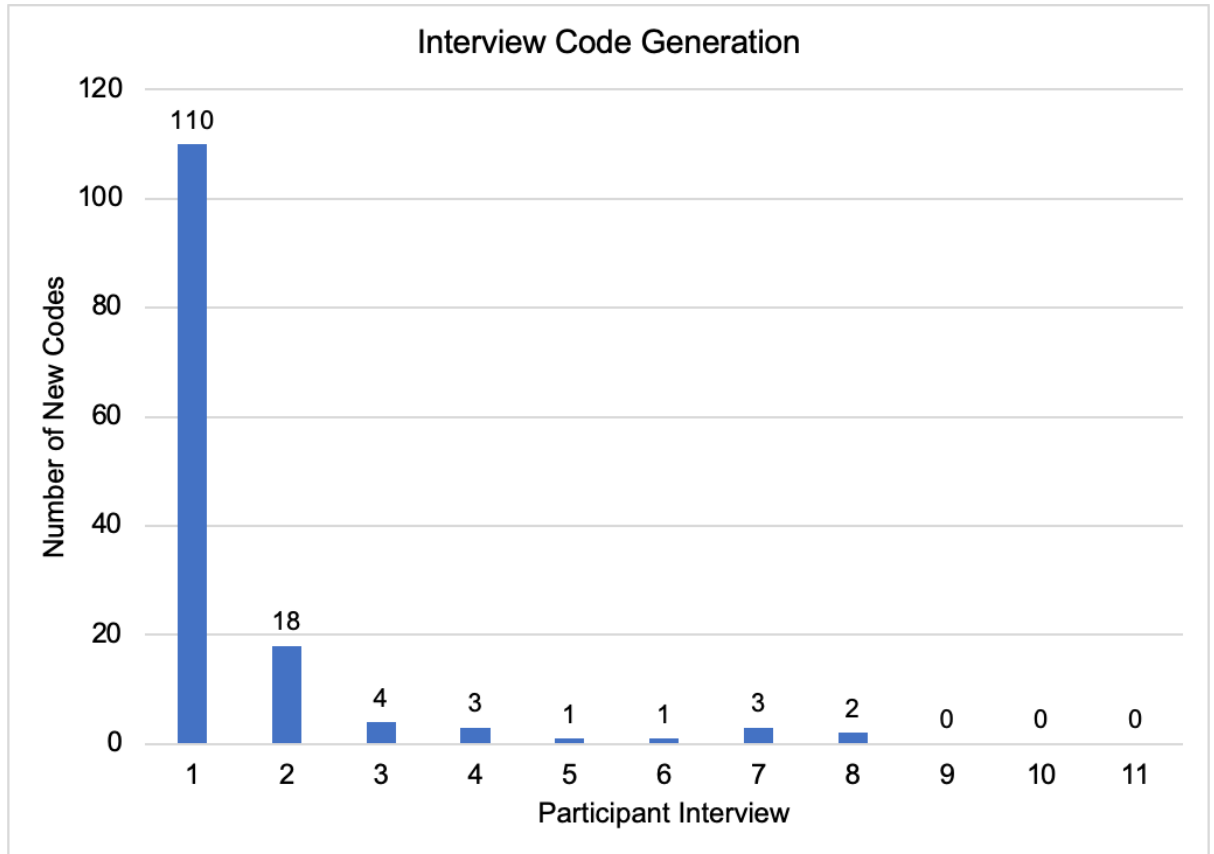
Due to the nature of the research and the vast field of strategic thinking, during the interview, the researcher showed the participants diagrams, which formed part of the interview guide, in an attempt to get a more focused response from the participants. With this in mind, the researcher used these images to initially code the transcripts, the initial coding took the researcher approximately 2 to 4 hours per interview. Thereafter the researcher would re-read the transcripts with a clear mind identifying any newly identified codes not previously identified, this process took approximately 1 hour per interview.

The codes generated from the interviews are shown below in Appendix E Code book.

5.5 Data Saturation

According to Saldana (2013), interview data should be collected until no new codes are generated from the interview analysis. This process indicated code saturation and is also contributed to the validity of the research. The code generation for each interview is shown below in Figure 6.

Figure 6
Interview Code Generation



It can be seen from the figure above, after the ninth interview, no new codes were identified from the interviews. Two further interviews were performed to ensure no further codes immersed from the research as well as to ensure sufficient data was collected to ensure that pre-mature saturation was avoided. For this research, code saturation appeared early in the analysis which can be attributed to the fact that all the interview participants were from the same organisation, Company X, and it can be speculated that the participants are conditioned to think the same. Early code saturation is also typical with purposeful sampling of homogeneous sampling, as is the case with the research (Etikan, 2016; Patton, 1999).

As part of the data analysis, frequency analysis was performed for research question 2 to 4 (Appendix F). The frequency analysis counts the number of responses received from the interview participants for each question and each code. Even though the number of participants are too low to draw conclusions from, the

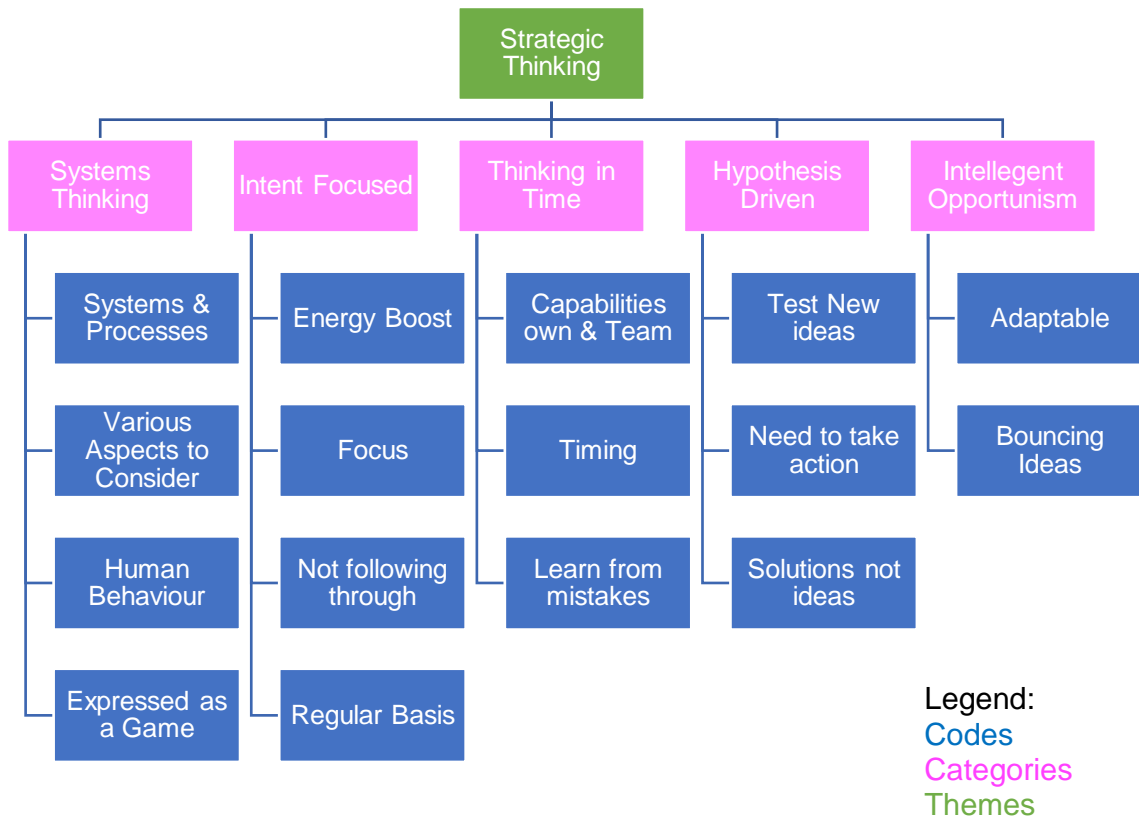
frequency analyses can assist with providing trustworthiness of the results obtained. With a large number of responses that converge to the same idea; gives an indication of multiple participant confirmation (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

5.6 Results for Research Question 1

Research Question 1: How have leaders' strategic thinking in the professional services developed through past experiences?

This research question was specifically aimed to understand how the leaders' strategic thinking methods have developed from their own experiences. Each leader was asked questions from the interview guide (Appendix D) which allowed them to talk about their own experiences and perceptions. Each leader was asked how their experience compares to the first literature model under consideration, Liedtka's (1998) Elements of strategic thinking. An overview of the results to research question 1 is shown below in Figure 7, which also illustrates, the codes, categories and themes that were generated and identified from the interviews.

Figure 7
Overview of Results for Research Question 1



5.6.1 Systems Thinking

Most participants mentioned that from their experience as leaders who have been involved in strategic thinking practices and strategic thinking implementation phases, they have learned to think about how different aspects affect each other. This exercise of having to think about different aspects and how they affect each other are major elements of systems thinking. This process of system thinking includes considering various groups or clusters of aspects or items that change depending on the decision to be made. These groups can include how decisions affect each other or how decisions affect people or operations, to name a few examples.

Participant 1: "So you step back, and you look at the interaction between, you know, if I do this, what is going to be the consequence of that, if I do that, if I do this, what will I do to counteract it, then helps me a lot in terms of, I think, in terms of system perspective, and I do that very often. And I think you've heard me talk about, you know, it's just the game"

Participant 2: “Yeah, well, I think in any change that you know, they are there quite a few things to consider. Obviously, you know, the, the overall goal or objective in terms of what it is that organization or yours either want to achieve, in terms of the direct deliverables, direct outcomes, but you obviously, in that process, have to take cognizance of, for instance, the dynamics of people behaviour, how people react to change and how people go through their own state of change and having to absorb and adopt to, to do change”

Participant 4: “But there's other factors also to take into account as in this still an operation that needs to carry on. So they still already have that on the plate. So I'm always looking beyond the point of what I'm trying to achieve in terms of what is what are these people currently busy with? And how much can they take in. And that's why I see a nice mix of small doses continuously.”

Participant 6: “Yes, so, you know, I myself, think about it a lot. Because each decision we make on a on a management level or a business unit level, as direct effects of how we interact with each other. And naturally, the decisions we make have or has consequences on a lot of other people's lives, and strategic changes in in I think any organization does influence how people interact”

5.6.2 Intent focused

The participants indicated that during times of strategic thinking they very often have to use their own energy and focus to achieve a specific strategic goal or target. They have also indicated that as a leader, when the path to the goal changes along the way of achieving that goal, the end goal remains the same and it is the leaders responsibility to guide the rest of the team or organisation on the new path. The participants also indicated that depending on their type of experience, they leverage their knowledge in different ways to achieve a strategic goal.

Participant 3: “So as the as the leader of the business, you had to bring strategic thinking into it to help people adapt, and to show them that the intent could be is the same, but could be achieved in slightly different, slightly different way. And that there was a lot of a lot of the attention and focus that was already in place, could be

redirected only slightly, and you actually change people's direction, quite a bit by just gently nudging them in that direction”

Participant 5: “especially intent focused, I think, aligns most with with me, I think, especially being a leader directly in operations? I think it is, you need to specifically ask yourself, what you and the company need to get out of a specific situation. And that's mostly why I would lean towards intend focus.”

Participant 6: “What I like to do is because I think it's mainly because I come from a project background is and what I like to do in a project space is you have an end goal and you have a project schedule, and there is a certain period of time, you have to do something or achieve your completion date, which is a project's end goal. And then take that end date, or in this case, the end goal and work it back in in certain chunks on what you need to achieve at certain time periods, to make sure you achieve your strategic goal.”

Participant 7: “And specifically in the role I am currently, there is this constant planning that needs to, to, to happen, we need to plan for labour on sites for materials for equipment and plant to be at certain places to make sure that you you, you maintain the correct schedule, according to the clients requirements, etc, etc. So that that takes up a lot of my own energy and focus to make sure that, that we that we execute our projects according to do a plan, and according to the right plan”

5.6.3 Thinking in Time

The participants indicated that they regularly, if not daily, use this aspect of strategic thinking, where they have to consider different time intervals, such as past, present and future time intervals. The different time intervals each have different effects. Leaders admit that from past experiences they learn from mistakes made during strategic thinking methods and actively attempted to avoid the mistakes going forward. The different time interval considerations also includes the leaders thinking process of considering the organisation current resources and capabilities.

Participant 1: “And I think thinking in time comes naturally if you are inclined to learn from your mistakes, I think if you think about what we've done in the past that work

sell, or, that didn't work so well. I think it's very strong focus. If it didn't work, well, you will never ever do it again, because you've burned your fingers. I mean, that kind of happened to me automatically. Maybe I'm more risk averse than other people. And then, if you have done it successfully in the past, it's the second time is always easier.”

Participant 4: “So I mean, from whenever possible now, I mean, I think we do this on a daily basis in different levels of intensity”

Participant 8: “So my thought process was thinking was the strategic thinking is mainly dependent on previous experiences and lessons learned. It's highly affected from past experiences. Just referring back to the same case appointing too much people, too many people in a very short amount of period when you're looking. You're not considering the future in terms of a business case. So you're highly dependent on past experiences and also change my thinking in terms of company efficiencies and optimization”

Participant 10: “And then the same was thinking in time, like I can really see that with a model like, change is inevitable, it's always going to change. It's the only thing we're almost guaranteed with in today's time. So thinking about the past, present and future is very valuable. And even if it's not for your existing company, looking at your competition, and seeing, or similar organizations, what have they learned? What have they done? What can you learn from that, and also about the resources.”

5.6.4 Hypothesis Driven

The participants indicated that in their experience as well as in their current organisation, they very often have to develop ideas and test the ideas concurrently during their everyday responsibilities. The participants have also indicated that during this process, their thinking has to be adaptable to overcome any hurdles encountered. The leaders also indicated that the whole hypothesis driven thinking method was used often in their current organisation, due to the fact that this type of thinking was taught and driven by the CEO of the organisation. One of the leaders also indicated that his perception is that this type of thinking was one of the aspects that lead to the fast paced growth of Company X and that this type of thinking was

part of the company's culture. A particular participant, participant 11, indicated that currently one of his main responsibilities was in this stage of idea testing. Currently participant 11 is responsible for moving an organisations' mechanical workshop from two separate locations to one physical location, and in his opinion this movement of the workshop was a process of idea testing.

Participant 3: "So we generate ideas, but we have to go out there and test them, and come back and maybe adjust as you go"

Participant 7: "hypothesis driven, there's been a lot of ideas generate generating, and the idea of testing, I work at the company where you have to, you have to be innovative, and where you also need to, to, to be very adaptable. And everything we try and do here is new, we it's novel ideas, we try not to stick to the same pattern. So there's a lot of that hypothesis driven thinking as well as though if I yeah"

Participant 10: "I can think about is like, so we had a centralized approach and like theory that we kind of wanted to implement within our organization for procurement. And it was kinda like the new goal is actually to like decrease like the amount of spending get a better terms. And that was during a period of change within the organization. So there was a lot of organizational change and structure as well. And how it affected my thinking was, I had to be quite adaptable. And also kind of like, fail. And when you fail fast and learn fast, and also make sure you know what you're measuring yourself against, and how to achieve those goals."

Participant 11: "Hypothesis driven, I think it is just at this point in time, just a hypothesis that we'd be that we'd be better suited in one location. And we'll see if that if that works out. But we'll see."

5.6.5 Intelligent Opportunism

The participants indicated that during strategic thinking times, an adaptable and open mindset is highly important. This adaptable mindset is what provides the leader and the organisation the flexibility to try new options and consider new possibilities. The open-minded mindsets of leaders are what allows the organisation to open for change and be more accepting of change.

Participant 1: "Yeah, and I think being adaptable is is very important."

Participant 3: "So as the as the leader of the business, you had to bring strategic thinking into it to help people adapt, and to show them that the intent could be is the same, but could be achieved in slightly different, slightly different way. And that there was a lot of a lot of the attention and focus that was already in place, could be redirected only slightly, and you actually change people's direction, quite a bit by just gently nudging them in that direction."

Participant 10: "I think one of the critical things would then be your adaptability. And you need to be open to change and have that corporate culture, which is willing to change with you as well."

Participant 11: "And the intelligent opportunism come in there, I think we are trying to adapt that we move into one into one location and maybe open up new possibilities, the new location is is pretty close to one of our major clients, which we service and I think we need to we want to exploit that. And so is there more that actually offer them more more services?"

5.7 Results for Research Question 2

Research Question 2: How does leaders' strategic thinking change during the process of creating an environment susceptible to change?

This research question was specifically aimed at understanding how the leaders' strategic thinking methods change during the first phase of organisational change, specifically creating an environment susceptible to change. Each leader was asked questions from the interview guide (Appendix D) which allowed them to tell a story about their own experiences and perceptions. Each leader was asked how their own experience compares to the two literature models under consideration, Liedtka's (1998) Elements of strategic thinking and Kotter's 8 Step Change Model (Kotter, 1995). The research question attempts to understand which strategic thinking elements (Liedtka's elements of strategic thinking) are predominantly used by leaders during the first stage of organisation change, specifically during the phase

of creating an environment for change (Kotter Change Model). An overview of the results to research question 2 is shown below in Figure 8.

Figure 8
Overview of Results for Research Question 2

Phases of Organizational Change			
First Phase : Creating Environment for Change			
C4C - Environment for Change	Creating Urgency	Form a Powerful Coalition	Create a vision for change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Automatically Happens •Better if envisaged •Happens due to Crises •Important Step •Leaders not always aligned •Levels misconnect •Not everyone receive change same •Not implemented well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Automatically happens •Believe/Underst and •Consequences •Future impact •Identifying a need •In Others •Instigate a change •Interaction between aspects •Leader Personally •Past/Present •Specific Focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Better Stakeholder •Bring Part Together •Cause and affect •Different perspectives •Effect on future •Follower •Give power away •Important •Intention •People who have influence •Specifically chosen •Terrorist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Adaptable •Changing minds difficult •Developing idea and testing •Direction change is difficult •Followers •Implementing •Intention of path •Leader •Minor Changes •No Change •Organisation •Understanding

5.7.1 Environment for Change

According to Kotter (1995), organisation change consists of three stages which in total consist of eight phases as shown above in Chapter 2 Figure 3. Environment for change is the first of the three stages, with the first three of the eight steps. During the interview, the participants were asked how the three overall stages of the Kotter's change model compared to their experience. Most of the leaders reported from their experience that the environment susceptible to change is automatically generated

either due to internal factors such as negative results from a project or financial year end or from external factors such as market demand changes. They did report that on occasion, the environment for change is created by initiating a change which does not stem from a negative result; however, those types of change initiations were very limited. The participants have also reported that, in their experience, during this first stage of change, there is typically significant misalignment between different levels within an organisation. The lower levels typically during this stage are resilient to change and don't understand the reasons for the change, and in these scenarios, the open communication channels become highly important.

Participant 1: "there's a big disconnect a lot of time between those lower levels and the management structure of the organization and the lower levels don't necessarily understand what is the driving forces for the these these changes that that's needed to the organization?"

Participant 5: "through creating the climate for change, I feel that that almost happens automatically. You know, you can, you can initiate I guess a change from nothing. But usually when you when you when you change something, there's a reason behind it."

Participant 6: "So I think the most the most difficult thing on on change is getting everyone on board needs to be part of the change and getting everyone's vision aligned and their buy into what you want to achieve as a leader."

5.7.1.1 Creating Urgency

Based on the leader's perceptions and experience, the majority of the leaders believe that in order to create a sense of urgency, the urgency first has to develop internally in the leader himself/herself. Once the urgency is fully understood and embraced by the leader, only then can the leader translate this sense of urgency to their followers or coalition. The leaders also highlighted the importance of truly understanding and knowing their followers on a very personal level to be able to correctly communicate this urgency to them in a way that resonates with the specific individual. The leaders also expressed their opinion that in most cases a sense of urgency for a change is created automatically, and this is mostly either due to

negative results or areas with significant room for improvement. Which aligns with the above overall first phase of change process.

Participant 1: "So if you understand if you can create urgency within yourself, it's easy to communicate that urgency, and to create that urgency to the other peoples"

Participant 3: "It's understanding that everybody that you deal with in your business has a different reason for being here. I think it's triggering that particular sense of urgency and that it takes effort and takes you got to know a little bit about the people around you. And I think that often drives the urgency. So I think it goes beyond the business performance, it goes to Why am I here? What's in it For me that question we forget to answer we asked very often, but you go and say what's in it for you, because you can do keep doing what you're doing, or we can put you on a growth path"

Participant 4: "It's, it's all about the vision that you have, you realize that there is something greater that you can achieve, whether it's individually, whether it's in a team, whether it's in an organization, so the first thing is you as a leader have as to buy into what you're trying to sell, you know, so your thinking must be you need to be 100% invested in it."

Participant 10: "Think the reason why this usually change is like if it ain't broken dont trying to fix it. So usually, the reason for changes, either there's room for improvement, or something isn't working. So I think that almost automatically and it seems then creates an urgency in your scenarios about thinking"

5.7.1.2 Form a powerful coalition

The leaders who were interviewed all indicated that obtaining the support of a group of selected people within the organisation is of significant importance to be able to successfully implement a change in an organisation. The leaders indicated that not only is the support required to implement the change but also to get the larger organisation to also support the change and to view an aligned management team focusing on the long term success of the company. The leaders also regularly discussed the importance of choosing the correct coalition member depending on

the strategic change that needs to be implemented. There needs to be a clear relationship between the leader and the coalitions members in order for the two parties to truly understand each other as well as the others' values, strengths and weaknesses.

Participant 4: "Well, you know, the saying strength in numbers. So you have to you have to partner or align with key people."

Participant 5: "Yeah, so first of all, I've never rolled anything else inside of our company without, you know, getting the buy in from as you know, as many people that I can, it is important because you need to see it from different viewpoints"

Participant 6: "And having people as part of the organization see that and see there's a, there's a firm, firm belief within the management structure that this is something that needs to be done for the company to have longevity. I think it's easier to do have the buy in or the coalition from, from everyone and think to answer the question on my specific thinking."

Participant 9: "So ideally, you got to identify the, if you're going to get this core team around you, you need to make sure they cover all your bases, if you want to put it that way. And then of course, exploit their, their their strengths. And then your mindset is make sure that those people drive the same vision that you're driving. I think you definitely got to understand them as well personally understand their weaknesses and strengths. And then develop that's squad or that team around you. And that team around you needs to be firstly on the same vision and you've got to drive that individual to what makes them tick."

5.7.1.3 Create a vision for change

The majority of the leaders clearly indicated the importance of the coalition in creating a vision for change. The participants indicated that from their experiences, the coalitions were crucial to firstly get their support for the change, secondly to get the coalitions inputs and perspectives of the suggested change and thirdly for the physical implementation of the change to the large organisation. Except for two leaders, the remaining leaders indicated that the coalitions members had an impact

on the proposed change and therefore the leader slightly varied their vision based on the feedback from the coalition.

Participant 3: "So the answer is absolutely yes, you must listen very carefully. Because you can't be a specialist in everything. And your perspective is never complete. You're you have biases, you have particular views on, on what success looks like, etc. And you've got to test it. But I think often not losing sight of the vision of the outcome."

Participant 4: "you've got your goal, what you want to achieve, but maybe the way you get the gets altered a little bit, you know, based on feedback and interaction was with colleagues, because they might see something that you've completely overlooked. And there's nothing wrong with changing the path."

Participant 7: "I would say that they are, they has been instances where where I had to alter my idea, I think, from from, from probing your, your co workers or colleagues to see whether interested in in yours in supporting your change, your idea change, and strategic change."

Participant 9: "Yes, of course, I think I think you you if you're gonna make a decision, you got to have the buy of majority if you dont have most of the buy in and then you're not going to achieve your goal. So they do they do play a part."

5.8 Results for Research Question 3

Research Question 3: How does leader's strategic thinking processes change during the cycle of empowering the organisation to initiate and enable change in the change process?

This research question was specifically aimed to understand how the leaders' strategic thinking methods change during the second phase of organisational change, specifically engaging and enabling the organisation. Each leader was asked questioned from the interview guide (Appendix D) which allowed them to tell a story about their own experiences and perceptions. Each leader was asked how their own experience compares to the two literature model under consideration, Liedtka's

(1998) Elements of strategic thinking and Kotter's 8 Step Change Model (Kotter, 1995). The research question attempts to understand which strategic thinking elements (Liedtka's elements of strategic thinking) are predominantly used by leaders during the second stage of organisation change specifically engaging and enabling the organisation for change (Kotter Change Model). An overview of the results to the Research Question 3 is shown below in Figure 9.

Figure 9
Overview of Results for Research Question 3

Phases of Organizational Change			
Second Phase : Engaging and Enabling the organization			
EEO - Engaging & Enabling Organisation	Communicate the Vision	Empower Action	Create quick wins
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cause and Affect •Chasing new opportunities •Constant Communication •Difficult to rectify if started incorrectly •Focus to acheive goal •Generate Idea to Test •Leader causes damage •Most critical part •Not giving time •Organisation left behind •Rushed - Action focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Adaptable •Communicate quickly •Depend on type of change •Difficult •Intention choice •News travels fast •People are selfish in change •People think/react different •The big picture •To each person •Underestimated •Visual •Without comms, worst assumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Adaptable •Capabilities •Cause and affect •Lead by Example •Leader •Learn from mistakes •Mindshift •More structured •No thinking change •Test Ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Adaptable •Commitment •Easy if you winning •Energy to continue •Focus •Incentives •Intentional or Unintentionally Happens •Keep the motion •Negativity demotivated •Question the results •Step back

5.8.1 Engaging and Enabling the Organisation

According to Kotter (1995), organisation change consists of three stages which in total consists of eight phases as shown above in Chapter 2 Figure 3. Engaging and enabling the organisation is the second of the three stages with the fourth, fifth and sixth phases of the eight phases. During the interview the participants were asked how the three stages of the Kotter's change model compares to their experience. The majority of the leaders mentioned that from experience they found this stage to be the most difficult of the stages. The leaders who raised the concerns for this stage, typically also referred to the communication step in this stage to be the most important step and is typically done incorrectly. The leaders also indicated that typically during this stage, the management team wants to rush through this phase to get to the implementation phase which results in large divides in the organisation as some groups or people are not taken on this change process journey and are left behind.

Participant 2: "Yes, I think all three of those blocks, but specifically, the block number four of communicating the vision, you know, I think that's probably also one of the most underestimated activities"

Participant 3: "Whatever it is, I think the most difficult one is the next one. Engaging and enabling the organization is that the if you depending on your positional or on the amount of selling that you've done to the business, so that people buy into the business and and again, I think the again, I think the that's by far the most difficult and most Most change processes fail there."

Participant 4: "Because if you if you create or have a vision of what the change should be, and you go through it, you create you communicate with organization, if it's not continuous touchpoints on that, and keeping people motivated and keeping your finger on the pulse in terms of our people reacting to the small change that you're starting now initially, in order to reach your vision, then I see that it does fall flat a little bit"

Participant 5: "But the next two steps, I think is what's really critical is obviously to enable that to happen and need to sustain it."

5.8.1.1 Communicate the vision

All the leaders who participated in the interviews indicated that communication and specifically communication of the vision has proved to be the most challenging, complex and underestimated tasks when implementing a change in an organisation. A large number of leaders indicated that the communication needs to be in various different forms such as verbal as well as visual and during various different forums both formal and informal. These various forums includes but is not limited to daily meetings, weekly meetings, monthly meetings, at the water cooler discussion points and during walk way discussion, to name a few examples. The leaders also indicated that different types of visual aids must also be used to ensure the vision is constantly visible to everyone in the organisation. They mentioned that these visual aids include examples such as billboards, posters, communication boards, etc. The leaders also made the point that the communication method and wording needs to be changed and adapted for each specific audience to ensure everyone, independent of their level in the organisation, can understand and related to the vision. They add to this point by highlighting the fact that the leaders themselves need to really know their staff members and know how each person understands and cognitively processes information to ensure the communication is done in the correct manner and is completely and fully understood by each person. The leaders have also indicated that the manner in which the changes are implemented need to be performed in such a way that there is psychological safety in the working environment that if a person does not understand the vision, they can openly discuss their uncertainties with anyone in the company to get a greater understanding.

Participant 2: "And it really is about people or people are visual animals. So they, they need to see it, they need to constantly be made aware of, of that, you know, so it's literally on electronic billboards. You know, real billboards, real burner boards, whatever the case might be in terms of communicating, communicating, communicating in daily meetings, in weekly meetings, in monthly meetings, etc. communicators, those visions..... communicating the vision, you know, I think that's probably also one of the most underestimated activities"

Participant 5: "So I think that is a difficult thing. You need to communicate it in a way that everybody understands. For me, that's usually a visual medium. So I think communication plays a massive part in it. And I think that you need to do as much

as possible in order to carry that idea through. And then that communication should be lasting.”

Participant 7: “And I had to alter my thinking such that, you know, that you that I could get the message across to too more different people. So I think that's that was one of the main things I had to do was to understand who am I working with? And also to understand the different ways that people take in information.”

Participant 10: “I think it is extremely important to communicate and also in informal matters, and informal communication as well. So if the batter, maybe a good idea would be to communicate formally to the entire company, and then also give the employees like an opportunity to be able to if they have any questions to give them the option to like, come forward and have more informal discussions about any changes as well that they can address their concerns and also get their buy in if there's anything.”

Participant 11: “Think the, the thinking around communication, I think, like I said, I think it was it's necessary to get everybody's buy in, and you have to phrase your words and phrase your thinking in a way that that is positive for the organization and is positive for the for the people that are involved in the change. So that they kind of don't get bogged down by the details. And And effectively, they're going to help you to implement the changes, you need the buy in and support as well.”

5.8.1.2 Empower Action

During this phase, many leaders indicated that from their experience this is the stage where the leader actively has to “live” and “be” the change subsequently leading from the front and setting the example for the organisation on how the change must be implemented. During this stage the change is starting to be implemented by the organisation, in which there will be teething issues and transitions problems that will be attended to, however during this stage the leader and his coalition of immediate followers need to lead from the front and remain constant in the example they are projecting to the organisation. The leaders have also indicated that in the beginning of the process, between communication and empowering action, a well-developed and thought out process is required, which needs to guide the organisation on how

to realistically achieve this change. They also need to remain adaptable in their thinking and actions to be able to adjust the process of achieving the change if and when needed.

Participant 1: “Empowered action. Now you have to kind of execute, you have to, you know, your mindset needs to change in terms of bigger, fluffy things in the cloud type of thoughts to step wise cause and effect, what are we doing well? What are we not doing well?”

Participant 4: “You, you have to be the change, you know, in order to do have change within the organization, as a leader, you have to lead. So you have to be the change, So, from you, your mindset has to be that of, I am the, I'm taking the first step in the change. But you have to, you have to walk in front, you know, you have to be that person. And you've already now convinced, you know, colleagues that you have taken out initially on this journey with you, and they had enough to, you know, as this action, or, or action, this change within themselves, so that it becomes infectious”

Participant 6: “A vision or an idea for execution method to get into that implementation phase quite quickly. As you said, the message has now been conveyed. And in my view, it helps to have an implementation plan or execution plan in place prior to communicating that you want the change to happen. So as soon as you've communicated it, the people will be looking at you as to how that needs to be implemented.”

5.8.1.3 Create Quick Wins

When asked about creating quick wins, the leaders indicated that the quick wins were easy to create when the change delivered positive results. These quick wins in turn had a positive effect on the further implementation of the proposed change as well as the team and organisational morale. These quick wins and the celebration of each win also provides additional energy to the team and organisation to actively continue with the proposed change. The feeling of a quick win also provides proof to the organisation that the change is obtainable making it more realistic and tangible, also adding to improved organisational morale. The leaders also indicated that the glory of the win must be shared with the organisation as well as praise be

given to the individuals and/or teams. The appraisals significant contribute to the individuals and teams motivation as well as dedication.

Participant 4: "The main thing is when things start going right, sometimes we tend to slack off, you know, it's like, oh, no, it's working now so its cool, you know, we carry on like we are, but the main thing is, you it's even more important when things start going right because people are now on a high so if things go right, and you show people things or go right and you celebrate it, I mean, they're gonna have this feeling, they've smelled it, they've done it, they've tasted it, they've all the emotions attached to they're gonna remember this feeling"

Participant 7: "you have to consider everything, we're not going to have a massive celebration on everything we achieved, especially if it's only small things, but every small step forward, should should put you in that positive mindset. Then you can either understand, you know, it's it's something you need to build on and it's positive and, and you can actually create something good from it"

Participant 8: "Now after achieving positive results that lead to me just wanting to receive more positive results and how I'm actioning it is by communicating and giving positive feedback to the people, which makes them positive and feel valued"

Participant 9: "I think it changes the I think the middle like if you created one quick wins is good for the moral of the team and the team going forward if you get one win here they will go get another win strategically as a leader, yes, it's good to get these little ones but that's the goal anyway"

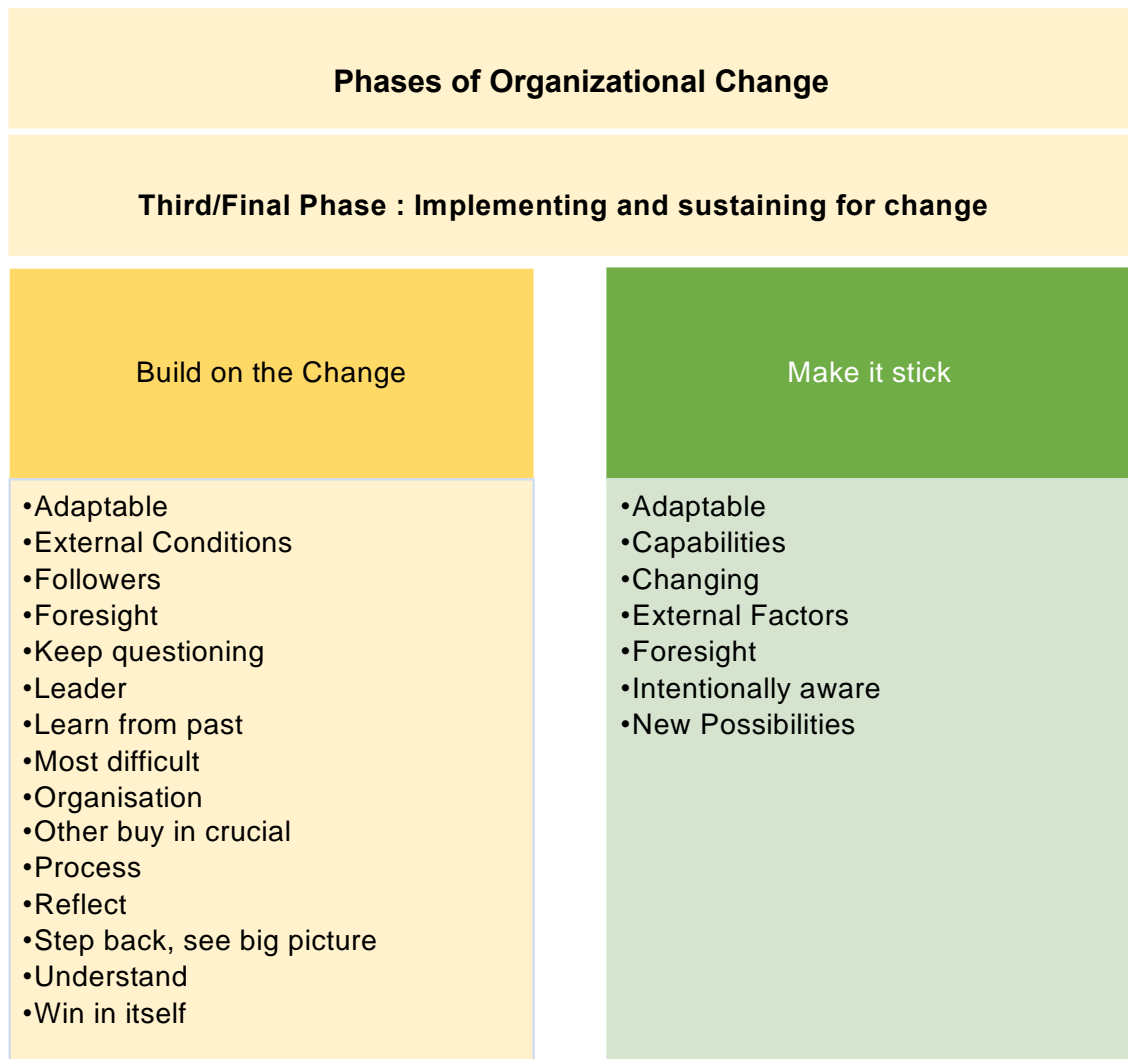
5.9 Results for Research Question 4

Research Question 4: How do leader's strategic thinking change during the final stage of the change management process where the change is embedded in the company's culture?

This research question was specifically aimed to understand how the leaders' strategic thinking methods change during the third and final phase of organisational change, specifically implementing and sustaining for change. Each leader was

asked questioned from the interview guide (Appendix D) which allowed them to tell a story about their own experiences and perceptions. Each leader was asked how their own experience compares to the two literature model under consideration, Liedtka's (1998) Elements of strategic thinking and Kotter's 8 Step Change Model (Kotter, 1995). The research question attempts to understand which strategic thinking elements (Liedtka's elements of strategic thinking) are predominantly used by leaders during the final stage of organisation change specifically implementing and sustaining for change (Kotter Change Model). An overview of the results to the Research Question 4 is shown below in Figure 10.

Figure 10
Overview of Results for Research Question 4



5.9.1 Implementing and sustaining for change

According to Kotter (1995), organisation change consists of three stages which in total consists of eight phases as shown above in Chapter 2 Figure 3. Implementing and sustaining for change is the third and final of the three stages with the seventh and eighth phases of the eight phases. During the interview the participants were asked how the three stages of the Kotter’s change model compares to their experience.

5.9.1.1 Build on the Change

Approximately half of the leaders reported that the final stage of making the change sustainable and building on the change is a very difficult stage in the process. During this stage, after the first couple of quick wins are celebrated, the excitement fades and the focus to complete the implementation also dwindles off to the next new change or crisis. The leaders also reported that during this stage, once positive results have been obtained from the changes and the proposed changes seem to be successful, the management team typically starts investigating how to build on the success and make it more sustainable, and therefore identify process and procedure that need to be updated and/or developed. Approximately a third of the leaders said that they have experiences where changes fall flat at this stage due to the loss of interest in the change. Leaders have also indicated in order to build on the quick wins, the leaders need constant communication with the organisation on what is working and were there's room for improvement.

Participant 2: "So that's probably the, my experience probably one of the most difficult parts of it, because it kind of it's, it's, it's after all the excitement is, has died out if I couldn't, or died off, if I can put it like that. So you know, there's a lot of Kumbaya and engagement sessions. And, you know, people get excited, and people go through valleys of despair. And we measure things and we get going and celebrate successes, and all of those wonderful things."

Participant 3: "One of those topics, often a very difficult topic from a remuneration point of view or reward point of view. So I think part of it is to say we're now at we're down straight and level position, we're have achieved that the benefits are there. There's this continual improvement thing that we have to now put in place so that we can be better at what we said we were going to do and we are our unwavering in our approach. And again, things like quality systems come into. So the quality system needs to catch up and say this is now how we're doing things. And it becomes more about this is how we do things"

Participant 4: "Listen, just keep going. And that's how you build on it. And when once you have an empowered organization, I don't even know where to stop. Because Are you going to have to try and put the reins on people to do to stop them from, from going all crazy, you know, so. So that that is that is, that is how I would build on

the change, you know, it's still again, continuous communication, continuous touchpoints.”

5.9.1.2 Make it stick

Majority of the leader indicated that this stage of making it stick is easy once it has been implemented and supported by key strategic people who constantly drive the change and who incorporate the process of making it stick easy to follow on a daily basis. However leaders have also mentioned that they constantly have to be aware and question the implementation of the change and observing how it becomes part of the culture as it affects operations.

Participant 1: “So you definitely have to keep on looking at looking, you know, systems thinking, thinking about the system itself, but also, you know, thinking about where your company is currently, and how that how does that relate to where you want to grow to and what type of things you want to pursue.”

Participant 7: “And I think we constantly need to be aware of what that's going on around us, and constantly be aware of how people's attitudes are changing how their approaches are changing towards this vision you had initially?”

Participant 11: “I would say once the change is implemented. I think my my thinking would sort of stay the same. I think the the the only I wouldn't say drawback, or the only thing we should focus on is is again, the alignment just to make sure they there isn't know the people don't stray too far from each other going forward. But I think once you've established the culture, it should sort of stay the same, but you have to work on it.”

5.10 Conclusion of Results

The finds of the four research questions were provided in this chapter. For each research question the overview of the finds were indicated in a figure. These finds generated insights on how leaders thinking strategically and how their individual thinking process changes during a time of organisational change. The insights provided by the findings also provided more in-depth information on the leaders perceptions. The main results obtained from the finds were that leaders developed

strategic thinking practices through experience based on their individual experiences. The findings also indicated that depending on the phase of organisational change, the leaders utilized different thinking elements or practices in an attempt to move the change process forward. The next chapter will discuss the results from this chapter compared to the information obtained from literature.

Chapter 6 Discussion of Results

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter the research results as shown above in Chapter 5 will be discussed in more detail. The results from Chapter 5 will be compared to the literature as described in Chapter 2. The interview results together with the literature review will provide findings to the research questions in Chapter 3. These insights obtained provide deeper understanding of how an individual leaders strategic thinking changes as the leader implements a strategic change and the organisation undergoes an overall organisational change.

6.2 Discussion of Results for Research Question 1

Research Question 1: How have leaders' strategic thinking in the professional services developed through past experiences?

Research question one attempts to understand how leaders have learned or developed their individual strategic thinking methods and capabilities from experience.

6.2.1 Systems Thinking

Majority of the participants indicated that as a leader involved in making strategic decisions, one of their thinking processes they use often is to consider how different aspects will affect each other. These aspects include human behaviour, financial impacts, internal as well as external factors, operational affects, to name a few. This interaction focused thinking is one of the divisions of systems thinking. From experience the leaders have learned to detach from the finer details involved in a decision's and to have a wider perspective of all the elements involved in that decision. By having a wider perspective the leaders have also learned to identify and understand the consequences of each decision.

Research has indicated that strategic thinking is underpinned by systems perspective, resulting in this element being one of the most important elements of strategic thinking. Liedtka (1998) states that a person who thinks strategically has a comprehensive and wide range mental picture of a system and how the world works.

The leaders also indicated in their interviews, that a large portion of thinking effort is undergone to understand how strategic decisions and strategic changes affects people. The leaders have indicated that this is such an import factor because each decision will in some way or form affects people, either in their behaviour, their reactions and interactions with other people, their individual state of mind, as well as their work performance.

Liedtka (1998) and Grewatsch et al., (2021) further explains how systems thinking is not limited by understanding the external business environment but also by understanding how the internal operations of the business functions. These internal operations include the inter-dependency of activities and inter-relationships of people. These inter-dependencies do not only include the business and functionals levels but also people on a personal level. Research has also found that most systems are; what is called “open”, which means that their boundaries are not defined and are more complex as they constantly change, evolve and are affected by external factors. This aligns with the leaders experience of how they have to include systems thinking before making final decisions to understand how strategic decisions, effect the operations as well as the people at a tactical, operational and support level in the organisation.

6.2.2 Intent Focused

From the interviews, the leaders have indicated that during a time of strategic thinking, the leader is constantly required to use their own energy and focus to achieve a goal. The leaders have also indicated that in certain situations it is common for the planned path towards the goal to change, it is then the leaders responsibility to provide the team or the organisation with the specific intent of a different path to still achieve the same goal as planned.

The leaders have also indicated that the process of applying intent focused thinking resonates deeply with them. The leaders have mentioned in their interviews that they use the intent focus method of thinking not just in strategic decisions but also on a daily basis for operational decisions. Most of the leaders have indicated that they use this on a daily basis on operational decisions to ensure they drive their team or division in the correct direction to achieve their larger strategic goal which aligns with the company strategic goals. The leaders have also indicated that by them using deliberate action and behaviour, they have seen how it provides direction as well as a sense of purpose and energy to their teams to achieve the goals.

The research has shown that intent focus provides a particular and long term view on achieving a specific goal. In this process, this thinking action can convey a sense of direction and a form of cognitive and emotional energy, as Liedtka (1998) phrases it an “animating dream”. This method of thinking can assist individuals, both leaders and employees, to obtain a state of what seems natural and painless type of exceptional performance. Research further describes this type of thinking and the positive effects it has on a team or an organisation as an energising effects on a leaders team, this is also noted by Liedtka (1998), as she describes how this thinking process creates an impression that leaders are providing a sense of discovery as they develop new solutions to problems in order to achieve the goal.

6.2.3 Thinking in Time

All of the leaders have indicated that they very often making use of the process of thinking in time, in which they leverage past experiences and lessons learned to improve their performance going forward. Based on past experiences this improvement of performance can either be positive or negative. Positive results from past experiences automatically indicate to the leaders that the process used has worked and therefore makes the leaders more inclined to re-use the same process or methodology in the future. A negative experience from the past automatically indicates to the leader that there is room for improvements and that certain parts of the process should be changed in the future.

The leaders had also indicated that from their perspective they use this type of different timeframe thinking, past, present and future on a regular basis and in

“different levels of intensity”. This level of intensity varies from operation, to tactical as well as strategic and also have different timeframes in which these decisions are made, some are instantaneous, others are considered and discussed over days and weeks before being implemented when considered developed. The leaders have also indicated that they use this type of thinking not just internally within the context of the organisation but also when considering external elements such as with competitors, suppliers and with the external market being served by the organisation.

Research has indicated that this type of thinking method has been historically known to be used to link current capabilities with resources with current as well as future opportunities (Liedtka, 1998). Research has also indicated that thinking in time requires institutional memory of the organisation as well as a broad based view of the specific industry as well as general macroenvironmental aspects. It is also well documented that this specific type of thinking, considering past, present and future perspectives are crucial when developing a strategy and making strategic decisions within an organisation. It has been noted in literature that the balance between past considerations and future direction is crucial for obtaining a sense of control during a time of change or uncertainty. As mentioned by Liedtka (1998), this type of thinking typically results in leaders thinking “having seen the future that we want to create, what must we keep from our past, lose from that past, and create in our present, to get there?”

6.2.4 Hypothesis Driven

The leaders indicated they made use of hypothesis testing, in terms of generating and testing ideas both in strategic thinking as well as during tactical and operational issues. This type of thinking, the leaders indicated, they had developed from experience and specifically in the organisation they were all employed in, Company X. The leaders also indicated that during strategic thinking scenarios when they were developing ideas, they also required a highly adaptive mindset which allowed them and their team the flexibility to think freely and openly and to not be limited in their solution generation phase.

The leaders also indicated that the whole hypothesis driven thinking method was used often in their current organisation, due to the fact that this type of thinking was taught and driven by the CEO of the organisation. One of the leaders also indicated that his perception is that this type of thinking was one of the aspects that lead to the fast paced growth of Company X and that this type of thinking was part of the company's culture. One of the participants indicated that in his opinion, he was involved in a decision made from hypothesis driven thinking, in which he was responsible for the relocation of a workshop to another location.

Research has indicated that hypothesis driven thinking of generating ideas and testing the ideas is crucial to the process of strategic thinking (Liedtka, 1998). Liedtka (1998) also indicates that this type of hypothesis driven method is often a very foreign thinking style to many business managers which prove problematic when considering its importance in strategic thinking. Research has also indicated that this type of thinking which allows for idea generation and testing and critical analysis, also allows the organisation to become comfortable with continuous learning. Continuous learning due to the lessons learned from generating and testing ideas and if needed adapting the ideas to achieve the goal.

6.2.5 Intelligent Opportunism

The leaders interviewed indicated that having an intelligent opportunism thinking method with an adaptive mindset was crucial for strategic thinking leading to strategic decisions. A leader indicated the importance of a leaders ability to be able to guide teams and organisations to be comfortable with change and to adapt and have an adaptive mindset. The adaptable mindset of the leader and his team will result in adaptability becoming entrenched into the culture of the organisation.

Research indicates that intelligent opportunism aligns with intent-driven focus in which space is left for new ideas to be developed when developing new strategies. This requires a highly adaptive form of thinking when considering strategic thinking (Liedtka, 1998).

6.2.6 Summary of Discussion of Results for Research Question 1

In terms of systems thinking, the experience obtained by the leaders on how important systems thinking is supported by literature in terms of the fact that strategic thinking is grounded by systems thinking. The leaders also indicated that systems perspective proved to be invaluable not only during a time of strategic change but also as part of their thinking process when making tactical or operational decisions.

When considering the information obtained from the leaders and comparing their experiences to theory, the leaders experiences confirms the theory. The leaders experiences confirm the sense of energy and avoidance of disruptions as well as the motivation that this type of thinking brings to the team as well as the organisation. The leaders have indicated that they very often use the method of thinking not just in strategic thinking but also in daily decision making for operational or tactical instances. The leaders have also indicated that this type of thinking process is very important and adds a tremendous amount of value to their decision making process as well as to the organisation. The leaders have also indicated that they all rely on this thinking methodology during strategic thinking for strategy development and that they all rely on learning from the past to develop future strategies. This supports the literature that leaders needs to use this thinking methodology to think strategically and that only by considering the past to determine the future, can they retain some sort of balance during times of uncertainty.

Considering hypothesis driven thinking, the leaders indicated that they used this type of strategic thinking regularly at the currently company, Company X, due to the fact that this type of thinking was driven by their CEO and was part of their company culture. The research indicated that this type of thinking is often foreign to many company managers. The leaders also indicated how important this type of thinking was regarding strategic thinking and therefore supports the literature in this regard.

From the interviews the leaders indicated the importance of adaptive thinking during strategic thinking with aligned and supports the information obtained from literature.

6.3 Discussion of Results for Research Question 2

Research question 2: How does leaders' strategic thinking change during the process of creating an environment susceptible to change?

Research question 2 to 4 attempts to deepen understanding on how a leaders individual strategic thinking changes during a time when an organisation is going through a strategic change. Research question 2 specially focused on attempting to understand how a leaders strategic thinking changes specifically during the first phase of organisational change, explicitly during creating an environment susceptible to change.

A systematic approach, identical to the process described in Chapter 3 was followed in which a matrix was used to juxtapose the results obtained from the interviews with theory. On the vertical axis of the matrix, Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements was placed, and on the horizontal axis, the first phase of Kotter's (1995) change model was allocated.

During the interview analysis stage, each interview was coded with Liedtka's strategic elements in mind as well as Kotter's change model. During the analysis phase an open mind was used by the researcher in order to allow for any additional codes identified what was not included in either listed of both theories. Thereafter, the codes obtained from the interview results were transposed into the different sections of the matrix according to the phase of the organisational change as well as the element of strategic thinking. The developed matrix is shown below in Figure 11

The legend of Figure 11, indicates the type of relationship leveraged, or made use of by the leader in order to successfully be able to implement an organisational change. The green legend indicates that the activity is primarily driven by the individual leader and therefore consists of the leaders own cognitive processes. The yellow legend indicates the relationship between the leader and its followers. These followers typically include the leaders closest alias or the imminent management level around or just below the leader. The orange indicated the relationship between the leader to the employees and to the large organisation.

Figure 11

Results of Research Question 2 – Developed matrix for the first phase of organisational change

Liedtka Elements of Strategic Thinking	Legend:		
	<p>Green – is the leader himself/herself Yellow – the leader to follower relationship Orange – Leader to follower to organisational relationship</p>		
Hypothesis Driven	Urgency: Instigate a change	Coalition: Better Stakeholder	Vision: Developing idea and testing
Intent Focused	Urgency: Specific focus	Coalition: Intention Coalition: People who have influence Coalition: Specifically chosen Coalition: Terrorist	Vision: Direction change is difficult Vision: Intention of path
Intelligent Opportunity	Urgency: Identifying a need	Coalition: Different Perspective Coalition: Give Power Away	Vision: Adaptable
Thinking in Time	Urgency: Automatically happens Urgency: Future Impact Urgency: Past/Present	Coalition: Effect on future	
Systems Perspective	Urgency: Believe/Understand Urgency: Consequences Urgency: Interaction between aspects	Coalition: Bring Parts together Coalition: Cause and Affect	Vision: Changing minds difficult Vision: Implementing Vision: Minor changes Vision: Understanding
Organisational Change	Create Urgency	Powerful Coalition	Vision for change
Phase 1: Creating Environment for Change			

6.3.1 Create Urgency

Results obtained from the interviews with the leaders indicated that the majority of leaders have the perceptions from past experience that in order to create a sense of urgency, the urgency first has to be developed internally within the leader himself/herself. After the urgency is fully understood and embraced by the leader, only then can the leader translate this sense of urgency to its followers or coalition. The interviewers have also indicated that this sense of urgency which is created within followers is of extreme importance as it indicates the first instance of support

or buy-in from the followers. These experiences aligns with theory. Kotter (1995) reports the importance of a leader obtaining the “aggressive” support of followers, requiring the followers to have a highly visible and highly vocal belief in the proposed change initiated by the leader. As seen in Figure 11, the creating urgency column is highlighted in partial green and yellow legend. From the interview results, which align with theory, this indicates that during organisational change, the urgency or the need for change is driven by both the leaders and well as its followers.

By inspecting Figure 11 as well as referring to the Frequency analysis in Appendix F, it can be seen that all five strategic thinking elements were identified to be used by leaders during a time of creating urgency during organisational change. The predominant strategic thinking elements identified during this stage proved to be systems perspective followed by thinking in time and then intent focused. The interview results indicate that leaders consider the human element involved in creating urgency to be an important factor in understanding the people in your coalition and how you as a leader need to communicate with each individual person to get your main message across and in order to achieve their support. Grewatsch et al., (2021) explain how understanding human behaviour is one of multiple lenses required to understanding different systems thinking processes. Strategy development requiring strategic thinking is typically classified as top managements obligation, in which leaders leverage past experiences to develop strategies going forward, this theoretical statement was clarified and supported by numerous leaders involved in the study (Goldman, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2011). The third strategic thinking element during this phase was intent focused, in which the leaders as well as their followers use an immense amount of personal energy and focus in order to achieve a specific goal. This exertion of energy and focus by the leader is also what attract the coalition to the journey of obtaining the goal (Liedtka, 1998).

6.3.2 Powerful Coalition

During this phase, results from the interviews indicate that the leader to follower relationship at this point during the organization change is leveraged the most as the leader is in the process of building a power coalition of closest followers and specifically chosen people in the organisation. The leaders interviewed indicated that during this phase, they typically seek out individual who either have a specific skill

set that the leader requires or people who would have the same mindset and would support them in their strategic changes. In Figure 11 this phase was indicated with yellow legend indicating that the main relationship leveraged at this stage was the leader and follower relationship. In this phase the leader's expel large volumes of energy, focus and timeframes in order to form a powerful and specifically chosen coalition, this is supported by literature. (Kotter, 1995). The three main strategic thinking elements present in this phase of organisational change is intent focus followed by system thinking and intelligent opportunism.

The leader makes use of intent focus strategic thinking by making use of high levels of energy and focus to build a powerful and specifically chosen coalition as discussed above. The leader and its coalitions also makes use of systems thinking and intelligent opportunism almost simultaneously as they use energy and focus to refine the strategy preliminary developed by the leader. The leader as well as the coalition refine this preliminary strategy by considering the current organisation capabilities in terms of current skills, resources and finances, in order to rework the strategy to enhance its ability as well as the communications and implementation of the strategy (Liedtka, 1998).

6.3.3 Vision for Change

From the interview results, the leaders indicated the importance of the coalitions in this phase of organisational change. The leaders interviewed indicated the importance of obtaining alignment with the coalition on the vision to be portrayed to the coalitions as a whole, to the collisions followers as well as the large organisation. During this organisational change phase, the majority of the responses were obtained in the strategic thinking realms of systems thinking, intelligent opportunism and intent focused.

The participants indicated that during this phase, leaders also require an intent focus in which vast volumes of personal energy and continuous focus is used to fine tune and finalise the lasting vision for change before the leader obtains final support from the coalition and before this final vision starts to be communicated with the larger organisation (Kotter, 1995). This form of intent-focused leader behaviour also provides the coalition with energy to attempt the change as well as provides them

with a feeling of confidence to attempt the change. This intent-focused type of thinking very often aligns with intelligent opportunism thinking methods (Liedtka, 1998). This type of thinking along with system thinking is used simultaneously in this phase, in which the vision is finalised. The vision is finalised by also considering the current organizational capacities while maintaining an adaptive mindset in order to provide unique solutions to strategic problems or decisions.

6.3.4 Summary of Discussion of Results for Research Question 2

Considering the results of how a leaders strategic thinking adapts during a time of creating urgency in an organisation while the organisation is going through change, the leaders made use of all five of Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements. Through the analysis it became prevalent that during this stage of change, the leaders utilized systems thinking, intelligent opportunism as well as intent focused elements more often. Thinking in time elements also appeared during the thought processes, however this type of thinking was possibly overshadowed by the other elements as the thinking in time elements also closely relate to the intelligent opportunism elements and could have been overlooked during the coding and analysis of the interviews.

The results of research question 2 indicate that during this time in which a leader needs to create an environment of change, many leaders believe that very often a sense of urgency is created automatically due to changing conditions, these conditions are either internal or external. The leaders have also indicated that from their experience, during this early phase of initiating change, resistance was often experienced from lower levels in the organisation. The resistance was very often due to the limited visibility that lower levels often have on important business aspects.

The results also indicate that leaders make use of high levels of intent focused thinking during these the first three stages of organisational change. The leaders are required to use a tremendous amount of energy and focus to take an organisation through the phases of change. During this stage of creating an environment of change for the organisation, leaders also make use of intelligent opportunism thinking elements. They utilize this type of thinking elements to formulate the new strategy that is required during this period of change. The leaders experiences are

supported by the literature. During the phase of creating an environment for change, typically the change or new vision is generated by the leader, however the leader also relies greatly on its chosen coalitions members to refine the strategy. The leader as well as the leaders coalitions then utilize their relationships with members in the organisation to start communicating the new vision.

6.4 Discussion of Results for Research Question 3

Research Question 3: How does leader's strategic thinking processes change during the cycle of empowering the organisation to initiate and enable change in the change process?

Research question 2 to 4 attempts to deepen understanding on how a leaders individuals strategic thinking changes during a time when an organisation is going through a strategic change. Research question 3 specially focused on attempting to understand how a leaders strategic thinking changes specifically during the second phase of organisational change, explicitly during engaging and enabling the organisation for change.

A systematic approach, identical to the process described in Chapter 3 was followed in which a matrix was used to juxtapose the results obtained from the interviews with theory. On the vertical axis of the matrix, Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements was placed, and on the horizontal axis, first phases of Kotter's (1995) change model was allocated.

During the interview analysis stage, each interview was coded with Liedtka's strategic elements in mind as well as Kotter's change model. During the analysis phase an open mind was used by the researcher in order to allow for any additional codes identified which were not included in either listed of both theories. Thereafter, the codes obtained from the interview results were transposed into the different sections of the matrix according to the phase of the organisational change as well as the element of strategic thinking. The developed matrix is shown below in Figure 12.

Figure 12

Results of Research Question 3 – Developed matrix for the second phase of organisational change

Liedtka Elements of Strategic Thinking	Legend: Green – is the leader himself/herself Yellow – the leader to follower relationship Orange – Leader to follower to organisational relationship		
Hypothesis Driven	Comms: Visual	Action: Testing Ideas	Wins: Incentives
Intent Focused	Comms: Intention choice Comms: Underestimated	Action: Mindshift Action: More Structured	Wins: Commitment Wins: Energy to continue Wins: Focus
Intelligent Opportunity	Comms: Adaptable	Action: Adaptable	Wins: Adaptable Wins: Question the results
Thinking in Time	Comms: Communicate quickly Comms: News travels fast	Action: Capabilities Action: Learning from Mistakes	Wins: Easy if you winning Wins: Keeping the motion Wins: Negativity demotivated
Systems Perspective	Comms: Depend on type of change Comms: People are selfish in change Comms: People Think/React Different Comms: The Big Picture Comms: To each person Comms: Without comms, worst assumption	Action: Cause and Effect	Wins: Intentional or Unintentionally happens Wins: Step back
Organisational Change	Communicate the Vision	Empower Action	Create Quick Wins
Phase 2: Empowering the Organisation – initiate and enable the organisation			

The legend of Figure 12 indicates the type of relationship leveraged, or made use of by the leader in order to successfully be able to implement an organisational change. The green legend indicates that the activity is primarily driven by the individual leader and therefore consists of the leaders own cognitive processes. The yellow legend

indicates the relationship between the leader and its followers. These followers typically include the leaders closest alias or the imminent management level around or just below the leader. The orange indicated the relationship between the leader to the employees and to the large organisation.

6.4.1 Communicate the Vision

From the interviews the leaders indicated that communication of the vision during a time of organisational change was one of the most challenging and complex tasks that was very often underestimated by leaders and the management team. The results also indicated that from the leaders experiences, the new vision must be communicated loudly and often, as often as need to get alignment and buy in from every single person on every level in the organisation. They also indicated that leaders and managers have a responsibility to know and understand how each person in the company processes information and to use all forms of communication to ensure the new vision is clearly understand by each member of the organisation.

The leaders had also indicated that the vision must be communicated to the organisation in such a manner that the employees feel a sense of psychological safety that they can discuss their uncertainties with anyone inside the company and well as management to ensure they have a deep understanding of the new proposed vision.

The leaders experiences are supported by literature in which it states that common mistakes made by leaders include insufficient communication in terms of poor quality as well as sufficient quantity of communication (Kotter, 1995). Leaders make the mistake of communicating only in large formal events typically once a year, on these occasions employees typically are only exposed to the new vision for the first time and don't have sufficient time to mentally process the new information received from leaders. This once-off type of communication also very often leaves the employees feel unsatisfied and unheard and typically decreases the take up speed of the new vision. This lack of quality and quantity communication opportunities tends to erode the relationship between the employees and the leaders and can further negatively affect the culture of the organisation (Kotter, 1995).

By inspecting Figure 12 as well as referring to the Frequency analysis in Appendix F, it can be seen that all five strategic thinking elements were identified to be used by leaders during a time of communicating vision within an organisation. The predominant strategic thinking elements identified during this stage proved to be systems perspective followed by intent focused and intelligent opportunism. The systems perspective which enclosed all of the human behaviour aspects was one of the largest concerns and discussion points by the leaders in this phase. This aligns with Liedtka (1998) explanation of how systems perspective is utilized during strategic thinking and how leaders use multilevel and multidivisional thinking to develop strategies. The other two strategic thinking elements utilized most during this change is intent focused as well as intelligent opportunism, which are both closely related and often occur simultaneously. From a communications point of view, with these two strategic thinking elements, the leaders have to continuously use energy and focus and creative sense of thinking to ensure the communication on a regular basis and in different forms and forums. This type of thinking is aligned with Kotter (1995) in which successfully vision communication efforts have been seen in instances where the leaders have used entertaining, exciting and interest methods to communicate the vision to the masses of the organisation.

6.4.2 Empower Action

From the results obtained, based on the leaders experiences, the leaders indicated that in order to empower the organisation to adopt the new vision and implement the required vision the leaders had to be highly active in this phase by leading the change and being an example to the organisation on how to implement the change. The leaders further explained that during this stage, it was crucial for the leaders and their coalitions to be involved with the new vision on a daily basis. This involvement is to be able to assist the organisation with transitional issues as well as teething problems to ensure the employees get the support they need to actively implement the changes as well as amend the implementation plan as need from a functional point in order to ensure the new transitions does not lose momentum. This view is support by Kotter (1995), where it is documented that a common leadership error during this stage is to not be actively and directly involved with the vision implementation and transitions. This results in the employees trying to implement the visions but not having the support to pull the required actions over the line,

stalling the transition. During this phase, it is crucial for the leaders to be on the ground providing guidance on the implementation activities, actively removing obstacles from employees way allowing them to perform their duties and implement the new vision.

By inspecting Figure 12 as well as referring to the Frequency analysis in Appendix F, it can be seen that all five strategic thinking elements were identified to be used by leaders during a time of empowering action within an organisation. The predominant strategic thinking elements identified during this stage proved to be intent focused along with intelligent opportunism as well as thinking in time. Considering the perspectives received from the leaders in which they utilized all five strategic elements and dominantly the three identified strategic thinking their experiences is supported by literature. Liedtka (1998) state leaders use, as well as provide, the required energy and focus in order to achieve the new vision and strategic objectives by making use of intent focused thinking methods. This type of thinking is typically accompanied with intelligent opportunism, in which the leader leverages their knowledge, experience and position to easily identify new solutions and opportunities. During this phase of change, the leader will leverage the same skill set but within the context of functional and practical requirements as required to remove obstacles from employees paths. Another major strategic thinking element during empowering the organisation to action is thinking in time. During this stage, the leader leverages their knowledge and in-depth understanding of the organisational history and unwritten rules and operations to effectively guide and assist employees to implement the changes by eliminating obstacles in the employees paths.

6.4.3 Create Quick Wins

The results from the leaders experiences indicated that during an organisation change, once the vision is implemented and starts taking action and produces any type of positive results it is easy and highly beneficial for leader to create quick wins. These quick wins needs to be widely communicated across the whole organisation and also needs to be celebrated by everyone in the organisation. These celebrations have fantastic energising properties for the employees and an overall positive effect on the organisational culture. The results also indicated that these quick wins make

the positive results more realistic and tangible to the employees which in turn motivates the organisational and provides an energy boost to the organisational culture. These quick wins and positive affects also indicate to the organisation that the proposed changes were required and are in a sense correct. The leaders also indicated that though the win is celebrated organisation wide, the individuals and the team members involved in obtaining the win must also be celebrated. The leaders experiences and perceptions are supported by literature. Kotter (1995) explains how short term wins needs to be actively created by leaders in order to maintain the momentum for the initiated changes. The creation of quick wins also assists the leaders to convince the people who were resistant to the changes that the vision communicated is correct and the direction is set in the correct direction.

By inspecting Figure 12 as well as referring to the Frequency analysis in Appendix F, it can be seen that all five strategic thinking elements were identified to be used by leaders during a time of creating quick wins within an organisation. The predominant strategic thinking elements identified during this stage proved to be thinking in time, intent focused along with intelligent opportunism. The leaders make use of thinking in time mindset by comparing the quick win to previous similar types of wins and using this knowledge of the organisation, industry and management to communicate this win in a highly positive and energetic manner to the organisation. The intent focused mindset is utilized by the leaders to be actively alert of instance where quick wins can be identified and celebrated (Liedtka, 1998).

6.4.4 Summary of Discussion of Results for Research Question 3

The results based on the leaders experiences and perceptions were all supported by existing literature. During a time of change in an organisation when leaders have to empower the organisation to action and implement the changes to achieve the selected vision, communication proved to be a vital phase in the process. The results indicate that the communication of the vision proves to be absolutely vital to the successful implementation. If the communication is not performed properly the following stages will automatically fail and provide negative results. The results indicated that leader spend a significant amount of time considering communication, from different communication methods to visual aid to regularity of communications. The results also indicated that during the empower action phase, leaders and their

coalitions need to be actively involved during the implementation of the changes. This active involvement is to ensure they set an example for the large organisation, to also use their position and knowledge and skills to remove obstacles from the implementation path and also to ensure this change is implemented correctly and sustainably.

Throughout this phase, even though all five strategic thinking elements were used, certain elements proved to be more dominant in different occasions. The dominant strategic thinking elements that were viewed from the results proved to be intent focused with intelligent opportunism, together with systems thinking and thinking in time. During the empowering the organisation phase, initially the focus is on communicating the vision with the organisation, followed by empowering action and guiding the organisation through the change and then the leaders create quick wins. During these phases the leader makes use of massive amounts of systems thinking and intent focused in each stage. Intent focused during each stage to achieve the required results as well as systems thinking to ensure they consider different mental models and how each decision will affect other decisions or people. Leaders also use intelligent opportunism during these stages to discover new ideas and possibilities to ensure to implement each phase .

6.5 Discussion of Results for Research Question 4

Research Question 4: How do leader's strategic thinking change during the final stage of the change management process where the change is embedded in the company's culture?

Research question 2 to 4 attempts to deepen understanding on how a leaders individuals strategic thinking changes during a time when an organisation is going through a strategic change. Research question 4 specially focused on attempting to understand how a leaders strategic thinking changes specifically during the final phase of organisational change, explicitly during implementing and sustaining the change.

A systematic approach, identical to the process described in Chapter 3 was followed in which a matrix was used to juxtapose the results obtained from the interviews with theory. On the vertical axis of the matrix, Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements was placed, and on the horizontal axis, first phases of Kotter's (1995) change model was allocated.

During the interview analysis stage, each interview was coded with Liedtka's strategic elements in mind as well as Kotter's change model. During the analysis phase an open mind was used by the researcher in order to allow for any additional codes identified which were not included in either listed of both theories. Thereafter, the codes obtained from the interview results were transposed into the different sections of the matrix according to the phase of the organisational change as well as the element of strategic thinking. The developed matrix is shown below in Figure 13.

The legend of Figure 13 indicates the type of relationship leveraged, or made use of by the leader in order to successfully be able to implement an organisational change. The green legend indicates that the activity is primarily driven by the individual leader and therefore consists of the leaders own cognitive processes. The yellow legend indicates the relationship between the leader and its followers. These followers typically include the leaders closest alias or the imminent management level around or just below the leader. The orange indicated the relationship between the leader to the employees and to the large organisation.

Figure 13

Results of Research Question 4 – Developed matrix for the final phase of organisational change

Liedtka Elements of Strategic Thinking	Legend:	
	Green – is the leader himself/herself	Yellow – the leader to follower relationship
	Orange – Leader to follower to organisational relationship	
Hypothesis Driven	Build: Keep questioning	Stick: Changing
Intent Focused	Build: Win in itself	Stick: Intentionally aware
Intelligent Opportunity	Build: Adaptable Build: Foresight	Stick: Adaptable Stick: Foresight Stick: New Possibilities
Thinking in Time	Build: Learn from past Build: Reflect	Stick: Capabilities Stick: Consistency
Systems Perspective	Build: External Conditions Build: Most difficult Build: Other buy in crucial Build: Processes Build: Step Back, see big picture Build: Understand	Stick: External Factors
Organisational Change	Build on the Change	Make it Stick
Phase 3: Incorporate and Sustain Change		

6.5.1 Build on the Change

The results from the leaders perspectives indicate that at the stage after quick wins, when you build on the change, various leaders indicate that they found this stage to be the most difficult. One of the reasons for their experienced difficulty is that after the organisation has received positive results and quick wins, the drive to improve the processes drastically decrease and there's an assumption that the change is implemented when it is not fully implemented into the organisations systems as yet. The other reason for the leaders difficulty regarding this stage, as soon as quick wins are experienced, leaders and managers again assume the change is implemented and rush away to another issue to be corrected, also not ensuring the change is fully implemented with the organisations systems. These experiences are fully supported

by literature. Kotter (1995) labels this stage as the “Declaring Victory too Soon”, where leaders make the common mistake of declaring victory after the first quick wins are achieved. This false victory decreases the momentum to implement the change and provides a false positive that the changes of the proposed vision has been successfully implemented.

By inspecting Figure 13 as well as referring to the Frequency analysis in Appendix F, it can be seen that all five strategic thinking elements were identified to be used by leaders during a time of building on a change with an organisation. The predominant strategic thinking elements identified during this stage proved to be systems perspectives, intelligent opportunism as well as thinking in time. From a thinking in time mindset, the organisation get so excited by the quick wins that they only see the positives results and assume it’s the end of the change process (Liedtka, 1998). From a systems perspective and intelligent opportunism, the leaders create the quick wins, and then transitions their energy to the next issue to be solved.

6.5.2 Make it Stick

From the results obtained from the leaders perspective, the leaders indicated that once the organisation get to the point where the implementation and action process has been tried, tested and finalised, then can easily be embedded into the culture of the company as well as the system and process of the organisation. The leaders also indicated that during this stage, they starting re-questioning the process and if it was and still is correct and constant and still applicable at that stage. This typical leader error has been documented by Kotter (1995). It is described as a failure not to ensure this vision and its actions become the new norm and become deeply embedded in the norms and values of the organisation.

By inspecting Figure 13 as well as referring to the Frequency analysis in Appendix F, it can be seen that all five strategic thinking elements were identified to be used by leaders during a time of creating quick wins within an organisation. The predominant strategic thinking elements identified during this stage proved to be intelligent opportunism, thinking in time and intent focused. As part of the thinking in time mindset, the leaders have obtained positive results and belief a false victory and subconsciously decide the vision is implemented and move along to the next

problem without finalising implementation. In these scenarios the leaders are focused on the current time and the positive results and how its improved from the past but they do not consider the steps required to make sure the results remain positive in the future (Liedtka, 1998). The intelligent opportunism and intent focused thinking methods are utilized by the leaders when they assume the change is implemented and they start identifying new and larger problems to solve.

6.5.3 Summary of Discussion of Results for Research Question 4

During this stage of incorporating and sustaining change the leaders indicated that these remaining two phases proved to be very difficult. The results indicated that from the previous stage, after quick wins are obtained, the positive results lead to a phase of false victory. The quick wins along with the positive results provide a false sense that the changes have been successful when it is not complete as yet. After the leaders build on the change the next step is to make it stick, to transpose the new vision into a permanent change in the organisation. The leaders perspective were supported by literature. During these final stages of organisational change the leaders utilized all five strategic thinking elements.

From the results the most dominant thinking elements proved to be systems perspectives, intelligent opportunism as well as thinking in time. During this stage, the leaders have to consider thinking in time elements as they have obtained positive results and they need to consider how the organisation has to implement the final changes typically in the form of organisations process and systems in order to sustain the positive results in the future. During these final implementation stages the leaders also consider systems thinking by thinking how each decision affects each other and what the consequences will be. The leaders also make use of intelligent opportunism, now that the vision has been implemented and obtained successful results, leaders need to consider new solutions of making the change sustainable.

6.6 Conclusion of discussions of results

This chapter describes the individual leaders perspectives of strategic thinking and how it changes when an organisation is going through significant change and compares their findings to the literature from Chapter 2. The results indicate that

through experience, leaders have learned to thinking strategically by learning from their mistakes and by having a more adaptable and open mindset. When the leaders experience based perspectives were compared to literature, the leaders experiences and the aspects they consider during a time of making strategic decisions, align with the theory suggested by Liedtka (1998). Through experience, leader have learned to consider and include five elements of strategic thinking's, specifically systems thinking, intent focus, thinking in time, hypothesis drive and intelligent opportunism. The results were juxtaposed with theories from Chapter 2 and is presented in the concluding chapter.

From the leaders experiences, insight has also been provided on the reasons behind large organisational change process failures. Particular of the most dominant issues proved to be that the powerful coalitions is not always leveraged and utilized throughout the whole change process. Communication quality and quantity was also a very popular reason for failure and a popular discussion points on lessons learned from miscommunications in the past. The last two steps in which the changes are embedded into the culture of the organisation also proved to be a common failure point, when quick wins result in false victories.

Chapter 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

Chapter one argued that during 2022 in South Africa, the economy was experiencing multifaceted challenges and therefore organisations needed to adjust their strategy accordingly to remain sustainable. It was also stated that no organisation, independent of its financial turnover, geographical footprint or industry, is immune to change (Olalekan et al., 2021). The higher the organisation's comfortability is to adapt to change, and the more sustainable the change is, the greater the organisation's competitive advantage, resulting in a higher probability of success and achieving excellence (Grant, 2003; Olalekan et al., 2021). It is well known that leaders are expected to be able to develop these strategies and are crucial in determining the direction of the future of an organisational as well as being an integral part in implementing the changes required to move the organisation in the direction of the future (Goldman, 2012; Kotter, 1995; Mitchell et al., 2011).

Strategic thinking is commonly identified as an individual's cognitive ability to react to the context of a situation to determine the best path to achieve an organisational goal (Goldman et al., 2017; Haycock et al., 2012). Strategic thinking is a process required to find patterns and a common thread between complex external factors and organisational goals and objectives. (Dhir et al., 2018).

The research aimed to deepen the understanding of how an individual leaders strategic thinking develops from experience and how these strategic thinking methods change when an organisation undergoes significant strategic organisational change. The research aims to close the gap between leaders lived perspectives and literature models.

The research has met its objectives by providing further insights into leaders strategic thinking methods and how their thinking changes when an organisation is going through a change. Furthermore the research may have highlighted which strategic thinking elements are more dominant in which part of the organisational change model.

This chapter will provide my main results and finds obtained from the research questions, outline the academic contributions, discuss the recommendation to leaders, list the limitations of the study and provide suggestions for future research.

The results will also be used to develop a conceptual model or a matrix of which strategic thinking element were more dominant during the different organisation change model

7.2 Conclusions on Findings for research questions

7.2.1 Leaders Strategic Thinking for Organisational Change Model development

In Chapter 3, a theoretical model was suggested through a process in which Kotter's (1995) organisational change phases were systematically comparing to Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements. It was speculated that as an organisation goes through significant change, through Kotter's change phases, the leader's strategic thinking has to adapt and change during each stage and that during the process the leaders also leverages different relationships with different stakeholders in order to implement the change successfully. Leaders were interviewed who were identified to be involved in strategic thinking on a regular basis, based within an organisation currently going through change. The leaders perspectives based on their experiences was juxtaposed with Liedtka's (1998) Elements of Strategic Thinking and Kotter's (1995) Change Mode.

The model was developed by transposing the results obtained from Chapter 5 (5.6 to 5.9) and Chapter 6 (6.2 to 6.5) with Liedtka's (1998) Elements of Strategic Thinking and Kotter's (1995) Change Model. On the vertical axis of the matrix, Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements was placed, and on the horizontal axis, the different phases of Kotter's (1995) change model. The results were then plotted into the matrix into the correct area. The combined model of how leaders strategic thinking changes in an organisation undergoing significant change is shown below in Figure 14.

Figure 14

How leaders strategic thinking elements changes during the different organisational change phases change

Legend:

- Green – is the leader himself/herself
- Yellow – the leader to follower relationship
- Orange – Leader to follower to organisational relationship
- Blue – most dominant elements

Liedtka Elements of Strategic Thinking								
Hypothesis Driven	Urgency: Instigate a change	Coalition: Better Stakeholder	Vision: Developing idea and testing	Comms: Visual	Action: Testing Ideas	Wins: Incentives	Build: Keep questioning	Stick: Changing
Intent Focused	Urgency: Specific focus	Coalition: Intention Coalition: People who have influence Coalition: Specifically chosen Coalition: Terrorist	Vision: Direction change is difficult Vision: Intention of path	Comms: Intention choice Comms: Underestimated	Action: Mindshift Action: More Structured	Wins: Commitment Wins: Energy to continue Wins: Focus	Build: Win in itself	Stick: Intentionally aware
Intelligent Opportunism	Urgency: Identifying a need	Coalition: Different Perspective Coalition: Give Power Away	Vision: Adaptable	Comms: Adaptable	Action: Adaptable	Wins: Adaptable Wins: Question the results	Build: Adaptable Build: Foresight	Stick: Adaptable Stick: Foresight Stick: New Possibilities
Thinking in Time	Urgency: Automatically happens Urgency: Future Impact Urgency: Past/Present	Coalition: Effect on future		Comms: Communicate quickly Comms: News travels fast	Action: Capabilities Action: Learning from Mistakes	Wins: Easy if you winning Wins: Keeping the motion Wins: Negativity demotivated	Build: Learn from past Build: Reflect	Stick: Capabilities Stick: Consistency
Systems Perspective	Urgency: Believe/Understand Urgency: Consequences Urgency: Interaction between aspects	Coalition: Bring Parts together Coalition: Cause and Affect	Vision: Changing minds difficult Vision: Implementing Vision: Minor changes Vision: Understanding	Comms: Depend on type of change Comms: People are selfish in change Comms: People Think/React Different Comms: The Big Picture Comms: To each person Comms: Without comms, worst assumption	Action: Cause and Effect	Wins: Intentional or Unintentionally happens Wins: Step back	Build: External Conditions Build: Most difficult Build: Other buy in crucial Build: Processes Build: Step Back, see big picture Build: Understand	Stick: External Factors
	Create Urgency	Powerful Coalition	Vision for change	Communicate the Vision	Empower Action	Create Quick Wins	Build on the Change	Make it Stick
	First Phase : Creating Environment for Change			Second Phase: Engaging and Enabling the Organisation			Final Phase: Implementing and Sustaining the Change	
Organisational Change								

The suggested model indicates during a specific phase of organisational change, firstly which relationship is dominant in that phase as well as the leaders strategic thinking elements during that particular organisation change phase. For example, during creating urgency step, the leaders is a highly dominant stakeholder as well as his relationship with his followers. During the same organisational change phase, systems perspective, thinking in time as well as intent focused were indicated to be the most dominant strategic thinking elements during a creating urgency phase. This analysis can be seen for each step of the organisational change process.

7.2.2 Research Question 1: How have leaders' strategic thinking in the professional services developed through past experiences?

The results clearly indicate that the leaders had learnt how to thinking strategically from experience. The aspects of strategic thinking that the leaders have learned are highly similar and particularly relatable to strategic thinking elements from literature, specifically Liedtka's (1998) Elements of Strategic Thinking. The results indicated that even though the leaders all described their strategic thinking process differently, with different contexts and examples, when coded based on the principles of the examples and not on the actual details of the stories, the leaders very often considered similar aspects pertaining to the same themes during a time of strategic thinking. The main strategic thinking aspects from the leaders can be labelled according to Liedtka's (1998) elements of strategic thinking as systems perspectives, thinking in time, intelligent opportunism, intent focused and hypothesis driven.

The results obtained from the leaders also indicated that during different scenarios, certain types of thinking are more prevalent than others, depending on the situation and the contexts. From the results analysis it was also identified that leaders used the same strategic thinking elements, methods and mindset, when solving tactical and operational issues as well.

7.2.3 Research question 2: How does leaders' strategic thinking change during the process of creating an environment susceptible to change?

The results indicates that during the first organisation change phase of creating an environment for change, the leader's individual thinking and individual behaviours

proved to be dominant during the initiation of this stage. Thereafter the leader to follower relationship was highly central during the execution of the remaining steps during this phase. During this stage of change it was clear that the leaders typically made use of all five of Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements. Through the analysis it became prevalent that during this stage of change, the leaders utilized systems thinking, intelligent opportunism as well as intent focused elements more often than the remaining two elements. Thinking in time elements also appeared during the thought processes, however this type of thinking was possibly overshadowed by the other elements as the thinking in time elements also closely relate to the intelligent opportunism elements.

7.2.4 Research Question 3: How does leader's strategic thinking processes change during the cycle of empowering the organisation to initiate and enable change in the change process?

During the second phase of organisational change, from the results it was clear that during this stage, even though the leader still have to drive this change process, the relationships that were crucial was the leaders to follower relationship as well as the leader to organisation relationships. During this phase of change, when the leaders has to engage and enable the organisation to accept and implement the change, the relationship between the leader and his followers were vital. The leaders require the support of his followers who in turn leverage their leader to follower type relationships with their followers and have a larger influence on the organisation. This was of importance to assist in obtaining large scale buy-in and cooperation from the whole organisation. Throughout this phase, on engaging and enabling the organisation for change, the leaders made use of all five Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements. However, results indicated that certain elements proved to be more prevailing in different occasions. The principal strategic thinking elements that were viewed from the results proved to be intent focused with intelligent opportunism, together with systems thinking and thinking in time.

7.2.5 Research Question 4: How do leader's strategic thinking change during the final stage of the change management process where the change is embedded in the company's culture?

During the final stage, in which the focus is on implementing and sustaining the change, the results indicated that many leaders found this phase to be highly challenging. From the positive quick wins of the previous phase, a sense of false victory is achieved and energy is required to transition through this phase. As a result, the individual leader's involvement in this phase was of high importance. The relationship with the leader to follower as well as leader to organisation relationships proved to also be critical at this stage. Throughout this phase, while implementing and sustaining the change, the leaders made use of all five Liedtka's (1998) strategic thinking elements. From the results the most dominant thinking elements proved to be systems perspectives, intelligent opportunism as well as thinking in time.

7.3 Academic Contributions

Although the previous studies provide insight into how strategic thinking practices affect organisations, little is known about how the practices affect individual leaders and lower social levels (Smriti et al., 2021). The research also suggests deepening the understanding of how strategic thinking develops naturally in leaders from experience; the leaders themselves and their experiences need to be better understood (Goldman, 2012). The findings from the research can assist in closing the gap on how leaders learn strategic thinking through experience.

A significant number of strategic initiatives in organisations fail and due to the complex business environment, it is expected of leaders to know how to navigate these difficult times. Organisational changes typically fail during the implementation phases. Strategic thinking is one of the elements involved in change management; specifically during the entire process from the change development through to change implement (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Stouten et al., 2018; Zubac et al., 2021). The findings from the research can assist in closing the gap on understanding why organisational change management processes fail. The results are based on leaders' experiences who are currently undergoing an organisational change and therefore provide valuable insight and feedback on the change management process.

One of the postulated reasons for failure of organisational change management has been attributed to insufficient and incorrect stakeholder involvement. This involves the individual leader, the leader and its coalition as well as the leader and the

organisation stakeholder relationship (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Stouten et al., 2018). The research provides insight on how leaders need to leverage different stakeholder relationships as well as when to leverage these relationships during the process.

7.4 Recommendations to leaders

The recommendations which arise from the results can be differentiated into individual development and into organisational applicable learnings. For individual development areas, the recommendations start with the topic of strategic thinking. Of the leaders interview only two leaders, had formal training in strategic thinking while the rest had no formal training and have learned these thinking processes through experience. The leaders experiences and learnings are largely affected by their surrounding conditions as well as their individual learning appetite. The leaders were able to practice and learn strategic thinking elements due to the fact they were employed in organisations and at certain levels, which welcomed and fostered the practice of strategic thinking. These organisations also have a learning and adaptive mindset, driven down by top management, which enabled the environment for this type of personal development and the practices of strategic thinking and the flexibility to learn from the mistakes made. From this perspective, leaders can focus on creating a working environment which fosters the development and practice of strategic thinking, not only for their employees, but also for themselves as well as their colleagues. From the results it was well perceived that strategic thinking needs to be physically practiced in order to grow that cognitive ability of a leader.

From an organisational perspective, it is crucial for leaders to understand the importance and severity of wanting to implement a large significant organisational change. When the change process is completed correctly it can be absolutely fantastic however, very often the change process is not managed correctly and as a consequence can and has caused serious organisational risks. Organisational risk such as organisational culture deteriorations, trust breach between colleagues or between leaders and the organisation as well as significant financial losses. When a leader wants or needs to implement a change it is crucial that there is a plan and a process which is communicated not only to the leaders coalitions member but to the organisations. The plan, the vision and the process must be communicated on a regular basis to every person in the organisation in various different methods. It is

also of vital importance that the leader has the support of a powerful and carefully selected coalition.

7.5 Limitations of study

The research has various limitations which include the researchers inherent and natural biases (Roberts, 2020; Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Due to the highly specific nature and type of study performed, the research required people in leadership positions, involved at a strategic thinking level in an organisation who has experienced an organisation that has gone through change or is currently going through significant change. As a result the researcher selected top and middle management to interview from one specific organisation currently going through change, resulting in purposeful sampling and homogenous sample. This was countered by checking code saturation from the data (Etikan, 2016).

The research is employed at the same organisation as the participants, and therefore the participants might not have responded as feely and openly. The researcher focused on remaining as unbiased and open to feedback from the participants as possible but may have been influenced (Patton, 1999). In addition, the researcher has noticed that the researcher could have impacted the results and analysis.

Due to the purposeful sampling of the participants being from the professional services sector specifically in the oil and gas field based in South Africa. There might be limits in the transferability of the study's findings (Patton, 1999).

7.6 Suggestions for future research

It is suggested that future research consider which of the strategic thinking elements has a larger statistically significant effect on effective organisational change implementation. The results of the future study can be quantitative by nature and will be validated by leaders within organisations that have undergone significant strategic change. From a qualitative point of view, the study can be repeated with a different target sample as well as different organisational change model.

7.7 Conclusions

It is well documented that strategic thinking has been linked to organisational success and growth (Shaik & Dhir, 2020; Smriti et al., 2021). However little is known on how a leader's strategic thinking has to change and adapt while an organisation is going through significant change (Goldman et al., 2015). The research was aimed at providing insight as to how a leader's strategic thinking develops based on experiences and then how the leader's strategic thinking has to adapt during a time when the organisation is going through significant change.

The findings that emerged from the study provide a recent indication on how the leaders have developed strategic thinking through experience. The study also provides leaders' perspectives and experiences on how organisational changes have previously been executed and implemented both correctly and incorrectly and have listed some of the negative effects possible from incorrect application.

This study also indicates which relationships are crucial and must be leveraged through leaders during the various phases of organisational change. This study can guide current and future leaders on how to develop their strategic thinking abilities as well as how to successfully implement large organisational changes.

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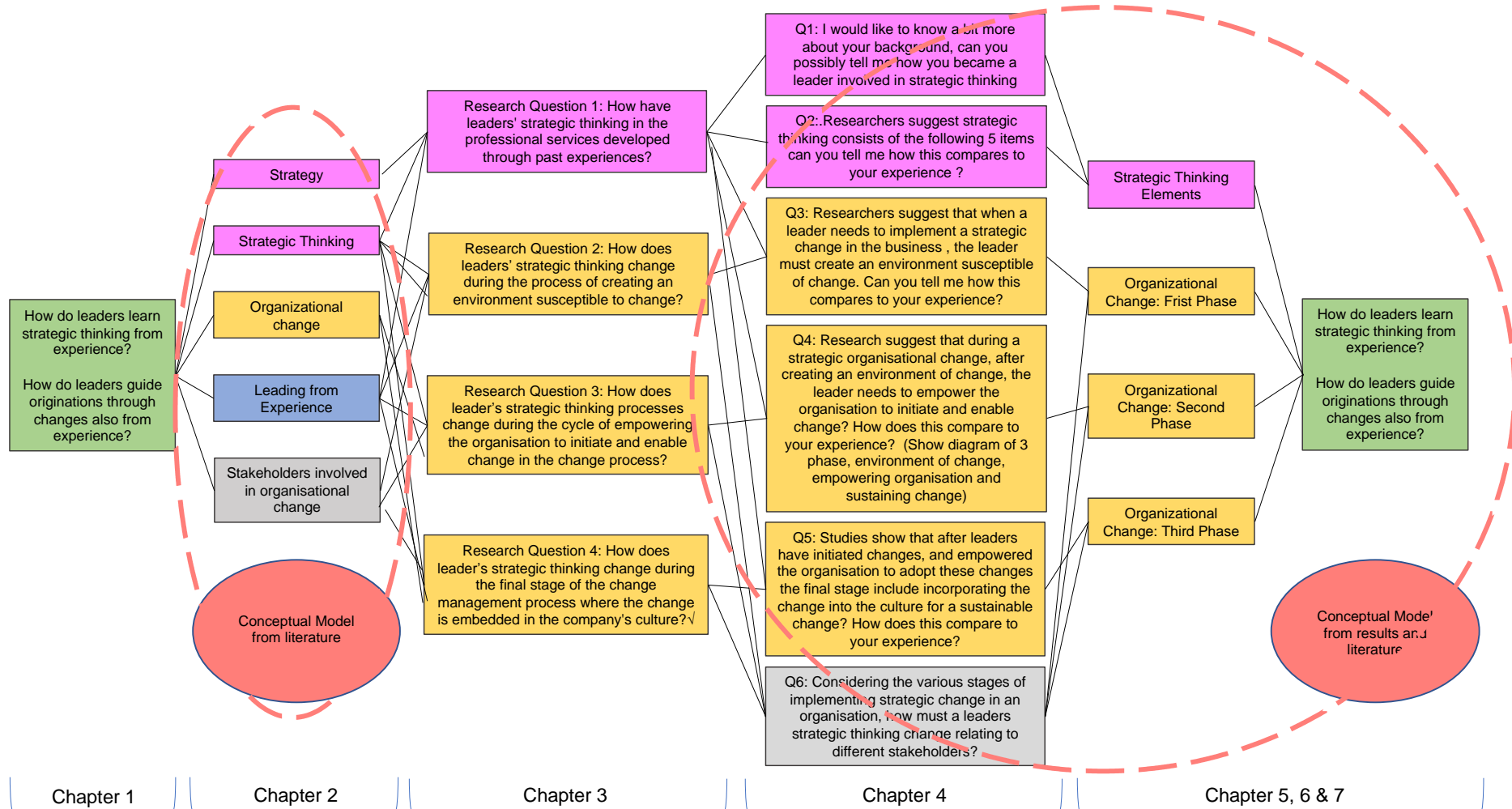
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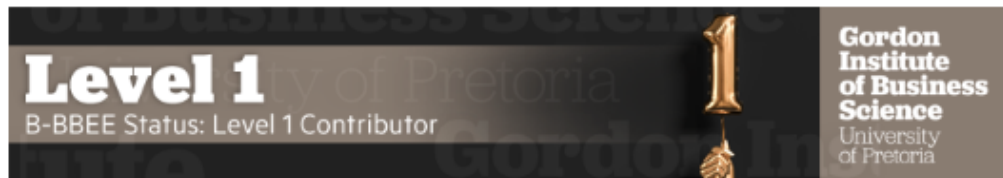
Appendix A: The Golden Thread



Appendix B: Ethical Clearance

Ethical Clearance Approved External Inbox x

GIBS **Masters Research** <MastersResearch@gibs.co.za>
to me, Masters ▾



**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
University of Pretoria

**Ethical Clearance
Approved**

Dear Iwouda Venter,

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved.
You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.
We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

[Ethical Clearance Form](#)

Kind Regards

This email has been sent from an unmonitored email account. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the GIBS Research Admin team.

Masters Research

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Appendix C: Consent Form

Interview Content Form

Adaptation of Strategic Thinking Elements during Strategic Change in a Professional Service Firm

I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA.

I am conducting research on how leaders' strategic thinking elements change in the context of an organisation undergoing a strategic change in the professional services environment in the oil and gas industry.

Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.

All data will be reported without identifiers. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.

Researcher name: Iwouda Coetser-Venter

Email: 29073937@mygibs.co.za

Phone: 082 354 2239

Research Supervisor Name: Marius Oosthuizen

Email: oosthuizenm@gibs.co.za

Phone: +27 11 771 4378

Signature of participant: _____ Date:

Signature of researcher: _____ Date:

Appendix D: Interview Guide

Semi- Structured Interview Guide: Adaptation of Strategic Thinking Elements during Strategic Change in a Professional Service Firm

Possible Questions:

1. *I would like to know a bit more about your background, can you possibly tell me how you became a leader involved in strategic thinking ?*

2. *Strategic thinking can be defined as a very individual specific cognitive experience. Researchers suggest strategic thinking consists of the following 5 items (show diagram of Liedtka Model in less academic English) can you tell me how this compares to your experience ?*

a) Probe - Have you had to think about how certain aspects could affect and interact with each other when thinking about strategic changes in the organization?

- b) Probe - How has past and present experiences affected your thinking about the strategic direction in the future?

- c) Probe - Have you had to leveraged your past experiences to develop, think about new strategies? How did you go about this thinking process?

- d) Probe - Have you had to use your own energy and focus for a period of time to achieve a strategic goal? How did you go about this thinking process?

- e) Probe - Have you ever had to test a theory you had about a new goal and had the opportunity to test it during the time of change? How did this option affect your thinking?

3. *Researchers suggest that when a leader needs to implement a strategic change in the business , the leader must create an environment susceptible of change. Can you tell me how this compares to your*

experience? (Show diagram of 3 phase, environment of change, empowering organisation and sustaining change)

a) Probe - How did you have to change your thinking to create a sense of urgency required for a change?

b) Probe - Did you require the support of colleagues or co-workers for the strategic change you suggested? If so how did your thinking have to change to get their support?

c) Probe - Did your interaction with your colleagues or co-workings about the strategic change you wanted to implement alter your idea in any way?

4. *Research suggest that during a strategic organisational change, after creating an environment of change, the leader needs to empower the organisation to initiate and enable change? How does this compare to your experience? (Show diagram of 3 phase, environment of change, empowering organisation and sustaining change)*

- a) Probe - How did your thinking as a leader have to adapt in order to effectively communicate your vision to the organisation?

- b) Probe - Once you have communicated your vision to the company, how has your thinking shifted to get the vision into action. Not focusing on how you implemented the change but how did your thinking have to change from communication to action?

- c) Probe - After you communicated the vision and get the first action in motion, when you received positive results, how did that affect your thinking? How did your thinking change from a negative result?

5. *Studies show that after leaders have initiated changes, and empowered the organisation to adopt these changes the final stage include incorporating the change into the culture for a sustainable change? How does this compare to your experience? (Show diagram of 3 phase, environment of change, empowering organisation and sustaining change)*

a) Probe - In order to achieve a long term buy in from the organisation how does your thinking as leader have to change to make the change sustainable?

b) Probe - Once you have the organisation accepting and implementing the change, resulting in the change forming part of the bloodstream of the company, how does your thinking have to change or does it stay the same?

6. *Considering the various stages of implementing strategic change in an organisation, how must a leaders strategic thinking change relating to different stakeholders?*

a) Probe - How does the strategic thinking change on a personal level for the individual leader?

b) Probe - How does the strategic thinking change in a leader to follower relationship?

c) Probe - How does the strategic thinking change in a leader to organisational relationship?

d) Probe - How does the strategic thinking change in a leader to ecosystem relationship?

Liedtka's Elements of Strategic Thinking

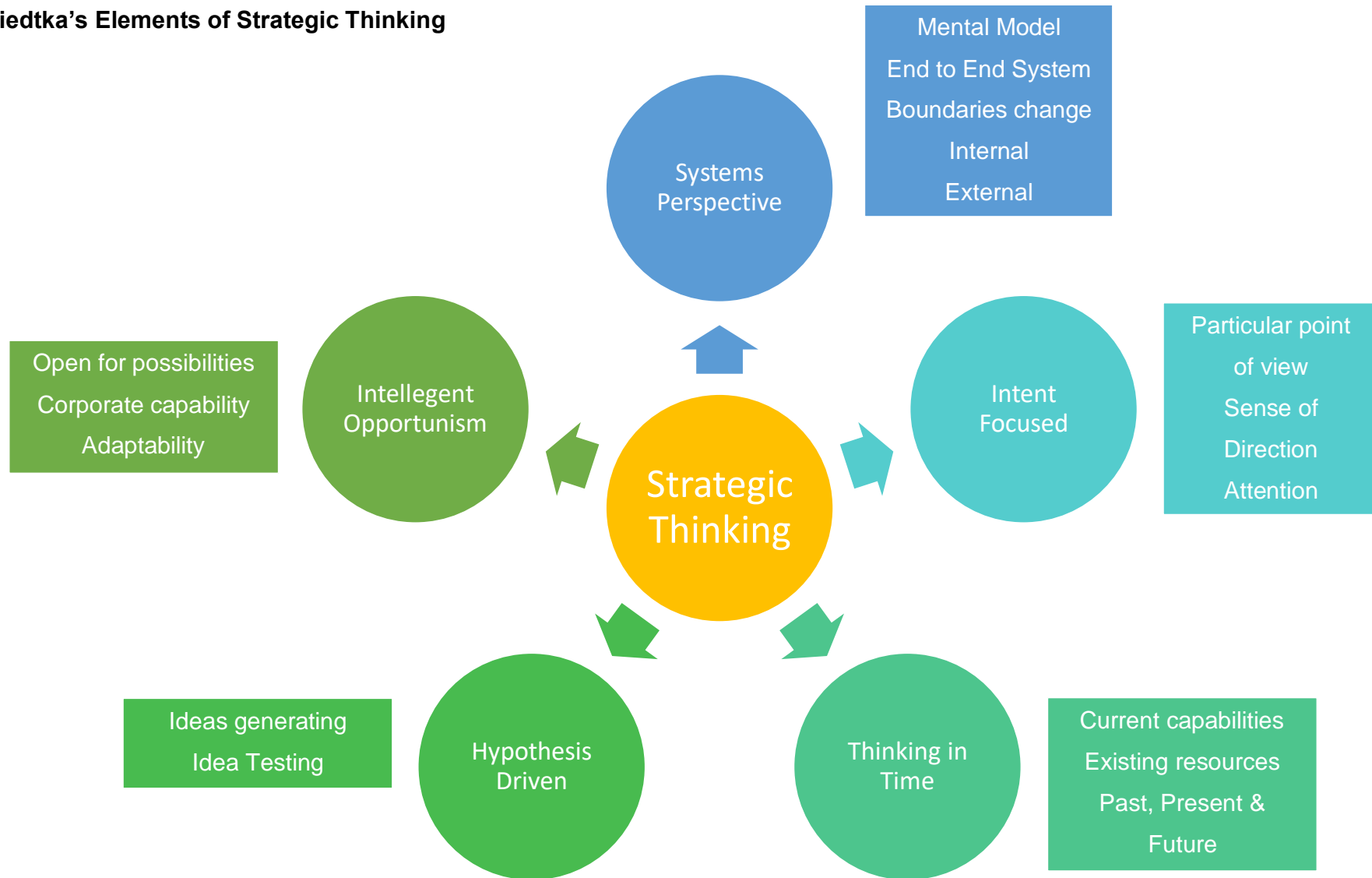


Diagram of 3 phases of Organisation in change



Appendix E: List of Code created during analysis

No	Code	No	Code
1	Action	24	Build: Reflect
2	Action: Adaptable	25	Build: Step Back, see big picture
3	Action: Capabilities	26	Build: Understand
4	Action: Cause and Effect	27	Build: Win in itself
5	Action: Lead by example	28	C4C
6	Action: Leader	29	C4C: Automatically happens
7	Action: Learning from Mistakes	30	C4C: Better if envisaged
8	Action: Mindshift	31	C4C: Happens due to Crisis
9	Action: More Structured	32	C4C: Important Step
10	Action: No thinking change	33	C4C: Leaders not always aligned
11	Action: Testing Ideas	34	C4C: Levels misconnect
12	Build	35	C4C: Not everyone receive change same
13	Build: Adaptable	36	C4C: Not implemented well
14	Build: External Conditions	37	Coalition
15	Build: Followers	38	Coalition: Better Stakeholder
16	Build: Foresight	39	Coalition: Bring Parts together
17	Build: Keep questioning	40	Coalition: Cause and Affect
18	Build: Leader	41	Coalition: Different Perspective
19	Build: Learn from past	42	Coalition: Effect on future
20	Build: Most difficult	43	Coalition: Follower
21	Build: Organisation	44	Coalition: Give Power Away
22	Build: Other buy in crucial	45	Coalition: Important
23	Build: Processes	46	Coalition: Intention

47	Coalition: People who have influence	70	Developed: Focus
48	Coalition: Specifically chosen	71	Developed: Human Behaviour
49	Coalition: Terrorist	72	Developed: Learn from mistakes
50	Comms	73	Developed: Need to take action
51	Comms: Adaptable	74	Developed: Not following through
52	Comms: Communicate quickly	75	Developed: Regular Basis
53	Comms: Depend on type of change	76	Developed: Solutions not ideas
54	Comms: Difficult	77	Developed: Systems and Processes
55	Comms: Intention choice	78	Developed: Test new Idea
56	Comms: News travels fast	79	Developed: Timing
57	Comms: People are selfish in change	80	Developed: Various Aspects to Consider
58	Comms: People Think/React Different	81	EEO
59	Comms: The Big Picture	82	EEO: Cause and Affect
60	Comms: To each person	83	EEO: Chasing new opportunities
61	Comms: Underestimated	84	EEO: Constant Communication
62	Comms: Visual	85	EEO: Difficult to rectify if started incorrectly
63	Comms: Without comms, worst assumption	86	EEO: Focus to achieve goal
64	Developed	87	EEO: Generated Idea to Test
65	Developed: Adaptable	88	EEO: Leader cause damage
66	Developed: Bouncing Ideas	89	EEO: Most Critical Part
67	Developed: Capabilities own and team	90	EEO: Not giving Time
68	Developed: Expressed as game	91	EEO: Organisation left behind
69	Developed: Energy boost	92	EEO: Rushed - action focused

93	Good Quote	116	Vision: Adaptable
94	Stick	117	Vision: Changing minds difficult
95	Stick: Adaptable	118	Vision: Developing idea and testing
96	Stick: Capabilities	119	Vision: Direction change is difficult
97	Stick: Changing	120	Vision: Followers
98	Stick: Consistency	121	Vision: Implementing
99	Stick: External Factors	122	Vision: Intention of path
100	Stick: Foresight	123	Vision: Leader
101	Stick: Intentionally aware	124	Vision: Minor changes
102	Stick: New Possibilities	125	Vision: No change
103	Urgency	126	Vision: Organisation
104	Urgency: Automatically happens	127	Vision: Understanding
105	Urgency: Believe/Understand	128	Wins
106	Urgency: Consequences	129	Wins: Adaptable
107	Urgency: Future Impact	130	Wins: Commitment
108	Urgency: Identifying a need	131	Wins: Easy if you winning
109	Urgency: In Others	132	Wins: Energy to continue
110	Urgency: Instigate a change	133	Wins: Focus
111	Urgency: Interaction between aspects	134	Wins: Incentives
112	Urgency: Leader personally	135	Wins: Intentional or Unintentionally happens
113	Urgency: Past/Present	136	Wins: Keeping the motion
114	Urgency: Specific focus	137	Wins: Negativity demotivated
115	Vision	138	Wins: Question the results
		139	Wins: Step back

Appendix F: Frequency Analysis

Research Question 2: How does leaders' strategic thinking change during the process of creating an environment susceptible to change?

Liedtka Elements of Strategic Thinking		Participant's	Total Frequency		Participant's	Total Frequency		Participant's	Total Frequency
Hypothesis Driven - internal	Urgency: Instigate a change	P1, P4	2	Coalition: Better Stakeholder	P2, P4, P5, P9, P10, P11	7	Vision: Developing idea and testing	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P11	8
Intent Focused - Leader	Urgency: Specific focus	P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P9	11	Coalition: Intention Coalition: People who have influence Coalition: Specifically choosen Coalition: Terrorist	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	42	Vision: Direction change is difficult Vision: Intention of path	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P11	10
Intelligent Opportunity - Develop high level strat	Urgency: Identifying a need	P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P8, P10	9	Coalition: Different Perspective Coalition: Give Power Away	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P9, P10, P11	16	Vision: Adaptable	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10	20
Thinking in Time Past, Present & Future	Urgency: Automatically happens Urgency: Future Impact Urgency: Past/Present	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	17	Coalition: Effect on future	P1, P2, P3, P4, P8, P10	7			
Systems Perspective - Leader - internal	Urgency: Believe/Understand Urgency: Consequences Urgency: Interaction between aspects	P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	22	Coalition: Bring Parts together Coalition: Cause and Affect	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	26	Vision: Changing minds difficult Vision: Implementing Vision: Minor changes Vision: Understanding	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	26
Create Urgency				Powerful Coalition			Vision for change		
Phase One: Creating Climate for Change									
Organisational Change									

Research Question 3: How does leader's strategic thinking processes change during the cycle of empowering the organisation to initiate and enable change in the change process?

Liedtka Elements of Strategic Thinking		Participant's	Total Frequency		Participant's	Total Frequency		Participant's	Total Frequency
Hypothesis Driven - internal	Comms: Visual	P2, P5, P7	4	Action: Testing Ideas	P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P9, P11	8	Wins: Incentives	P6	1
Intent Focused - Leader	Comms: Intention choice Comms: Underestimated	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P11	25	Action: Mindshift Action: More Structured	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, P11	31	Wins: Commitment Wins: Energy to continue Wins: Focus	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P11	31
Intelligent Opportunity - Develop high level strat	Comms: Adaptable	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, P11	18	Action: Adaptable	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, P11	18	Wins: Adaptable Wins: Question the results	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, P11	27
Thinking in Time Past, Present & Future	Comms: Communicate quickly Comms: News travels fast	P1, P2, P5, P6, P10	8	Action: Capabilities Action: Learning from Mistakes	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P9, P10, P11	15	Wins: Easy if you winning Wins: Keeping the motion Wins: Negativity demotivated	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	32
Systems Perspective - Leader - internal	Comms: Depend on type of change Comms: People are selfish in change Comms: People Think/React Different Comms: The Big Picture Comms: To each person Comms: Without comms, worst assumption	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	38	Action: Cause and Effect	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P10, P11	8	Wins: Intentional or Unintentionally happens Wins: Step back	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P9, P11	12
Communicate the Vision				Empower Action			Create Quick Wins		
Phase Two: Empowering the Organisation									
Organisational Change									

Research Question 4: How does leader's strategic thinking change during the final stage of the change management process where the change is embedded in the company's culture?

Liedtka Elements of Strategic Thinking		Participant's	Total Frequency		Participant's	Total Frequency
Hypothesis Driven - internal	Build: Keep questioning	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8	10	Stick: Changing	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P10	12
Intent Focused - Leader	Build: Win in itself	P1, P9	2	Stick: Intentionally aware	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P9, P10, P11	12
Intelligent Opportunity - Develop high level strat	Build: Adaptable Build: Foresight	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P10, P11	23	Stick: Adaptable Stick: Foresight Stick: New Possitibilities	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	32
Thinking in Time Past, Present & Future	Build: Learn from past Build: Reflect	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P9, P10	14	Stick: Capabilities Stick: Consistency	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P9, P11	15
Systems Perspective - Leader - internal	Build: External Conditions Build: Most difficult Build: Other buy in crucial Build: Processes Build: Step Back, see big picture Build: Understand	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11	47	Stick: External Factors	P1, P3, P4, P7, P10	7
Build on the Change			Make it Stick			
Phase Three/Final: Incorporate and Sustain Change						
Organisational Change						