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***AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FACTORS
IMPACTING PEOPLE IN TRANSITION FROM
INSTITUTIONAL TO VIRTUAL EMPLOYMENT***

by

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SUMMARY

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FACTORS IMPACTING PEOPLE IN TRANSITION FROM INSTITUTIONAL TO VIRTUAL EMPLOYMENT

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Charting a way forward in the 21st Century will only be possible by discovering and meeting the strategic mutual needs of customers and the service providers as committed partners. Everyone has unique value to offer which can make the difference. Transformation has thus been brought about mainly due to the immense influences that technological development of electronic information and communication have on the world and all this found its outlet in the globalisation of the world economy.

In order to survive, organisations therefore had to embark on adventures in the quest to search and discover unique resources in the market as well as in processes and ultimately their human capital.

It was from a position of relative strength, that one of the biggest South African financial institutions boldly launched a change initiative to secure their presence in the local financial market. While leading the challenge

from the front, it was – ultimately – up to each member of staff to decide in whatever way to support the transition.

Comprehensive change management workshops were presented to both management and staff. These workshops gave specific focus to the emotional journey of change relevant to all people as well as the stages of transition. These transitional stages can be shortly referred to as:

- **Endings** – the first step in the human adjustment to change is the letting go of something – the ending.
- **Neutral Zone** – this zone represents a period in which neither the old ways nor the new ways work satisfactorily. This zone truly encapsulates the Chinese principle of change as encompassing both challenge and danger – a chaotic time ripe with creative opportunity.
- **New Beginnings** – without the new beginning the transition is incomplete. Beginnings only happen once individuals make an emotional commitment to do things the new way and see themselves as new people. It can however, not be scheduled or forced on people.

A survey was done to establish the factors relevant to the impact of the environment (space), relationships (work & family) and lastly privacy during a time of transition. This transition's characteristics, from the view point of the people being affected, can be summarised as a change on a no choice basis or limited choice basis.

The single most important observation made from this survey is that human capital is a world filled with wonders and as the only asset in any environment that can appreciate and measure up with the challenges of the future, man was created with an ability to adapt and choose. Despite the fact that man do not know from where the wind will blow, man's choice is that he can set the sails in order to reach the destination.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Flexibility is a defining attribute for corporations hoping to survive in the 21 century and beyond. Observing the business world, it is noticeable that familiar but rigid organisational structures and operating procedures that worked well in more predictable times are no longer appropriate in today's ever-changing business environment.

Workplace flexibility and why it has become so important comes from two perspectives: the organisation's and the employee's. To an organisation, in general, flexibility means being able to adjust quickly to changing economic conditions: expanding, contracting, or reallocating labour supply as needed: and improving service in order to become more competitive by increasing productivity and decreasing costs. To most employees, flexibility means being able to adjust work time or workplace when personal needs are in conflict with their current schedule: being able to alter starting and quitting times occasionally; reducing paid work time for a while, etc. Both perceptions reflect a work world where people and organisations are under increasing pressure to do more with less and need to be able to react quickly to external demands and ongoing change.

The global economy (being one of the external demands) is one of the driving forces today. It has led to extensive restructurings in most organisations as companies have worked to reconfigure themselves and refocus their competencies in order to remain viable in the market place. Seeking to become more competitive on a global scale, organisations have looked for ways to become more flexible in order to respond better to fluctuations in demand for products and services. New technologies have facilitated global communication and at the same time have blurred boundaries about where and when work is

done. Terms like telecommuting and faxing have already moved into the common language.

Faced with more competition and fewer resources, many employers are demanding more of their workers but at the same time feel able to give less in terms of job security, training, and commitment. The result, as per the experience of the researcher, is that there has been a dramatic increase in stress in most workplaces. It is due to these dramatic changes in the workplace that this investigation will centre and focus around the factors impacting people in the transition from institutional to virtual employment - when virtual employment becomes the only reasonable alternative.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study will refer to matters relating to the factors impacting the people during the transition and thereafter moving from institutional employment to virtual employment. In this chapter, brief reference will be made to the concept of change – a journey and stages typically universe to change. Further reference will be made to the meaning of work and work in its traditional form. Lastly, virtual employment and the meaning thereof will be put under the search lamp as well as a quick look at business, moving more and more to a virtual world of work.

Chapters 2 and 3 respectively are dedicated to consulting previous literature regarding issues relevant to the *environment* and *relationships* - moving from the “old way” (institutional – office based) to that of “partly” virtual (home based). Chapter 4 makes reference to the research method and detailed discussion is presented on the Delphi Technique. In a nutshell, the Delphi Technique is a method for the systematic solicitation and collation of judgments on a particular topic through a set of carefully designed sequential questionnaires interspersed with summarised

information and feedback of opinions derived from earlier responses. The measurement technique is also under discussion in this chapter.

Chapter 5's discussion focuses on the data obtained from the research and it is indeed in this part of the study where the hypothesis as set out would be examined and measured to come to a final conclusion. The study will conclude with Chapter 6 sharing some final thoughts and conclusion on the research information obtained and recommendations for possible further studies will be presented.

This study took cognisance of mainly two postulates that was formulated to finally address and examine the hypothesis.

Postulate 1: When virtual employment (working from home) is not the individual's own choice but the choice of the employer, most individuals would want to revert back to institutional (office based) employment.

People have a natural tendency to revert back to the known comfort zone and it is because of this that one could expect that a "forced" move to virtual employment will not be a lasting move and that the most employees would want to revert back to the known environment – namely the office environment.

Postulate 2: When operating from a home based office, most people work longer hours. However, these hours become odd working hours in order not to impact negatively on the family life.

As many individuals find it difficult to manage conflict the most common tendency is that of conflict avoidance. People are more and more confronted with the issue of quality of life, thus resulting in sacrificing ordinary working time in exchange for some family time. Ultimately this

leads to a situation of irregular working hours in the quest to achieve success in both family and working life.

Hypothesis (H₀): The nature / origin (be it compulsory or voluntarily) of transition to virtual employment has no bearing on the individual's final acceptance of working virtually.

It is therefore the aim of this study to investigate the factors impacting on the specific group of people, who as part of this transition, had to change their working environment from the traditional institutional (office based) employment concept, to that of virtual employment. This transition formed part of an overall repositioning in the market place and therefore presented a paradigm leap to most of the affected individuals now working virtually.

The limitations to this study should be noted as the responses obtained were only received from a selected sample of employees working for a specific financial institution. However, the basic principles identified do relate to those evident in other working environments. Mention must be made that despite numerous efforts to obtain responses from all the participants only sixty two percent (62%) of responses were returned. This study furthermore only refers to two main streams/categories of sphere's being influenced during the transition process and thereafter, namely the impact of the *environment* and the impact on *relationships*.

This study was based on the principles of social research meaning that it has been concerned with gathering data that can help to answer questions about various aspects of society and thus enables us to have a better understanding of society or at least parts thereof. The questions pertained to very specific problems, as it will become clear in the data analysis in Chapter 5 of this study.

Once the concepts and hypothesis have been carefully formulated and a good sample drawn, the next link thus, in the research chain was the data-collection instrument (questionnaire or interview schedule). The key word in questionnaire construction is “relevance”. The word “relevance” has three different facets namely: (a) relevance of the study’s goals; (b) relevance of questions to the goals of the study; and (c) relevance of the questions to the individual respondent.

Pitfalls in questionnaire construction are typically double-barrelled questions, ambiguous questions and the level of wording. This study will thus tend to refer to concrete and specific matters and have specific answers where possible. A mixture of both closed-ended questions as well as open-ended questions will be used. The close-ended questions or fixed alternative questions will thus enable (1) standard answers and comparison between person to person; (2) the answers are much easier to code and analyse; (3) the respondent is usually clearer about the meaning of the question; and (4) the answers are relatively complete and a minimum of irrelevant responses are received.

The gathering of data and the data collection as briefly referred to in the forth going paragraphs links with the comments of Viruly (1999: 9) when he makes mention that in any research process undertaken, it consists of a number of steps. Although these steps are normally separated it forms an integral whole. Therefore, this study, thus took cognisance of the five dimensions of research as defined by Mouton & Marais, (1985: 9 – 17).

- **Sociological dimension:** Scientific research as a common / collaborative action.
- **Ontological dimension** - Research is always directed on an aspect of reality.

- **Teleological dimension** - as a human act, research per definition has the intention to understand phenomena and therefore is a goal orientated activity.
- **Epistemological dimension** - the purpose is to make valid pronouncements regarding the phenomena under study.
- **Methodological dimension** - research distinguish in its particular work method – an objective study or method.

The Planned procedure for the study was done along the lines of:

- **Gathering of Data** – reference will be made to literature by means of books, articles and journals and consulting the internet.
- **Analysis and reduction of data** – to sort and organize the information in such a manner to reach a final conclusion. Relevant literature will be studied relating to the different themes to embed a sound understanding.
- **Data representation** – can be described as an organized compilation of information that enables and simplifies complex matters and reduce such to comprehensible terminology. Therefore data representation becomes part of the data reduction process.
- **Interpreting & verification of results** – From the beginning of data collection, the analyst will decide what things mean, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flows and propositions
(Miles & Huberman, 1984: 22).

2. CHANGE – A JOURNEY

Change is one of the few constant things in our lives. Change has been with us since the beginning of time, but in recent years, more and more complex changes have been occurring in society and in the workplace. To survive in the future, organisations need to be prepared to manage the rapid and constant changes they will have to face.

The pace of the global economic and technological developments makes planned change in organisations inevitable. Planned change refers to the change that happens to any organisation as it is with the knowledge and planning of the executive members of such an organisation (Cummings & Worley, 2001: 17).

Theories of planned change tend to focus on how change can be implemented in organisations and also refers to the activities that must take place to initiate and carry out successful organisational change. In *Figure 1* a comparative illustration reflects three planned change models. These models are also discussed and viewed in the works of Burnes (1992: 161 – 174).

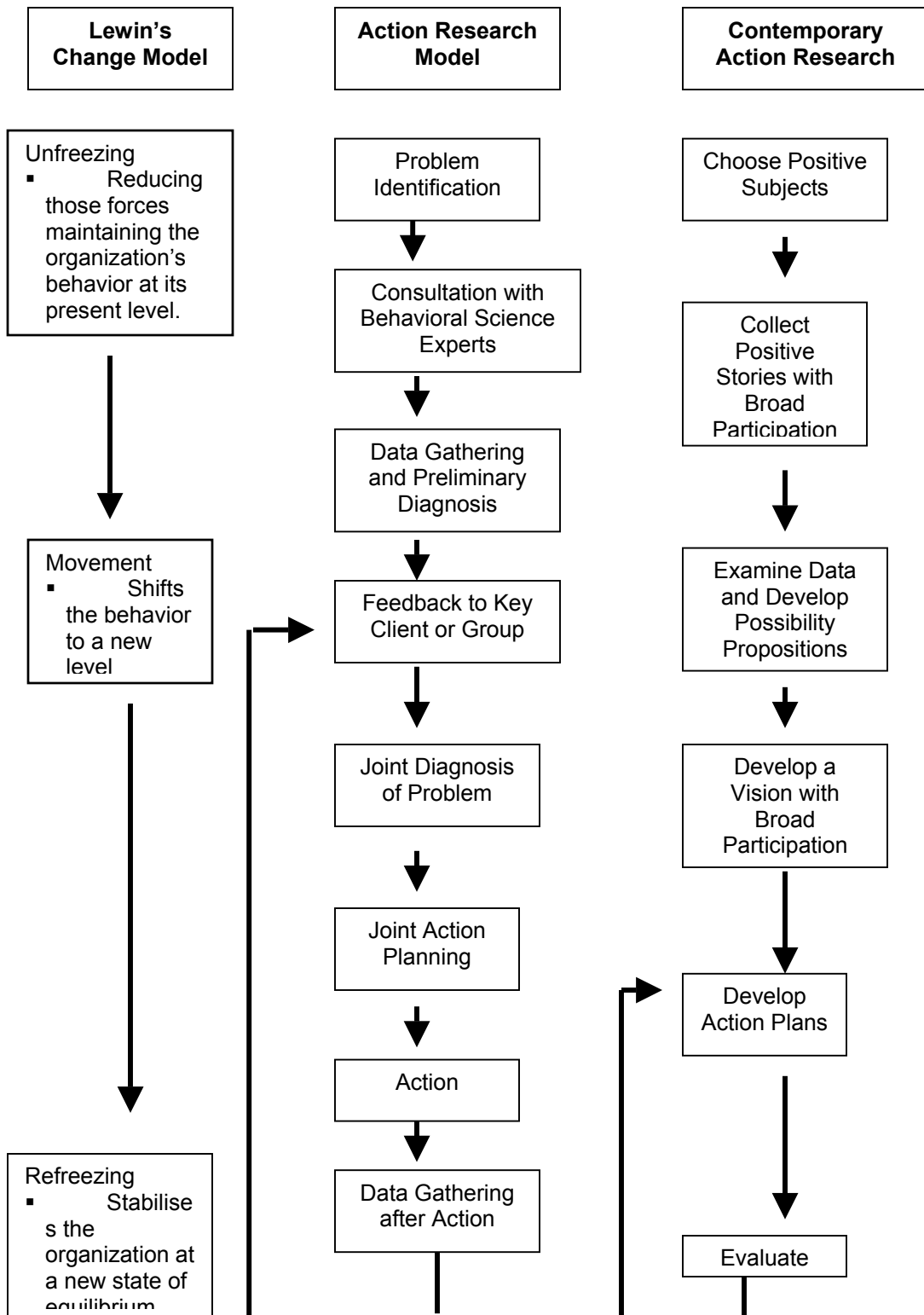


Figure 1. (Planned Change Models) Cummings & Worley, (2001: 19).

The three theories of planned change suggest a general framework for planned change. This framework describes four basic activities that gets carried out by organisations when dealing with change. This framework can be illustrated as per *Figure 2*.

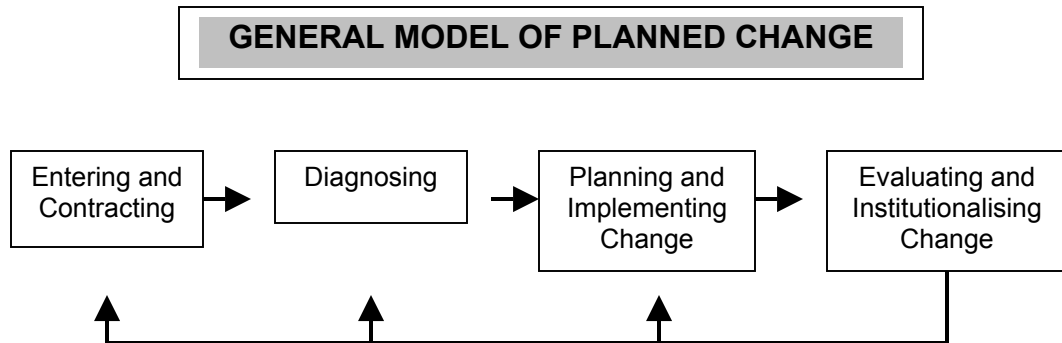


Figure 2. (General Model of Planned Change) Cummings & Worley, (2001: 23).

In this illustration of *Figure 2*, *entering and contracting* can be summarised as the decision period in which management has to decide whether they want to or need to engage in a planned changed programme, commit resources to such a process and involves gathering of data. The *contracting* stage spells out future change activities. *Diagnosing* refers to the careful client system being studied. *Planning and Implementing change* is the stage where the design of interventions, to achieve the organisation's vision or goals, and setting action plans to implement them. Finally the *evaluating and institutionalising change* stage involves the evaluation of the effects of the intervention and managing the processes (Cummings & Worley, 2001: 23 - 25).

This general model has broad applicability to planned change and can be utilised in either domestic or international changes.

Organisational change thus involves moving from the known to the unknown. Because the future is so uncertain there is generally an unwillingness or resistance from staff to support change initiatives. It is then for this very reason that organisations have to effectively manage their change processes and from there do we only start to realise that change in fact is not an event with a beginning and an ending, but is rather a journey. Planned change may have a specific beginning and an ending, but change in its broadest sense is merely a journey, part of life, as we have to deal with many issues in a specific time-frame of our lives and each of these issues may be at a different level in the change process.

The first hurdle then for any organisation to address during a period of planned change, is to overcome resistance to change. Cummings & Worley (2001: 111 – 112) refers to at least three major strategies for dealing with resistance to change.

- ***Empathy and support*** – firstly there must be an understanding of how people are experiencing change. This process calls for active listening and challenge to have open relationships to help establish the basis for the kind of joint problem solving needed to overcome barriers to change.
- ***Communication*** – people resist change when they are uncertain about its consequences. Lack of adequate information fuels rumours and without information one can not make an informed decision. Best practice is that information is distilled in a structured way.
- ***Participation and involvement*** – can lead both to designing high quality changes and to overcome resistance to implementing the changes. This way a diversity of ideas and information can be obtained which can contribute to making the innovations effective and appropriate to the situation.

According to Burnes, (1992:175) some authors stress full involvement and others less. Some are more concerned with radical organisation wide changes, whilst others are based on behavioural science theories. He concludes that the best way to resolve these apparent contradictions is probably to view the various theories and approaches as partial and particularistic. He continues by stating that the Open Systems theory is a good example as it focuses primarily on the appropriateness of overall organisational structures and the external and internal environments. Its objective is to improve organisational performance by realigning structures so that they are appropriate to the organisation's situation.

As the Open system theory refers to appropriateness, the real life situation that was relevant to this particular study and the changes that both the employer and employees had to deal with were managed on three levels of change that are illustrated in *Figure 3* followed by a brief indication of the respective levels.

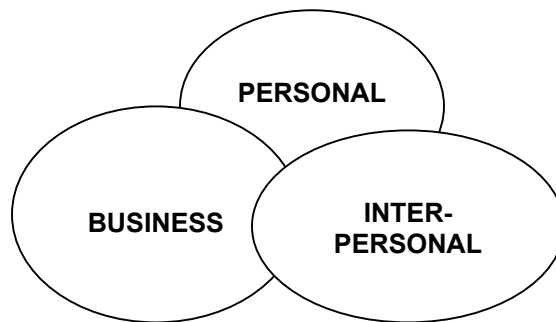


Figure 3 (Levels of Change) Transformation Consulting, Group Human Resources, Standard Bank

- **Personal** - insight into the nature of your own journey through the change. This includes manifesting a positive, realistic and committed attitude to the change.

- ***Interpersonal*** - role of supporting, guiding and motivating your team through the change.
- ***Business*** - ensuring that business imperatives are met/retain a priority during/and following change.

The entire process of change was managed from the perspective as Burnes indicated that the situation must be dealt with as it is appropriate to the organisation. Change Management therefore in any organisation may not lose touch with the three levels affecting both the internal and external environment. This emotional journey consisting of the different stages namely *stability, immobilisation, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, testing* and lastly *acceptance* is a process that takes time and for each individual the time frames differ as we do not respond to things in the same way at the same time.

3. THE MEANING OF WORK

What counts as work and how it is valued, differ across time and space. The sphere of work therefore cannot be said to have any absolute boundaries or incontrovertible intrinsic meaning. According to Knights & Willmott (1999: 35) the most inclusive definitions of work encompass everything that human beings do to maintain their material and symbolic existence. They refer to the ancient Greeks who regarded work as demeaning (a curse) and avoided it by using slaves. The Hebrews, they say, viewed hard work simply as a way of expiating sin. In Western Europe, the Protestant ethic was innovative in valuing work as an indicator of spiritual salvation.

The pursuit of material possessions has largely displayed the significance of work as a means of salvation. As long as employed work is the source of income that permits consumption, it is likely to remain a central element of identity. In modern societies, the sphere defined as 'work' tends to be arbitrarily restricted to activities that are rewarded by wages or in kind (Knights & Willmott 1999: 35).

According to Knights & Willmott (1999: 44) work becomes meaningful not in its intrinsic content but the relationship to its purpose and organisation. They further argue that when people work broadly to a programme and timetable of their own design and as a result, do not draw a great distinction between work and non-work is what makes work meaningful.

James Robertson, writes in his book titled Future Work, (1985: 33), that most employees have not expected to achieve a serious purpose of their own or a meaning for themselves through their work. They have worked in order to be paid and in order to achieve self-esteem, social respect, companionship and time-structure to their daily life.

With the rapid changes that the world is faced with currently the true work ethic is more likely to be found among self-employed people and the ones who choose not to work in the conventional job, but rather to dedicate themselves to their own chosen sphere of work. Robertson, (1985: 64), comments and states that this shift is based on the perception that work is a good and valuable activity for what it achieves. It is perceived as an activity that meets needs.

For Marx, work was the process of human self-creation and for others standing in contrast to Marx's views, they see work as participating in the process of nature, rather than subduing and changing them (Robertson, 1985: 65).

Stanton Wheeler, wrote a chapter called Double Lives, in the works of Kai Erikson & Steven Peter Vallas, (1990: 142), and describes the keystone of his topic – that work, if it ever did, no longer provides a full sense of vocation. Wheeler continues to state that a double life, (meaning that people perform other types of ‘work’ i.e. writing poetry, after their official job has been performed) is an answer of a sort to the notion of worker alienation. For these people, work and the workplace are not enough and what makes them distinctive and gives them life substance and character are activities they pursue elsewhere (Erikson & Vallas, 1990: 148).

Job shock and the information revolution have become a harsh reality. According to Dent (1995: 6-7), jobs are going to be redeployed, automated, eliminated and regenerated in forms we haven’t yet imagined. He continues to comment that job shock is only the tip of the iceberg for fundamental changes that will continue to occur.

A natural progression from an agricultural society to a factory / assembly / line / manufacturing society, to a streamlined, automated society is taking place before ones eyes. Dent (1995: 22) indicated that “work revolutions begin in times of crisis and emerge in the decades following the introduction of new technologies when people finally realise they can no longer resist the inevitable change and must radically re-engineer the workplace.”

People are therefore looking for meaning in their lives, and hence, in their work. Since the workplace is constantly reinventing itself, a person must be able to adapt to the changing environment, which means that they must be able to adjust their skills and learn new ones to fit into the new situation. This sense of meaning and purpose has become the new

contribution to the work contract in the hope to replace job security (Peterson & Gonzalez, 2000: 342).

Considering the above literature and the respective views on the meaning of work, one could probably comment to say that with this new perspective of the working life and the meaning of work, an appropriate holistic approach would probably be one to include personal identity and work identity.

4. VIRTUAL EMPLOYMENT

Every business consists of two types of elements: the physical and the virtual. The physical elements are items such as buildings, machinery and people; the virtual elements are items such as information about the customers, knowledge and technology. The information revolution provides organisations to move from the physical to the virtual.

Arguments have been made in articles that the physical value chain is only one side of the equation, and that in every business there is also a virtual value chain. This value chain is illustrated in *Figure 4*. Where the traditional value chain is effectively a series of interrelated functions within any organisation that links its inputs (raw material to a factory) to its outputs (sale of goods to customers), the virtual value chain refers to the value that can be generated by exploiting the information generated by any stage of this process (Czerniawska & Potter, 1998: 69). The processes by which the value is extracted are themselves virtual.

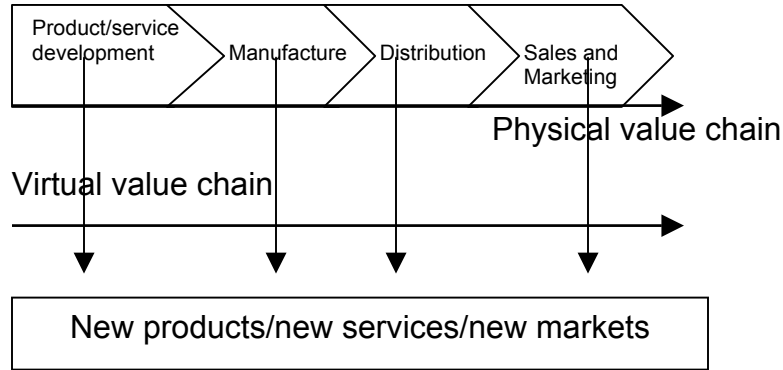


Figure 4. The Virtual Value Chain (Czerniawska & Potter, 1998: 68).

Igbaria & Tan (1998: i) mention that to meet these challenges, organisations have to understand the complexities of the new social and work structures, therefore, management need to develop strategies to support what is called “moving work to where people are, rather than people to where the work is”. Telecommunications technology becomes the glue that makes virtual societies and work possible. As virtual employment is developing more and more companies are talking about working anywhere, anytime and with anyone.

In meeting these challenges virtual teams, unlike traditional ones, must accomplish by working across distance, time and/or organisational boundaries and by using technology to facilitate communication and collaboration (Duarte & Snyder, 1999: 5). They refer to seven basic types of virtual teams, namely:

- **Networked Teams** – consisting of individuals who collaborate to achieve a common goal or purpose.
- **Parallel teams** – carry out special assignments, tasks or functions that the regular organisation does not want or is not equipped to perform.
- **Project or product-development teams** – these virtual teams also can cross time, distance and boundaries. They conduct projects for

users or customers for a defined, but typically extended, period of time.

- **Work or production teams** – these teams usually exist in one function, such as accounting or training.
- **Service teams** – are distributed across distance and time and each technician “follow the sun” and work during daylight hours.
- **Management teams** – are often cross national boundaries but almost never cross organisational boundaries.
- **Action teams** – such teams offer immediate response, often to emergency situations

(Duarte & Snyder, 1999: 5 – 8).

Virtual employment can only be successful if the people operating virtually are empowered and if the workers are not empowered, information systems will add little value states Bill Davidow, a former executive with Intel and Hewlett Packard (Duarte & Snyder, 1999: 9).

Defining virtual organisations, Luthans, (1995: 487) describes the virtual organisation as “a temporary network of companies that come together quickly to exploit fast-changing opportunities. Different from traditional mergers and acquisitions, the partners in the virtual organisation share costs, skills, and access to international markets. Each partner contributes to the virtual organisation what it is best at.”

Key attributes of the virtual organisation according to the Business Week, “The Virtual Corporation”, of 8 February 1993: 98-102, are:

- **Technology** – Information networks will help companies to link up and work together from start to finish.
- **Opportunism** – Partnership will be less permanent, less formal and more opportunistic. Companies will band together to meet all specific market opportunities.

- **No borders** – the new model redefines the traditional boundaries of the company.
- **Trust** – their relationships make them far more reliant on each other and require far more trust than ever before.
- **Excellence** – because each partner brings its core competencies to the effort, it may be possible to create a best-of-everything organisation.

Grimshaw and Kwok write in Chapter 3 of the works edited by Igbaria & Tan (1998: 47-49), that the attributes of a virtual organisation would entail:

- **Alliance for a common goal** – a virtual organisation as a group of companies in alliance to attain a certain goal so as to produce a particular product or services with their combined resources.
- **Underlying information and communication technologies** – information and communication technologies can be used to exploit the dimensions of time and space.
- **Vertical integration** – this suggests that virtual organisations should include both core suppliers and long-term customers into their virtual blueprints.
- **Globalisation** – the concept is not limited to national boundaries.
- **Collaboration** – the team work from people within the organisation that may be distributed locally or globally.

Expanding on the attribute relevant to collaboration, Duarte & Snyder (1999: 12 – 13), refers to seven critical success factors that affects the success of virtual teams, being:

- Human resource policies.
- Training and on-the-job education and development.

- Standard organisational and team processes.
- Use of electronic collaboration and communication technology.
- Organisational culture.
- Leadership support of virtual teams.
- Team-leader and team-member competencies.

Scase, 1999: 29, says that in the workplace of the future, employees will have very different psychological expectations. Most employees will consider their organisational commitment to be temporary. They will have few expectations of long-term careers and will tend to regard employment contracts as short-term negotiated arrangements.

5. SUMMARY

Investors expect managers, as their agents, to organise work in a way that achieves an acceptable rate of return on their capital. This is contingent on success in the marketplace but also restraining costs, especially those of labour. The relationship between capital and labour is thus founded on a fundamental conflict over control of work and the economic rewards that it yields.

The forces which operate to bring about change in organisations are described by Barbara Senior (2002: 7) as winds of change and varies from small summer breezes which merely disturb a few papers to that of howling gales which cause devastation to structures and operations causing consequent reorientation of purpose and rebuilding.

In the future, hierarchical management structures will be less evident. The management of intellectual capital will require skills that nurture creativity and innovation in workforces rather than compliance as in the past.

Change is about nothing if it is not about persistence. Change is not easy but it can be interesting. It is certainly worth the journey even if the place of arrival is surprising (Senior, 2002:357).

CHAPTER 2

ENVIRONMENTS – LITERATURE OVERVIEW

In this chapter the discussion will centre around literature background and overviews relating to the impact that our environment has on us as humans, specifically making reference to our working environment and residential environment. Our interaction and adjustment to our personal space and work space will be explored and enlightened by previous research and studies as we consult works in this field.

1. INTRODUCTION

As we explore the environment and psychology one tends to look at what the meaning of environmental psychology is. Robert Gifford (1997: 1), defined it as “the study of transactions between individuals and their physical settings.” He further states that in these transactions, individuals change the environment and their behaviour and experiences are changed by the environment.

Theory in environmental psychology is vital, diverse and in a way still developing. Gifford (1997:10) summarises it as follows to say that some theorists emphasise stimulations. The adaptation-level approach begins with the assumption that each of us becomes accustomed to a certain level of environment stimulation (sound, light, etc). The common occurrence of too much or too little stimulation is the focus of arousal, overload, and stress theories, which predict that a wide range of behaviours and experiences will be affected. A **second** type of theory emphasises the importance of an individual’s real, perceived, or desired control over stimulation, such as personal control and boundary regulation

theories. **Thirdly**, the ecological-psychological approach asserts the importance of behaviour settings, naturally occurring small scale social-physical units consisting of regular patterns of person-environment behaviour. A **fourth** type relates to the integral approaches such as interactionism and transactionalism. Organismic theory attempts to describe the full, complex interrelationship of persons and settings. In the **fifth** instance, operant approaches downplay abstract principles, adopting a direct problem solving approach that employs behaviour-modification techniques. The **sixth** type refers to the environment-centred theories, such as green psychology and eco-psychology and raises the issue of the environment's own welfare and its ability to support our welfare (Gifford, 1997: 10 -11).

Environmental psychology has three levels of inquiry or analysis. The first or basic level deal with studies of processes as perception, cognition, and personality as they filter and structure the individual's experience of the environment. The next level has relevance to social management of space: interpersonal distancing (personal space), territoriality, privacy, etc. In the last instance, environmental psychology also concentrates on the physical setting aspects of complex but common behaviors in everyday life, such as working, learning, life at home, life in the community and our relationship with nature (Gifford, 1997: 13).

For the purpose of this study, the dimensions of *place* (home versus office at work) and *psychological processes* (working) will be explored and further discussion in Chapter 5 will follow based on the data obtained from specifically designed questionnaires.

In the quest to explore the working and residential environments, which influence behaviour and emotions, aspects of privacy surface and need to be addressed as well. Without realising it, most people become uneasy

when their privacy, within their own framework, are being exploited or penetrated. The issue of privacy will thus be further discussed, followed by discussions on the residential environment and lastly the working environment.

2. PRIVACY

Concepts of privacy and personal space vary from society to society. Yet in all societies these concepts are so ingrained that we take it for granted. Privacy is a process that is a very important dimension of our daily lives, but one we usually manage at a low level of awareness. In most instances, privacy will boil down to two meanings, namely: (i) being apart from other people and (ii) being sure that other individuals or organisations do not have access to one's personal information. Each one of us needs different kinds of privacy and some need more than others. Irwin Altman (1975: 7) developed a definition of privacy and he wrote "privacy is selective control of access to the self or to one's group." This definition captures the themes of management of information about the self and the management of social interaction.

Altman's definition of privacy also refers to *control*. Thus meaning that access may be granted or declined. A person who has optimal privacy is not a recluse but someone who is able to find either companionship or solitude easily and who is able to share or halt the flow of self-related information (Gifford, 1997: 174).

Privacy thus means going toward others as well as going away from them and is further optimising social interaction and information transfer, not merely restricting it.

2.1. Influences on privacy

Certain social situations or physical settings engender different privacy needs. Differences in a person's background are related to privacy preferences. According to Gifford (1997: 175), individuals who grew up in homes they felt were crowded prefer more anonymity and reserve as adults. He continues and refers to those who spend more time in cities preferring more anonymity and intimacy, whilst wanderers (people who live someplace other than where they grew up) prefer less intimacy.

The physical environment might be associated with greater privacy preferences or dissatisfaction with privacy. In a study of office workers who changed offices it was found that employees who left offices with walls for open-plan offices said that they felt a significant decline in privacy (Sundstrom, 1986: 305). In another study of office workers, the best predictor of satisfaction with privacy was simply the number of partitions (60 inch high) around the employee's workstation (Sundstrom, 1986: 307). These studies therefore suggest that satisfaction with privacy is a function of how much the physical environment allows us to regulate access to self.

Privacy in the work place consist of many controversial issues regarding the office layout and therefore may be defined in terms of retreat from people, management of information, or regulation of interaction. Privacy in work environments generally refers to the limitation of interaction or communication (Sundstrom, 1986: 313). Sundstrom (1986: 313) continues to argue that speech privacy or conversational privacy refers to the ability to conduct conversations without being overheard outside the workspace, whilst visual privacy in turn would mean the inaccessibility to view other people.

In the work environment, privacy can contribute to communication by allowing confidential conversation. In an environment that provides too much seclusion from others, a person may experience isolation. Influences on privacy in the work place vary from offices that are totally enclosed (separate room) to that of open-plan spaces with high partitioning to no partitioning at all. At the end of the day, status (position i.e. management) and individual preference play an important role in the study of privacy in the work environment.

There is further the issue relating privacy at home. Residents of houses with an open plan lay-out prefer less solitude (Gifford, 1997: 178). At work then, open spaces are associated with dissatisfaction with privacy, but at home, open spaces are associated with preferences for less privacy. It would probably be best to regard each kind of privacy to be differently influenced by the physical environment.

According to Nicola Phillips (2000: 115), who wrote in her works of E-Motional Business, as more people work from home they look for communal activity in their neighbourhood. The 9 to 5 way is being eroded by homeworking. She quotes David Reisman who said that we are a “lonely crowd”, living and working within a few feet of people whose names we will never know. People in the cities bemoan this and speak of wanting to be in a friendly neighbourhood and environment but they do not want to give up any privacy to get this.

2.2. Privacy and environmental design

According to Gifford (1997: 190), all the theorists agree that privacy can mean openness to some as much as it means being closed to others. The important thing is to live and work in settings that allow an individual to

regulate access to others. Privacy is therefore a process and is ultimately linked to other psychological processes, such as space management, emotion, adaption, etc. The physical environment plays a key role in facilitating privacy and can make it either difficult or easy to cope with. The reason for this is that we do not always have a choice of the physical environment that we are confronted with and sometimes wish that the settings were different to accommodate our emotions and the way we would like to express them, i.e. crying, shouting, etc.

Angela Gunn wrote an article that she called “The war over your personal privacy is over. You lost!” Her discussion centres around aspects of privacy but boils down to one central conclusion that privacy in its broadest meaning no longer exists as all forms of communications can be captured and personal information is easy to come by (www.seattleweekly.com/features/9927/features-gunn.shtml (8 – 14 July 1999)).

In support of this stance that privacy has and still is suffering due to communication exposures, Alan Lightman reflected during a lecture, that with the many new communication technologies, we are in effect plugged-in and connected to the outer world twenty-four hours a day. He makes reference to his days being a youth and comment that he believes that he has lost something of his inner self, meaning the part that imagines, dreams and explores on who I am and what is important to me. He conceptualises privacy as a need for silent spaces in the mind (Delivered as the second Hart House Lecture in April 2002).

3. RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT

For most of us, home is the most important place in our lives. It is for this reason that home is usually the most important refuge from stresses of work, school and the street life. Gifford (1997: 194), states that a house is

not a home. He continues that a house is a physical structure and home is the rich set of evolving cultural, demographic, and psychological meanings we attach to that physical structure. It is thus for this very reason, that we are exploring the meanings of the residential environment to enable us to understand the impact of working from home or differently said, the impact that a home office has on our residential environment.

Gifford (1997:195) refers to the five dimensions that characterise residences as per Irwin Altman and colleagues. These are: (1) permanent versus temporary, (2) differentiated versus homogeneous, (3) communal versus non-communal, (4) identity versus communality, and (5) openness versus closedness. In Chapter 5 we will discuss the impact relating to the differentiated versus homogeneous, meaning the separation, or the lack of it, in the functions of rooms. Cognisance will be taken of the fact that in differentiated residences, each room normally has a specific activity and that due to the lack of space or infrastructure, it results in conflict.

It is evident from the results obtained in this study that the dimension relevant to the *openness versus the closedness* to outsiders were also influenced. All of a sudden, customers visited the residence for business purposes and this impacted the aspect of being *open* to render a service to customers but in the same token being *closed* to protect privacy at home.

Six dimensions of home, as per Gifford, (1997: 196), are haven, order, identity, connectedness, warmth and physical suitability. Analysis of the factors that had an impact on the people who suddenly found themselves working from a home office, will show that virtually every dimension of “home” were affected with the transition from institutional employment to that of virtual employment.

Kimberly Dovey writes in the book of Home Environments, Edited by Irwin Altman and Carol M Werner (1985: 39), that home is a highly complex system of ordered relations with place, an order that orients us in space, in time, and in society. Home also means that we identify with the place in which we dwell and identity implies a certain bonding or mergence of person and place.

Dovey’s view to home and her using the term dialectic, is similar to that adopted by Altman and Gauvain. Her views of the home’s dialectical interaction along a series of binary oppositions are illustrated in *Figure 5*. These dialectical oppositions may be divided into those that are primarily spatial and those that are primarily socio-cultural.

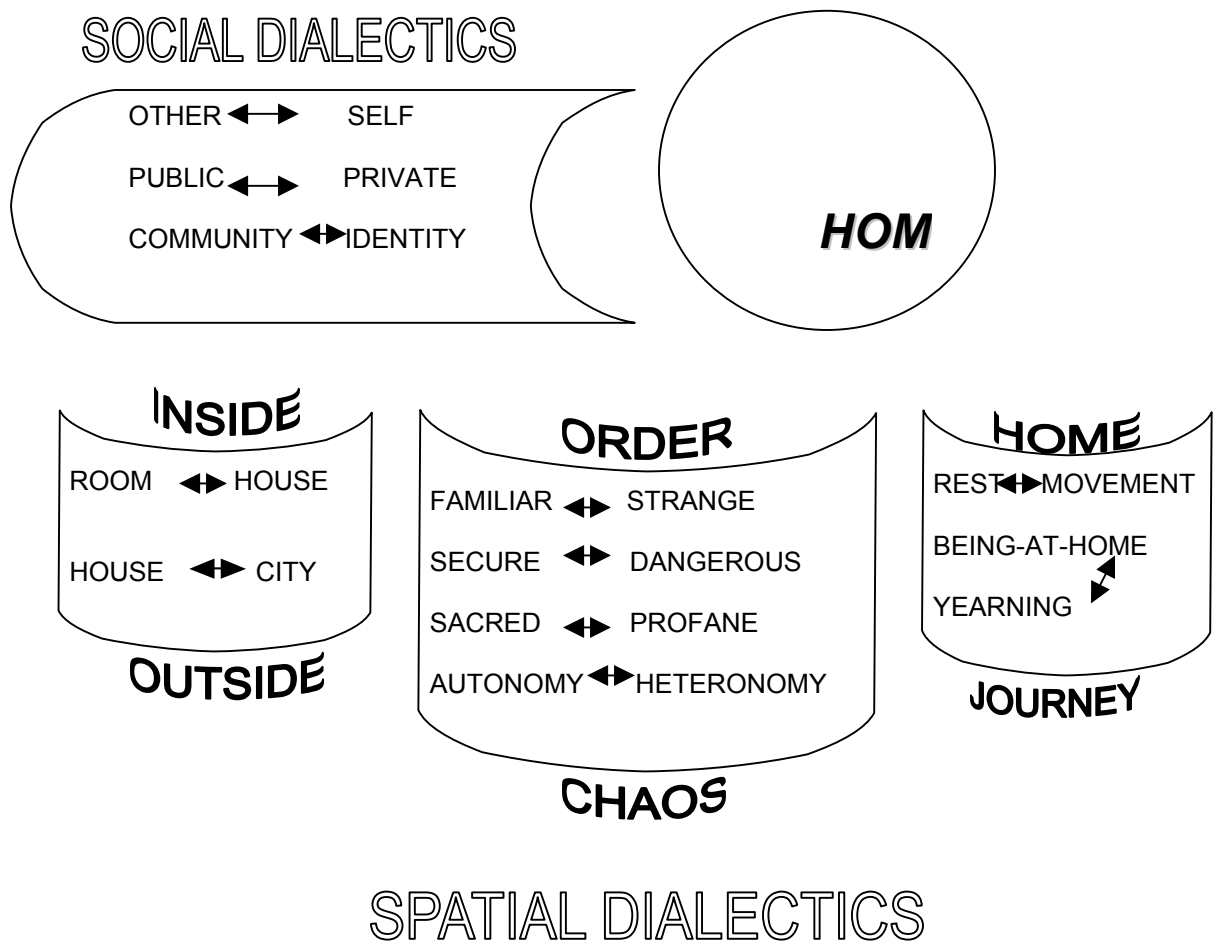


Figure 5. The Dialectics of Home (Altman & Werner, 1985: 45)

Amos Rapoport in Altman & Werner, (1985: 277) states that people in home environments have choices and things like furnishing and mementos play a major role in communication of identity and status. They help take possession of space and reflect people's lives, experience etc. Various modifications and transformations in the home environment not only represent choice but are also a way of making the home environment more congruent with the people in them. This is why issues such as meaning and personalisation are so important. There is also choice about which other settings are linked to the dwelling. Choices are made about work, social relations, recreation and many other issues. However, the transition to working virtually from home impacts drastically and directly on the choices traditionally associated with a home environment. Space, work and social relations are probably some of the major issues being affected.

The home environment, in a way, reflects the personal identity of its inhabitants as well as the relationship to the community.

In the virtual environment, adjustments need to be made. We normally would plod along on the normal course and we feel relatively secure as long as we do not have to face changes. When things change, we don't know what to expect – or worse, what's expected of us (Murray, 1998: 279). The one issue that we tend to overlook when operating virtually especially so when working from home, is the necessity to articulate and even write down the family rules or the rules of the house (Murray, 1998: 282). These rules have to be subject to a reality check and even changing the rules to help everyone to adjust and knowing the boundaries.

As one becomes accustomed to working at home, one may deal with the deflation of one's own expectations and the realities of life. Murray writes that these things can be difficult to handle if you are not expecting them and suggests that one navigates through times like these by:

- Expect challenges.
- Prepare solutions.
- Remember that this too shall pass.
- Keep your sense of humour.

(Murray: 1998: 288)

4. WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

Working can provide some of our very best or even some of our worst experiences in life. The Hawthorne studies (conducted over a number of years of study) examined the effects of the environment on the productivity and satisfaction of assembly-line workers at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company, near Chicago (Sundstrom, 1986:44). The physical environment at work is crucial to employee performance, satisfaction and social relations. Issues such as sound, noise, music and indoor climate, etc. have an impact on the employee and vary from positives to negatives, each employee responding differently to the stimuli (Sundstrom, 1986: 403).

H. McIlvaine Parsons writes in the book *Human Behaviour and Environment*, edited by I Altman and J.F. Wohlwill (1976: 187) that an office can mean the working space (large or small) for a single individual, the collective space for an organisational division or department or even the entire building of workers.

Modern technology has produced physical environments that vary in their entirety, in their resources, in their spatial arrangements, in their communication, in their protection, etc. All these aspects affect its users relating to feelings, manipulation of environment, social interaction, motivation, learning and perception (Altman & Wohlwill, 1976: 206). Most

virtual teams exist in adaptive environments. Their work is always changing, there are always new problems on the horizon, and the solutions to problems are often one-of-a-kind (Duarte & Snyder, 1999:203).

Work environments have such a great influence on people and could be viewed from so many angles such as physical settings, varieties of human beings and even the ways in which the human is being affected by the constructed environments.

In the works of Gifford, (1997: 299) he discussed the issue of *working away from work* and comments on idyllic scenes being created but the realities are that working from home is not suitable to all. Obviously the nature of the job being performed plays a major role, as it is unlikely for someone in a manufacturing environment to work from a home office whilst it is highly possible, for example for a stockbroker, to operate *away from "work"*. Many employees sense *working away from work* as conflicting with home life, it may create social isolation and can even pose supervisory problems. Gifford continues by stating that studies has shown of female insurance claims processors, a high level of satisfaction along with a 69% drop in absenteeism and a 10% increase in productivity. Traditionally, research on work space emphasises the study of human factors, or ergonomics. Attitudes about space or spatial arrangements may not correspond to performance related behaviors in spatial arrangements. However, employees are very sensitive to space and unhappiness with existing spatial arrangements is a reality in the work environment, be that in an institutional office environment or a home office set up.

Sociologists have argued that our working lives have become increasingly shaped by the organisations in which it takes place. One of the first

scholars to analyse work in the context of the modern organisation was Karl Marx. He used a concept that has ever since dominated sociological discussions of the relationship between workers and the environment in which they work: the concept of alienation (Popenoe, 1983: 336). Since Marx's time, the idea of worker alienation has come to have broader meaning and the term has come to be applied to white-collar workers employed in large bureaucratic organisations as well. Alienation, as defined by Marx, refers to the lack of control that workers in industrial society have over the work they do and the products they make, causing them to feel they have no stake in their society. In the more recent usage of the term, it refers to a general sense that work in modern society is unfulfilling (Popenoe, 1983: 342). However, some studies have shown that high-technology work settings need not be alienating.

Popenoe (1983: 341) defines an organisation as “a social group that has been consciously constructed to achieve specific goals, an organisation also has a division of labour, a concentration of power and a membership that routinely changes.” The working environment therefore varies from the Japanese model being the “institution of lifetime employment” where job security is exchanged for worker loyalty, versus the Western countries where the relationship between worker and employer is seen as a negotiated contract between an individual and an organisation.

Worthington & Britton (1994: 4) in somewhat different terms to Popenoe perceives the business organisation to be ultimately involved in the same basic activity namely, the transformation of input (resources) into outputs (goods or services). They conclude and acknowledge that all organisations acquire resources – including labour, premises, technology, finance, materials – and transform these resources into goods or services required by customers.

Probably the best working definition of an organisation is the one sourced from Butler (1991: 1) that defines it as a social entity that has purpose, has a boundary, so that some participants are considered inside while others are considered outside, and patterns the activities of participants into a recognisable structure.

The one facet of organisations is that they all have physical aspects to them, the buildings, the plant and equipment and the like and all this would constitute part of the working environment.

While analysing the working environment, it is of paramount importance to look at the individual and the work place as a whole. Short-term influences on performance can involve psychological arousal, stress, overload or fatigue. Long term influences on performance depend on adaptation but are not well understood. Perceptual adaptation involves the well-established tendency of people to perceive extreme or intense environmental conditions as less extreme or intense with the passage of time. Behavioural adaptation involves changes in habit to accommodate the environment (Sundstrom, 1986: 389).

Satisfaction with the physical environment is a component of job satisfaction. Research has shown that the physical environment in offices and factories contributes to a person's general satisfaction with the job. It has further shown that satisfaction and performance in a work-station depend on a variety of features and on the characteristics and activities of the occupant. This obviously results that the relationship between person and work-station is highly complex. Supporting facilities play a major role such as the comfort of the office chair. Floorspace may also relate to satisfaction of the working environment especially as floorspace traditionally symbolises status. Factors such as noise, light, temperature, windows, colour, music and air all impact on the working environment and

the individual's perception of the working environment (Sundstrom, 1986: 394).

5. SUMMARY

This chapter reflected on different perspectives relating to privacy, residential and working environments. It is evident from the literature that previous experiences influence people on all of the dimensions and reactions to specific environments and privacy is mostly an individual thing. However, there are many similarities in reactions of people towards certain stimuli and these are supported by numerous studies conducted in the past.

Changes in the working environment, especially from a work at home situation, affect all areas of one's life and a person has to adjust emotionally, physically and mentally. These areas are interrelated, which means that the more a person worries, the more tired that person gets. The more a person adds to his/her daily schedule, the more worn down he/she becomes. It's easy for most people to overlook their own needs without knowing they are doing it. In order to get rest, to get time away from the home-working environment, one has to be able to turn thoughts off when it is needed.

When the office is based at home, it's hard to "go home" for the day. The project is in there, on the desk calling ones name. Thinking about work even occurs when taxing the kids to where they should be, i.e. swimming lessons. In a way, throughout a person's entire life, people's time is mainly devoted to working or waiting to work again. In a home office environment it has to be decided that things must change and when a person for example is fixing supper it should not be clouded by work related actions

and/or thoughts but the joy should be in the cooking. This obviously not only relates to cooking but especially to any form of socialising in and around the home environment.

Traditionally privacy in a work environment would be associated with physical enclosure of workspaces. One of the studies consulted particularly showed that different facets of privacy were related to environmental satisfaction. In the home – working environment a sense of privacy can relate to physical enclosure of workspace as well as creating an opportunity for the self to be alone and relaxing constructively.

In the efforts to cope with environments and privacy, it is not necessary to push the family into the business, be that office based or home based. Worrying about getting operating to a specific (your one) frame of satisfaction and adequate performance should be a first priority in the working environment, especially after a transition from office based to home based. It is thus important to be able to relax, enjoy being where you are and doing what you do. The rest will unfold in time.

CHAPTER 3

RELATIONSHIPS – LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Employment, the exchange of work for compensation, is a social fact the world over. But what the exchange means to workers or employers is a subjective experience for each participant, that is being affected by personal values, and upbringing, the relationship's history and the broader society. The merge of these factors create a central feature of employment: the *psychological contract*. Psychological contracts in employment are the belief systems of individual workers and employers regarding their mutual obligations (Rousseau & Schalk, 2000: 1).

These obligations grow from the promises made as employment arrangements are started and sustained, from the hiring process through day-to-day interactions. Two key requirements for the creation of a psychological contract are some degree of *personal freedom* and *social stability*. The concept of *personal freedom* refers to the voluntary commitments that individuals make with others. This will reflect the choice of the individual but with the understanding that freedom is always a matter of degree, with each society creating different solutions to basic problems. *Social stability* has relevance to both the employer and worker having confidence in one another's intention and ability to keep commitments (Rousseau & Schalk, 2000: 5).

It is for this very reason relating to relationships, be that between the employer and employee, the individual and his/her family in their home office, or even the customer and company image that this chapter will explore and reflect on. Chapter 2 reflected on the impact of the environment towards our working lives whilst this chapter's discussions will follow concerning our "working relationships" and the impact thereof.

1. INTRODUCTION

A central part of our human existence is the process in which we act toward or respond to others. We are constantly aware of the effects our actions and reactions have on others. In turn, other people's expectations influence most of our own acts. We often find ourselves in relationships where we act in a certain way in order to receive a reward or return. This type of *exchange relationships* are typically found between employer and employee. Normally the employee will behave in the way the employer wishes and is rewarded with salary or bonus or even an "early" promotion.

Rewards do not have to be tangible, however, many social exchange relationships offer emotional rewards, as when people tailor their behaviour toward another to receive gratitude (Popenoe, 1983: 111). The relationships that we are faced with in our working environment, dealing with clients and making it possible to operate from a home office with success, are deep rooted exchange relationships.

Given the blurring of home and workplace, and how the E-world exists in both places, it is worth exploring how this new way of dealing with matters and working affects our relationships, both in our workplace and outside. Sometimes, the pace of the workplace creates the different relationship need outside, or even changes the nature of the relationships (Phillips, 2000: 23).

We are also confronted with our roles in social groups and these "social groups" can be described as two or more people who have a common identity and some feeling of unity and sharing certain goals. It was interesting to note that from the data obtained as per Chapter 5 that quite a number of respondents indicated that they initially felt very isolated after having started work at home, and lost their feeling of unity and sharing the

same goals. For most individuals the relationship with their employer would thus be a secondary relationship which is specialised and mainly lacking in emotional warmth. In contrast to this type of relationship most people experience their primary relationship with the people closest to them, with free and extensive communication and it involves the whole personality.

2. WORKING ENVIRONMENT RELATIONS

Self-expression in a workspace presupposes two things. According to Sundstrom (1986: 217) the first would be a work-station that is assigned to a specific person and recognised by others as that person's. The second would be where the occupant of the workspace has at least some freedom to decorate or arrange it to suit his or her preferences. In the BOSTI findings, three out of four office workers personalise their workspaces (Sundstrom, 1986: 222). Personalisation of workspaces may contribute to employee's satisfaction in part because personalisation may lead people to feel that their individuality is recognised.

Implications of personalisation relating to interpersonal relationships seem to have the capacity for sending several messages to co-workers and visitors. The personalised workspace may symbolically indicate to either visitors or co-workers the occupant's desires regarding psychological distance or may even define the workspace as a territory. Phillips (2000: 110) summarises this by stating that consciously or subconsciously we define our space professionally and personally.

Status is another issue of great importance in the organisation. It reflects the relative standing of an individual in the organisation's hierarchy of authority and influence. For the individual, the symbols of status represent concrete and visible evidence of rank in the organisation, and the power

that accompanies it. In many instances the workspace symbolise status. Working from home then obviously has an impact on the individual's status as it is no longer visible to co-workers and even visitors.

In the working environment there are always expectations from both the employer and the employee. They may not be formally stated but they do exist and they have an impact on the relationship between the parties. When the expectations of either side are not fulfilled or when the contract is violated, intense emotional reactions result. The trust and good faith of the relationship is destroyed and can not easily be rebuilt. The disillusionment over broken psychological contracts affects employee job satisfaction, productivity, and desire to continue with the organisation. This type of violation also reduces employee commitment (Osland, Kolb & Rubin, 2001: 5).

The tremendous rate of change that businesses undergo as they try to adapt to a global economy and changing economic conditions has resulted in marked changes in the workplace expectations and psychological contracts. On the question of how do employees react to the broken psychological contracts that accompany corporate restructuring – Osland, et al, (2001: 7), states that some employees modify their expectations and make whatever sacrifices are necessary to retain their jobs, while others give more importance to family and non-work interests.

Organisational behaviour equates to that behaviour as a function of the person and the environment. Within an organisation there are relationships between the people, organisational culture, products and the customers. Phillips, (2000: 113) gives an example of the difference in impact between a conversation with a friend that she had many years ago and which she can still “see” the two of them walking in the field, versus an e-mail discussion with the same friend on a similarly important issue

just a week or so ago and. In the latter form of the communication her memory has no anchor. It was quite evident from the first round of questionnaires (refer to Chapter 5 for more detail) that most of the respondents felt that due to the distant way of building relationships their “memories no longer have anchors”.

Dick (Sethi) Depak, uses a “seven R” model to develop a culture of high performance and high self-esteem among today’s knowledge workers. These “R’s “ represent the following:

- **Respect** – a sincere belief that people at all levels of the organisation have unique contributions to make.
- **Responsibility and Resources** – employees perform best when they have a discrete and well-defined area of responsibility and the resources needed to make it successful.
- **Risk-taking** – to promote innovation, employees have to learn to take risks. Mistakes, however, should be viewed as opportunities for lessons rather than career-ending triggers.
- **Reward and Recognition** – deserving employees should receive both monetary rewards, as well as recognition for a job well done. Lack of recognition, poor management and little or no involvement are probably the main reasons why good people leave corporations.
- **Relationship** – trust can flourish when mutual and meaningful feedback is given and received.
- **Role Modelling** – when an individual “walks the talk”. Ideally senior executives should serve as inspiring role models.

- **Renewal** – a culture that promotes organisational learning at all levels results in the expanded consciousness needed for renewal.

(Osland, et al, 2001: 397 –398).

In viewing Depak's description of relationship it is the researcher's submission that having to operate from home impacts on building trust and the flow of giving and receiving meaningful feedback becomes more difficult as the level of interaction is on a different dimension.

Some futurologists paint a very cosy picture of how technology will "glue the family unit back together again". For the one it is the concept of living above the shop like it used to be many years ago and the family units working together. However, to another this looks like an attempt to imprison people in what was their "safe haven". It can take away any refuge from the workplace, encourage long and irregular hours, and eliminates any sense of perspective about the different facets of our lives and their relative importance (Phillips, 2000: 118). From the responses obtained in the research of this study, the situation in this group specific has relevance to working longer and irregular hours and no more refuge from the workplace as the respondents are faced with it all the time – refer to chapter 5 for more detail.

Activities that are generally present in the institutional working environment that also influence relationships are the skills to actively listen to superiors, colleagues or sub-ordinates. Avoid being the source of all wisdom by brainstorming certain issues or entering into debates or discussions regarding probable solutions to problems or better ways of managing challenges.

In the work of Igbaria and Tan – The Virtual Workplace, 1998, Romm and

Pliskin discuss in Chapter 19 pages 369 and 370 the literature and comment that there are two major bodies of research: studies that focus on the *process* of group dynamics (i.e. how groups members interact with each other) and studies that focus on the *content* of group dynamics (i.e. the issues that group members discuss during the interaction process). They continue to state that the positive effects of groups under the *process* dynamic relates to the impact on decision making and creativity. The negatives to this type of group dynamics can be pressure on individuals to conform to views that they know are wrong, a tendency to social loafing, etc. Recent studies conducted by Finholt and Sproull (1990) reported that e-mail can facilitate group decision making and bring about unity and cohesion in a virtual environment. Focusing on the *content*, the earliest model has been proposed by Tuckman (1965) and contains five stages: *Forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning*. Robbins (1993: 288) then came to use the terminology of the first model while proposing a modified new model which also contains five stages: *forming and norming, low performing, storming, high performing, and adjourning*. In research conducted by Romm and Pliskin using e-mail messages as the basis for the analysis of the 1994 Israeli academics' strike, they concluded that each of the five phases corresponded to the stages in Robbins' "combined" model (Igbaria & Tan, 1998: 384).

Organisational structures are the essence of the division of work between individuals and the formal organisational relationships. These relationships will be reflected by the individuals, the formal pattern of role relationships, and the interaction between the roles and the individuals. Worthington & Britton (1994: 19) defines patterns of responsibilities as follows:

- *Line relationships* occur when authority flows vertically in a downward flow – from management to levels lower and each level flowing from the previous one.

- *Staff relationships* are created when senior personnel appoint an assistant who normally has no authority over any other staff but acts as an extension of the superior.
- *Functional relationships* refers to those between the specialists and line managers e.g. the Human Resources area or a typical IT area would fall in this type of relationship. It is typical that in this instance the specialist provides a common service throughout the organisation or division but has no authority over the users of the service.
- *Lateral relationships* exists across the organisation, particularly between individuals occupying equivalent positions.

Consulting all the sources and considering the highly complex nature and dimensions of relationships at work, only a few issues relating working relations have been addressed in this chapter.

3. FAMILY RELATIONS

In a study that Claudia Goldin did, researching career and family relevant to college women, her analysis of “family” is represented by children, but the high divorce rate reminds us that “family” and family related tasks include not only women but also men. More and more there is a shift in the definition of family or alternative family and now a days family can be considered to be whoever you love. Happiness does not have to equal a husband/wife and children (Blau & Ehrenberg, 1997:59).

Holmer & Karlsson, (1997: 170) maintains that a reasonable supposition regarding family relationships is that there are certain moral guidelines for family relationships which tend to transcend more immediate feelings of

justice in everyday life in families. They continue to state that the actions of family members are in a sense performed in the context of a family pact or a family culture, where certain values function as moral guidelines in the relationships of everyday life. These Editors comment that the norms (relevant to the family, but originating from the society) are given as general guidelines, but are transformed into commitments in the concrete relationships between the individual family members through their negotiations over the distribution of tasks and responsibilities. Therefore, the dynamic interplay between the persons involved in everyday relationships and the sense of commitment are of importance (Holmer & Karlsson, 1997: 171).

While there is little empirical research on how telework impacts relationships at home, related work suggests that working at home may negatively impact on the family. In Chapter 12 of the book *The Virtual Workplace*, (1998: 228), the authors Duxbury, Higgins and Neufeld state that in a study conducted in 1985 it was found that the amount of time devoted to family activities and leisure decreased with the acquisition of a home computer. A later report in 1990 suggested that fathers who used the home computer eleven hours or more per week, were less available to their wives and spent less time performing household chores. These authors also make reference to the work of Gottlieb & Dede of 1984 and Tinnell of 1985 suggesting that the home use of a computer for work-related purposes could be linked to an increase in family conflict and decreased marital satisfaction. Some of these complaints indicated issues such as an obsessiveness with work and reduced time commitment to parent roles.

Nicola Armstrong wrote on *Flexible Work in the Virtual Workplace*, edited by Alan Felstead and Nick Jewson, that the construction of the virtual workplace may create new 'dangers' such as income insecurity and

overwork (Felstead & Jewson, 1999:56). Some indications are that the prime consideration in people's life's operating virtually is their work and cause all sorts of problems, personal problems as well as not spending enough time doing the 'normal' things that people do. Thinking, living and breathing work becomes the norm and staying away from the computer or out of the home office for a length of time is like withdrawing from an addiction (Felstead & Jewson, 1999: 57).

4. BOND WITH CUSTOMERS

While individual transactions are the economic cornerstone of exchange, they do not always describe the complex relationships that often emerge between the channels. All transactions range from discrete (or transactional – minor social exchange) to relational exchange (long term or ongoing relationships between exchange partners). More and more companies are therefore engaging in relational exchange with their customers (Pelton, Strutton & Lumpkin, 1997: 478).

To see customers as the central focus of business is thus the best way for any Corporation or business entity to survive in today's competitive world. Economic relevance boils down to the fact that business entities have customers who are prepared to pay in exchange for the value that, that entity offers them. Observing the corporate world, it is noted that many companies adopt customer strategies such as striving to make their customers successful, inviting their customers to be their critics (usually by means of survey questionnaires), striving to make the customer's challenges those of the corporation's and lastly positioning themselves to become part of the solution that the customer has brought.

Building relationships with customers are then obviously crucial to any business wanting to stay in business. Unfortunately all relationships are not necessarily good and like in any form of relationship a bad relationship

fosters conflict. Employees thus have to align to the employer's vision and mission in order to meet the challenges of relevance in the marketplace.

Max Mckeown writes in his book on E-Customer, (2001: 217) that as soon as one has managed to make the customer happy, it is back to the beginning with new ideas, new competitors, new fads and new opportunities as business should be an endless value exchange with the e-customer. He continues to call on the heart of business and wishes to create an awareness that there are some twenty-one principles to win hearts and wallets. McKeown refers to real trust, real relationships and real integrity and concludes that life's work can make money by making the world a better place – building the kingdom where the customer has his heart (McKeown, 2001: 218 –222). Taking his views into consideration it is evident that relationships with customers can determine an organisation's position in the market place.

Mike Brennan, vice president of engineering for consumer product of Black & Decker made a statement that “sometimes we at the company are too close to the products, and we fail to see what value they may have for end users. Sometimes we really like a product that our consumers don't like. We're always ready to listen to them, however, and in the case of the SnakeLight, I'm glad we did.” (Hiebeler, Kelly & Kettelman, 1998: 83).

One of the issues that Hiebeler, et al., (1998: 170 - 171), remarks on is that no one enjoys getting bounced around an automated telephone answering system, unable to contact a real human being who can answer a simple question or listen to a complaint. They continue to comment that establishing one-on-one relationships are vital and points-of-contact excellence should give its contact people the authority to make decisions and expedite customers requests.

Most authors who write about customer service seem to hold the view that building and maintaining good customer relations are of vital importance as it is much less expensive to fix problems and preserve loyal customers, than it is to go out and find new customers.

5. SUMMARY

Poor relationships sometimes bring about a feeling of dreading the prospect of meeting with a specific person whether that be from the perspective of engagement with a customer, colleague or even one of the family members. For whatever the reason, sometimes we just do not get on with a particular person in any one of these three types of relationships as was discussed in this chapter. Sometimes hardly a bad word has been spoken in anger, yet the air hangs heavy whenever the two occupy the same room. On other occasions the problem can be more obvious and what unfolds is a situation of psychological or verbal abuse.

Given the blurring of home and workplace, this type of abuse can have many faces. As employees are now in some instances expected to meet clients at the “new” home office, the dilemma arises that provocation or even assault may take place between the service provider’s representative (employee) and the customer, and all of this may happen on private property with little or no security backup, instead of an institutional office environment, where security measures are in place.

Working relationships are further influenced by means of the expectations from both the employer and the employee and a new dynamic needs to be developed in this new way of operating. The tremendous rate of change of the business world also constitutes an expectation from the customer,

thus leaving the individual/employee in the middle trying to adopt and cope with both the new role in the working relationship as well as the new relationship with the customer.

Taking the dynamics of this into consideration it is no wonder that most people working from home, as the literature showed, have a tendency to work longer and irregular hours. Juggling work and home life can be so time consuming that it is possible to never pencil in any time for the self, not as an employee, spouse or parent, but just as an individual – the real you.

As bad or unhappy relationships wear one down and drain one's energy, equally, good and happy relationships are uplifting and stimulates inner-growth. The challenge however, is probably to keep and maintain the balance between ones capabilities and challenges. When a change (also relevant to relationship dynamics) involves ones capabilities being greater than the challenges, most people tend to view this as positive as they feel they can control the situation or the demands of such a relationship. However, when changes involve one's capabilities being smaller than the challenges, most people tend to view the change as negative as they would feel that they are the victims in the situation.

In any relationship, there are various characteristics and as one's life becomes clearer and clearer from one's own experience. Factors such as *trust, communication, a variety of roles* between the parties in the relationship and even the *ability to absorb or tolerate* specific behaviour, make relationships unique and acts as the glue that makes people "stick" together be that at work, at home or dealing with the customer.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

The Delphi Technique, as already mentioned in Chapter 1, is a research method and has been chosen and used in this study. This chapter will however, focus on some of the aspects relevant to Delphi based on the literature consulted in the process. Furthermore, it should be noted that the population used for the purpose of this study is considered to be representative of the broader population. This is based on the fact that the results obtained from the questionnaires are likely to be similar in any other type of industry that is faced or challenged with similar implementation strategies as was the case with this particular sample. The construct of the questionnaires were of such nature that the respondents had an open – ended opportunity in the first instance to list their views and secondly these views were recapitulated in a close – ended format. The respondents are also spread geographically thus indicating that these results are not unique to a specific geographical area. The respondents further represent a spread of staff on both managerial and non-managerial levels thus contributing to the sample being representative in this regard as well.

1. DELPHI ENUMERATION

According to the works of Delbecq, Van de Ven & Gustafson (1975: 10) in their book *Group Techniques for Program Planning*, Delphi is described as a process which utilises written responses as opposed to bringing individuals together.

Due to the fact that Delphi does not require face-to-face contact this technique is essentially a series of questionnaires. The first questionnaire

would ask the individuals to respond to a broad base question and each subsequent questionnaire built upon the responses to the preceding questionnaire. The process stops when consensus has been reached among participants (Dalkey, 1967), or when sufficient information exchange has been obtained (Delbecq, et al, 1975: 83).

From the literature it is evident that Delphi found its existence during the second world war as per Zemke and Kramlinger (1982:149). The Delphi concept therefore, may be viewed as a spin-off of a defence research. “Project Delphi” was the name given to an Air Force-sponsored Rand Corporation study in the early 1950’s, concerning the use of expert opinions (Linstone & Turoff, 1977: 10). Since the first Delphi research it has been employed in many different settings and its applications have broadened beyond technological forecasting and has become a multiple planning and research tool.

Delphi can be used to help identify problems, set goals and priorities, and identify problem solutions. It can also be used to clarify positions and delineate differences among diverse reference groups (Delbecq, et al, 1975: 84).

2. DEFINING DELPHI

Numerous definitions of the Delphi technique would include a reference to a method for developing consensus deriving from expert opinion.

Sackman (1975: xi) defines Delphi as “an attempt to elicit expert opinion in a systematic manner for useful results” whilst Byars (1992) supports the reference in that the Delphi technique is a method developing consensus deriving from expert opinions.

According to Linstone & Turoff (1977: 3) “Delphi may be characterised as a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem.”

In the works of Nieuwoudt (1990: 50) he quotes Theron’s definition of the Delphi technique: “... as a method for the systematic solicitation and collation of informed judgements on a particular topic. It offers a means of avoiding both the potential errors of a single expert’s judgement and the inordinate distortions possible when a group of experts acts in a committee environment”.

Delbecq, et al. (1975: 34) states that “The Delphi process is a survey technique for decision making among isolated anonymous respondents”.

Interpreting Delphi and exploring its multitude of uses it is far more than just a decision making technique, it enables the researcher or the project team to learn about broader facts or issues outside the initial problem statement. Delphi also enhance the quality of group effort for judgemental tasks.

3. DELPHI CHARACTERISTICS

Two distinct forms of Delphi would either refer to a *conventional Delphi* or a *real-time Delphi*.

The ***conventional Delphi*** (paper-and-pencil version) is characterised by a small monitor team that designs a questionnaire which is sent to a larger respondent group. This monitor team will summarise the results upon receipt of the questionnaire responses and will develop a new

questionnaire for the respondent group based upon the results from the first questionnaire. This form of Delphi characterises combinations of conference procedures and polling procedures which attempt to shift a significant portion of the effort needed for individuals to communicate from the larger respondent group to the smaller monitor team (Linstone & Turoff, 1977:5).

The *real time Delphi* on the other hand would sometimes be called a Delphi conference and the monitor team in this instance would be replaced to a larger degree by a computer which has been programmed to carry out the compilation of the group results. This would have advantages such as less time delays in interpretation and summarising each round of Delphi but it would further require that the characteristics of the communication be very well defined in advance (Linstone & Turoff, 1977:5).

Further character phases applicable to Delphi, whether conventional or real-time, can be summarised as follows:

- Explore the subject – each individual contributes additional information that in his opinion is pertinent to the issue under discussion.
- Reach an understanding of how the group views the issue – an understanding of the terminology used as well as what they mean by relative terms such as importance, desirability and feasibility. In the case of significant disagreement, this disagreement would be explored in the third phase.
- Focus on the underlying reasons for the differences and evaluating them.
- Final evaluation – this occurs when all previously gathered information has been analysed and evaluated.

(Linstone & Turoff, 1977: 6).

4. APPLICATIONS OF THE DELPHI TECHNIQUE

The purposes of Delphis are as varied as the users. Wolmarans and Eksteen (1987: 83) indicate that Delphi has been used with success with strategical planning sessions, future forecasting, planning and development of new products and even the generation of possible performance problems.

Nieuwoudt (1990: 51) makes reference that the “Policy Delphi” is an application of the normal Delphi technique. Normally the traditional Delphi has its focus to reach consensus from a group of homogeneous experts, whilst the Policy Delphi has its task to explore differing balanced views relevant to a problem. A contrasting view to the Policy Delphi as per Murray Turoff (as quoted in Linstone & Turoff, 1977: 84) is that it seeks to generate the strongest possible opposing views on the potential resolutions of a major policy issue. Turoff’s views are that a policy issue is one for which there are no experts, only informed advocates or referees.

Broad base applications of Delphi can also be found in Government Planning, Business and Industry and carried on as integral parts of planning projects or as staff work of a proprietary nature. The Delphi method, has furthermore, been applied extensively in the medical area and also found it’s way into academe (www.iit.edu/~it/delphi/html).

Linstone & Turoff, (1977: 4), list a number of Delphi application areas that have already been developed, namely:

- Gather current and historical data not accurately known or available.
- Examine the significance of historical events.
- Evaluate possible budget allocations.
- Explore urban and regional planning options.

- Plan university campus and curriculum development.
- Putt together the structure of a model.
- Delineate the pros and cons associated with potential policy options.
- Develop casual relationships in complex economic or social phenomena.
- Distinguish and clarifying real and perceived human motivations.
- Explore priorities of personal values, social goals.

The appropriateness of the Delphi application would thus be relevant to the particular circumstances surrounding the necessarily associated group communication process.

5. THE DELPHI PROCESS

The Delphi Technique refers to a method for the systematic solicitation and collation of judgements on a particular topic through a set of carefully designed sequential questionnaires interspersed with summarised information and feedback of opinions derived from earlier responses.

Delphi respondents are typically anonymous to one another and are physically distant and do not meet face to face with one another relating the topic under study. However, in the Delphi process all communication between respondents occur via written questionnaires and feedback reports from the monitoring “team” whilst in this investigation there will be instances of direct communication between the individual respondents and the researcher.

Delphi is therefore, essentially a series of questionnaires. The first questionnaire asks individuals to respond to a broad question. Each

subsequent questionnaire is built upon responses to the preceding questionnaire. The process stops when consensus has been reached among participants or when sufficient information exchange has been obtained (Delbecq, et al, 1975: 83) - also refer to the summary on the Delphi Method by (<http://www.osat.umich.edu/delphi2.html>.)

The Delphi process, as per the model of Delbecq, et al, (1975: 86 – 105) can be described in the following steps:

- 1) Develop the Delphi question – if respondents do not understand the initial broad question which is the focus of the Delphi technique, they may answer inappropriately.
- 2) Select and contact respondents – the respondents should feel personally involved and have pertinent information to share.
- 3) Select sample size – it was the intention of the researcher in this specific study to have a sample size of at least 60 respondents (taken from a specific financial industry environment). Previous experience, according to Delbecq, et al, (1975: 89) indicates that few new ideas are generated within a homogeneous group once the size exceeds thirty well-chosen participants. (Thus the principle of purposive sampling applies to this study as the advantages of such sampling is that the researcher used her research skills and prior knowledge to choose respondents).
- 4) Develop Questionnaire #1 and test – the first questionnaire allows participants to write responses to a broad problem.
- 5) Analysis of Questionnaire # 1 – this analysis will result in a summary list of items identified and comments made.

- 6) Develop Questionnaire # 2 and test – this questionnaire should accomplish four things:
 - It should be easy to identify and understand the items taken from questionnaire 1
 - It should be easy to add comments of agreement, disagreement or clarification
 - It should have clear and simple voting instructions
 - It should be short enough to complete in twenty to thirty minutes.
- 7) Analysis of Questionnaire #2 – here the researcher will tally votes for items and summarise comments made about the items in a form that is both thought provoking and easy to understand.
- 8) Develop Questionnaire # 3 and test – the third and final questionnaire permits the participants to review prior responses and express their individual judgments as to the importance of each item. The benefits are that it provides closure for the study; it suggests areas where diversity of judgments exists (but allows for the aggregation of judgments) and it provides guidelines for future research and planning.
- 9) Analysis of Questionnaire # 3 – this will follow the same procedure of analysis as per questionnaire 2.
- 10) Prepare the final report – the final report will summarize the goals and the process as well as the results.

It should be noted that for the purpose of this study only 2 questionnaires were utilised. The first consisting of some broad based questions and the second towards close-ended questions covering a broad spectrum of information required. A third questionnaire was not used as there were no real need for further clarification.

A similar model developed as per *Figure 6* illustrates the process as follows:

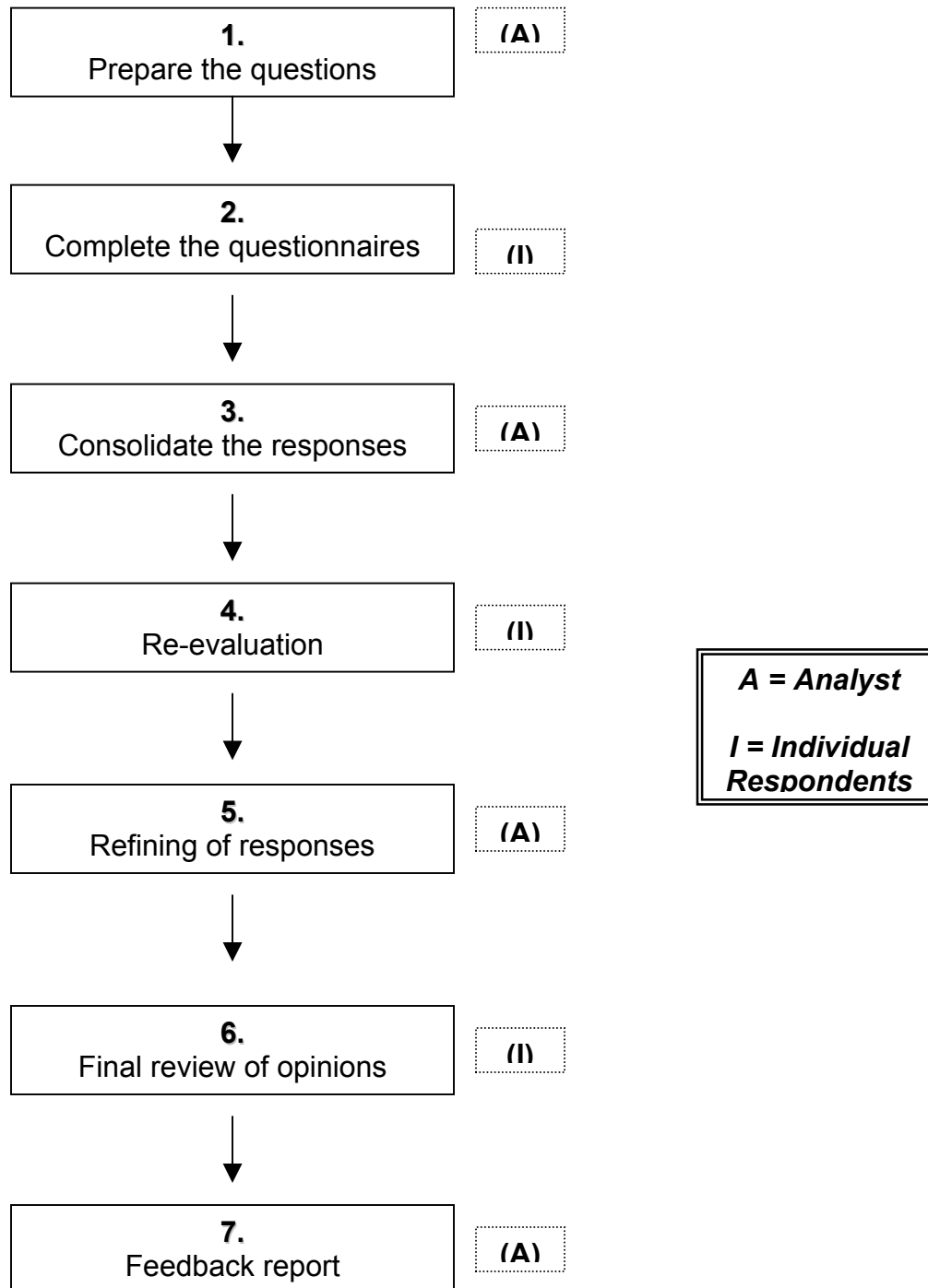


Figure 6. The Delphi Procedure - Wolmarans, et al, (1987:84).

6. DELPHI LIMITATIONS

According to Delbecq, et al, (1975:84-85) Delphi should not be used when time is limited. The three critical conditions necessary to complete a successful Delphi are:

- adequate time – most Delphi studies take more than a month to implement and as a rule of thumb the minimal required time is about 45 days.
- participant skill in written communication – Delphi should likewise not be used with groups that have difficulty in reading or in expressing themselves in written communication due to the fact that the entire process is built on questionnaires that have to be completed by the participant and no source of reference is available during the completion of such a questionnaire.
- lastly high participant motivation – the quality of the responses is influenced by the interest and commitment of the participants.

Linstone & Turoff, (1977: 6 – 7) refers to some common reasons for the failure of Delphi. Issues such as imposing monitor views and preconceptions of a problem upon the respondent group, poor techniques of summarizing and presenting the group responses, ignoring and not exploring disagreements and the underestimation of the demanding nature of Delphi.

Shortcomings and problem areas of Delphi have also been discussed by Green, (1981: 18) when he makes mention of the impact that the monitor team and the choice of respondents may have on the results. It may be that the monitor team is unable, during the first round of questionnaires, to accurately reduce the responses to generic statements. The monitor team may push down their own views on the respondents by way of incorrect interpretations or wording going forward to the next round of

questionnaires. The respondents, on the other hand, may well misinterpret or misunderstand the scales of value during the next following rounds.

Characteristics of the Delphi process which inhibits the decision-making performance as summarised by Delbecq, et al, (1975: 35), are:

- The lack of opportunity for social-emotional rewards in problem solving leads to a feeling of detachment from the problem-solving effort.
- The lack of opportunity for verbal clarification or comment on the feedback report creates communication and interpretation difficulties among respondents.
- Conflicting or incompatible ideas on the feedback report are sometimes handled by adding the votes of group respondents thus leading to the fact that conflicts are not resolved.

It was noted in this study that there were a large number of participants who did not respond to the questionnaires as they felt that the research had taken place, long after the impact had had taken effect . Another aspect was that in an already isolated environment the lack of personal interaction worsened the sense of detachment as Delbecq's observations mentioned.

7. RESEARCH COMPOSITION

The very first step in survey research (this is after the survey issues have been defined) is to identify the population also called the universe (the total group of people to be studied) (Popenoe, 1983: 35).

Therefore, as previously indicated in chapter 1 and this chapter, the universe that was used for this specific research topic was a selection of employees (purposive sampling) based in one of the major financial

institutions in South Africa that was exposed to a shift from institutional to virtual employment during a restructuring process, reaching its peak towards the latter part of 1998 into the first quarter of 1999.

The sample, however, has been carefully selected to represent the majority of the employees who went through this transition and who would most likely be positive toward partaking in this type of research.

As already discussed in depth, the instrument that was used were two sets of questionnaires developed on the principles of Delphi and both these questionnaires were self-designed instruments constructed by the researcher to gather specific information. Whilst the first questionnaire (attached as annexure B) requested the participants to write in their own words some of their experiences relating to specific issues relevant to the transition of offices and other factors relevant thereto, the second questionnaire (attached as annexure D) was carefully designed to accommodate most issues raised in questionnaire 1 and to further rank so of the issues under research.

The measurement process is an integral part of research. Brilliant theories and research studies that are perfectly constructed, will be a failure if adequate measurement of the concepts can not be performed. Generally, measurement entails the assignment of numbers to concepts or variables. Measurement can be defined as the process of determining the value or level, either qualitative or quantitative of a particular attribute for a particular unit of analysis (Bailey, 1982: 61).

Stevens (1951) constructed a widely adopted classification of levels of measurement in which he speaks of nominal measurement, ordinal measurement, interval measurement and ratio measurement. In Chapter 5 details follow relating to the measurements used in this study.

The entire process of obtaining the data was done by means of electronic communication, therefore the e-mail facility to distribute the two sets of questionnaires to the respondents was used. This way it made the feedback process easier as the respondents could simply return their inputs upon completion of the questionnaire. The respondents did however, also have an alternative option to return the questionnaires by means of a hard copy being faxed to the researcher. Both the questionnaires were sent under cover of a letter of introduction. These e-mail formatted letters of introduction are respectively attached as annexure A (that introduced questionnaire 1) and annexure C (introducing questionnaire 2).

A total of 61 questionnaires were distributed in both instances. The response rate on questionnaire 1 was 31 (51%) and the response rate on questionnaire 2 were 38 (62%). It should be noted that in the case of questionnaire 1, four of the responses obtained were by means of an interview conducted by the researcher. Kerlinger (1973: 414) indicates that a response of 50% to 60% could be expected from a questionnaire mailed to respondents and as such the number of responses received were accepted as normal.

8. SUMMARY

To accomplish this “structured way of communication”, there should be: some feedback of individual contributions of information and knowledge shared; assessment of the views or the judgement of the respondent group; opportunities for individuals to revise the views; and some degree of anonymity for the individual responses.

While the written word allows for emotional content, Delphi may tend to minimise feelings but at the same time can be used to aggregate judgements where people are hostile towards one another, or where personality styles would be distracting in a face-to-face setting.

Therefore, as the study progresses the assumptions become more explicit. The meaning that surface is tested for thoroughness stemming from the assumptions and its validity. The process comprises of the gathering, analysis and representation of data and to finally conclude and enable recommendation sourced from the research.

It permits to harness the knowledge, expertise and abilities of an entire group of disparate people- each with unique perspectives and knowledge whether from a marketing, sales, engineering, production, customer service and/or purchasing background.

Previous studies by Basu and Schroeder report that a Delphi forecasting, consisting of three rounds using 23 key organisation members, when compared against actual sales for the first two years, error of 3 – 4% were reported for Delphi, 10 – 15% for the quantitative methods, and of approximately 20% for the previous used unstructured, subjective forecasts (<http://www.iit.edu/-it/delphi.html>).

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS PRESENTATION

In previous chapters discussion referred to literature and related studies or surveys conducted in fields that have relevance to the topic and the impacting factors under research. In presenting the results relevant to this investigation specifically, this chapter will not only reflect on the statistical analysis of questionnaire two (2) but will also deal with some of the comments retrieved from questionnaire one (1) with great prudence.

1. UNRAVELLING QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Since the initiation stages of this study it was decided (by the researcher) to limit the research to two main streams of factors, with a third dimension, which possibly could have had an impact on the transition from institutional to virtual employment.

In *Figure 7*, illustration is presented relevant to the interplay of the selected main stream factors that were explored in this study.

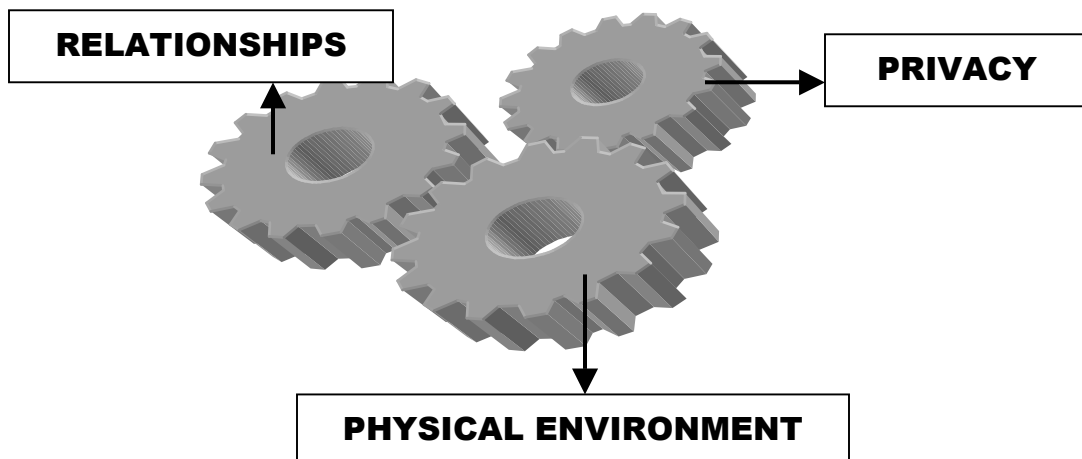


Figure 7. *Main Stream Factor Interplay*

The illustration in figure 7 also intends to symbolise the interdependency of the factors. A change in the one ultimately have an influence on a motion or change in the other.

In terms of the Delphi technique, the first questionnaire only consisted of open-ended questions. The respondents had an opportunity to share their views as well as their real life experiences. Comments were made and is presented here in a summary format:

Table 1. Results of first questionnaire (part a)

Physical Environment	Responses / Comments
	➤ Children do not understand that parent has to work from home
	➤ Clients call unannounced or without an appointment
	➤ Parking for clients is a problem, especially if rest of the family needs to use the driveway and they are parked in.
	➤ Work problems become family problems
	➤ Work longer and irregular hours
	➤ Some clients have a tendency to use the business call as a social visit
	➤ Sharing facilities / rooms with family as an office area and therefore privacy suffers
	➤ When on sick leave – still works as there is no one to do one’s work or clients arrives as there is someone home
	➤ Noise levels from the domestic environment is disruptive and cause frustration
	➤ Family find it difficult not to interfere as they see the respondents and therefore demand attention

Table 1.	(Continues)
	➤ Ideal situation to work independent
	➤ Advantage of being at home with the children
	➤ Security may be a problem
	➤ No Office furniture provided – had to buy own
	➤ Running costs of household increased
	➤ Space is really a problem – sharing “rooms” and no space to place equipment
	➤ Car becomes like a second office as everything is being driven from point ‘a’ to ‘b’
	➤ No more central air-conditioning – either very warm or very cold
	➤ Professional image tarnished

It is evident from the “tone” of the responses obtained that has relevance to the physical environment, that the respondents found it difficult to adjust to their new environment especially so shortly after the transition. The known (office environment) was challenged with the unknown (home office environment). Although this study did not research the emotional impact of the transition it was evident from some of the responses obtained that the respondents felt deeply affected as a result of the transition specifically relating to the area of the physical environmental changes.

It should be noted that table 1 summarised comments relevant to part ‘a’ of the first questionnaire whilst table 2 summarises some comments relevant to part ‘b’ of the same questionnaire. This first questionnaire is attached for any further reference as annexure “B”.

Table 2. Comments pertaining to questionnaire 1 (part b).

Working Relationships	Responses / Comments
	➤ Telephonic relationships
	➤ Availability may be a problem even if it is mainly electronic communication
	➤ Regular meetings taking place
	➤ Selective listening takes place due to no eye contact and this may cause misunderstanding to giving wrong information
	➤ Most relationships are “distant” and therefore not a personal relationship
	➤ Lack of time causes one to solve problems first before referring them to superiors
	➤ Suddenly all role-players become decision makers and thus causing inconsistencies
	➤ Nobody to share successes or failures – family becomes the sound board
	➤ Isolation in terms of interaction and with regards to general working issues is a major concern
	➤ Limited “knowledge pool” to obtain info from, it can be quite a mission to get the correct answer
	➤ Office environment has to many distractions
	➤ Had to develop new relationships with “new” colleagues
	➤ Self reliance is now the new way of work

The comments from table 2 reflects some of the experiences that the respondents had after the transition took effect. Isolation became a reality for some and for others this transition brought a new dimension to “taking ownership” and becoming more self-reliant.

Taking all these comments (from both part a and b) into consideration led to the development of the second round of questions. However, before presenting the inputs obtained relevant to questionnaire two(2), a brief overview is given in the next section of this chapter to put the statistical issues in perspective.

2. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The actual results of the statistical analysis of the data relevant to the second questionnaire are presented under point /section 3.

Descriptive statistics have been used to record the numerical properties of the various distributions. Descriptive statistics refer to numbers that describe the features of a set of observations viz mean, median, mode, skewness and kurtosis. It is evident from table 23 enclosed as annexure “E” that the mean values revolve around or rather vary between 2 to 3, thus indicating that in most cases the respondents rank the statements as often to seldom and applicable to average. Mean values of five (5), four (4) and one (1) are by far in the minority. The values of the standard error of the mean indicate that generalisations cannot be made to the population at large. The values of the skewness coefficient and the kurtosis imply that the distribution is not normal. The value of the mode indicates the value of the response category that has the largest number of cases. The median refers to the value or scores that exactly divides the ordered frequency distribution into equal halves in the outcome associated with 50th percentile. The median mainly varies between two (2) and three (3).

Correlational statistics were also employed to ascertain significant the relationships, if any, between two variables. The value obtained is called the correlation coefficient. A non-parametric correlation, Kendall’s tau-b

was used in this case as the sample size is small. Variables used are therefore of rank order. Rank order implies observable discrete measures in which each observation is assigned a number from 1 to N to reflect its standing relative to other observations (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, 1988: 499). Scrutinising the questionnaire no questions could be found where positions occupied by an observation with scores ordered from the smallest to the largest (or vice versa) could be found.

Cross tabulation was also calculated to determine the relationship, if any, between discrete variables. A cross tabulation is a tabular display of the joint frequency distribution of two discrete variables that has “r” rows and “c” columns (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, 1988: 491). Lambda, Phi, Cramer’s V, the Contingency Coefficient, the uncertainty coefficient, and Goodman and Kruskal tau (symmetric) were calculated. Lambda is an asymmetric measure of association for non orderable discrete variables based on the prediction of modes (the value of a response category in a frequency distribution that has the largest number of percentage of classes (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, op cit). The phi coefficient refers to a symmetric measure of association for a two (2) by two (2) cross tabulation. The Cramer’s V is a measure of association for discrete variables based on the Chi-Square. It is a variant of the coefficient of contingency. The coefficient of contingency refers to the association of non-orderable discrete variables and is also based on the chi-square.

As regards to Goodman and Kruskal’s tau which is used when a prediction is randomly made in the same proportion as the marginal totals, no significant relationships could be detected. Also, Somer’s d was calculated in those instances where two (2) orderable discrete variables were taken into account, no significant relationships, however, could be detected. The Gamma values (a symmetric measure of association for orderable discrete variables that takes into account only the number of untied pairs) are of significance.

The Chi-square-test (χ^2 -test) of independence was employed to determine significant relationships, if any, between the frequencies in the discrete categories (Siegel, 1956). Frequency distributions are presented by way of frequency tables – refer to part 3 hereunder. A frequency table represents the outcomes of a variable and the number of times each outcome is observed in a sample. The Chi-square test is a test of statistical significance based on a comparison of the observed cell frequencies of a joint contingency table with frequencies that would be expected under the null hypothesis of no relationship (Bohrnstedt & Knoke, 1988: 490). The chi-square is distributed only or approximately only if the number is large (Daniel, 1978). Bohrnstedt & Knoke (1988), view a chi-square distribution as a family of distribution, each of which has different degrees of freedom (df) on which the chi-square test statistic is or should be based. A sample size of at least 30 is adequate provided that none of the expected frequencies is too small (Daniel, 1978: 256). In this case, however, cells have expected frequencies of less than five (5) while the minimum frequency expected should have been, on average, more than five (5). Therefore the chi-square test could not have been performed.

2.1. FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS

These tables are so designed to enable the reader to grasp with minimal effort the information that it is intended to convey (Ferguson, 1981: 24-25). The frequency(ies) of the scores for each category is/are given with the percentage of the scores in the category it represented. The cumulative percentages are also given. Healy (1990: 24) views frequency distributions as tables summarising the distribution of a variable by reporting “the number of cases in each category.” It is a form of the classification and description of numbers, which assists the researcher in interpreting the information obtained and to understand the important

features of data (Ferguson, 1981: 17). The frequency tables presented in this chapter also contain the cumulative percentage frequencies, which are obtained by successively adding the individual percentages. The primary purpose of the cumulative percentage column is to ascertain the percentage of values falling below (or above) a given score or class interval in the distribution of what percentage of values is “greater than” or “lesser than” a specific value (Theron, 1992: 373-374).

3. QUESTIONNAIRE 2 - SAMPLE DISCUSSION

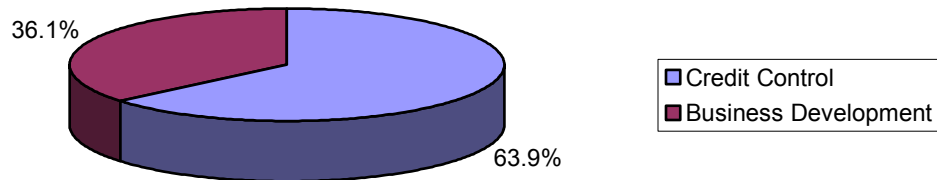
The frequency tables, histograms and pie charts present descriptions of the respective variables. All the variables discussed in these distributions have relevance to the second questionnaire that was sent to the respondents. Annexure “E” also display the details indicating which question has relevance to which variable.

Table 3: Job Level (Q 1)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid: 1.00 (managerial)	12	31,6	33,3	33,3
2.00 (non-managerial)	24	63,2	66,7	100,0
Total	36	94,8	100,0	
Missing System	2	5,2		
Total	38	100,0		

It is evident from Table 3 that 33,3% of the respondents are in managerial positions and 66, 7% of the sample are performing their jobs at a non-managerial level.

Pie Chart 1. Job Type (Q 2)



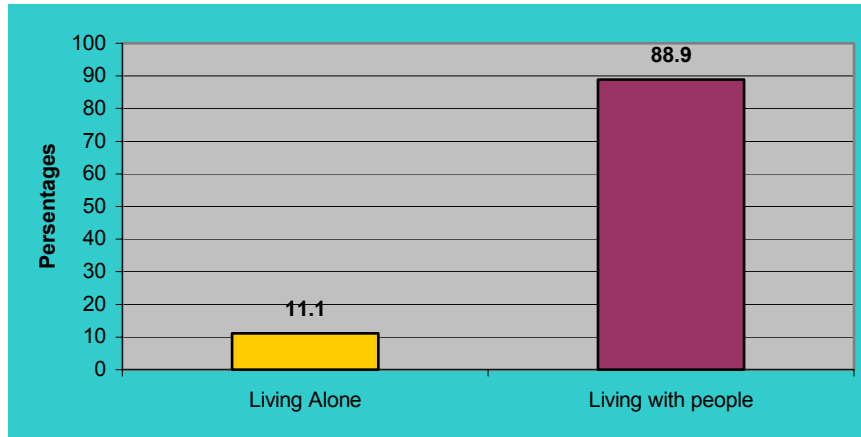
Pie Chart 1 indicates that the majority of the respondents (63,9%) are in the Credit Control environment. Just for clarification purposes, the Credit Control environment has relevance to the employees who are responsible for the collection of monies in the event when the customer/s is/are unable to honour the debt towards the financial institution. Alternatively, the Credit Control Officer’s duty would be to normalise a problematic account with a history of late or no payment. The Business Development environment (36,1%), on the other hand, has relevance to the employees who are responsible to market and sell the products relevant to the specific channel of the financial institution.

Table 4. Children still at home (Q 4)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (yes)	28	73,7	77,8	77,8
2.00 (no)	8	21,1	22,2	100,0
Total	36	94,7	100,0	
Missing System	2	5,3		
Total	38	100,0		

Table 4 indicates the frequency distribution regarding “children still at home living with the parents (respondents)”, who are now operating from home. It is evident from this table that the majority of respondents still have children at home equating to 77,8% of the sample.

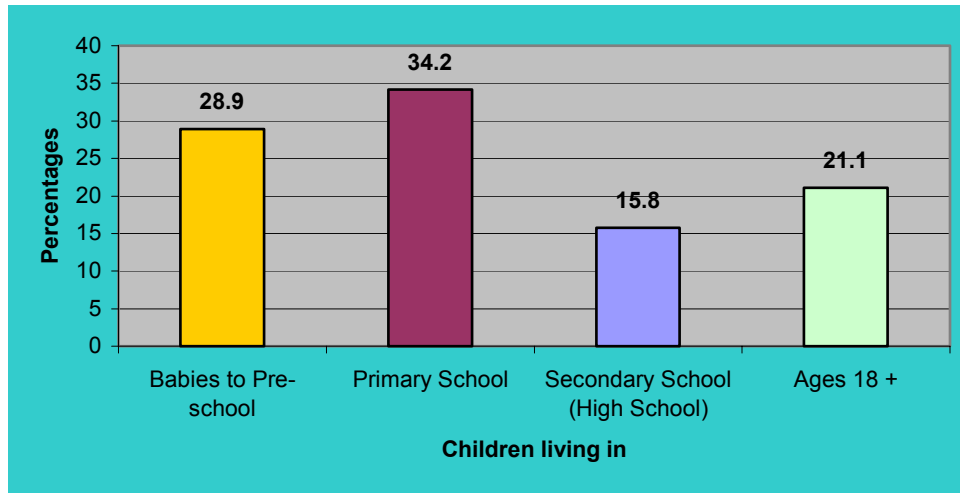
Histogram 1. Living alone or with people (Q 3)



The distribution relevant to variable 4 as per histogram 1 indicates that most respondents (88,9% of the sample) have other people staying with them.

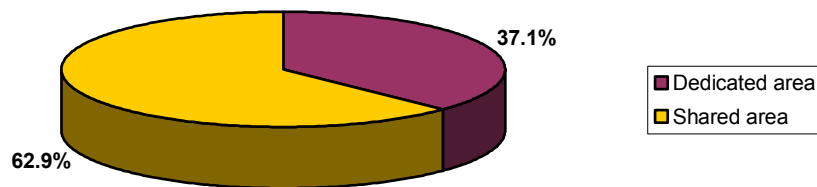
In table 4 we saw the distribution of respondents having children living with them. Question 5 continued to determine the age categories of the children of those respondents who indicated that they do have children living with them. The details obtained is expressed in histogram 2 below.

Histogram 2. Children's ages (Q5)



The data obtained from this analysis of variables 6 to 9 as per question 5, reflected that 28,9% of the respondents have children with ages ranging from babies to pre-school. It continues to indicate that 34,2% of the respondents have children in primary school whilst 15,8% have children in secondary or high school. Lastly 21,1% of the respondents have children ageing 18 and older that is still living at home.

Pie Chart 2. Working area (Q 6)



According to this pie chart, the majority of the respondents (57,9%) had to share an area with the rest of the family when they started to operate from home. Based on the information obtained in Questionnaire 1 it was

indicated that the most common area's that had to be shared with the rest of the family were dining room's, bedrooms or even kitchens.

Table 5. Receiving clients at home (Q 7)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (yes)	18	47,4	51,4	51,4
2.00 (no)	17	44,7	48,6	100,0
Total	35	92,1	100,0	
Missing System	3	7,9		
Total	38	100,0		

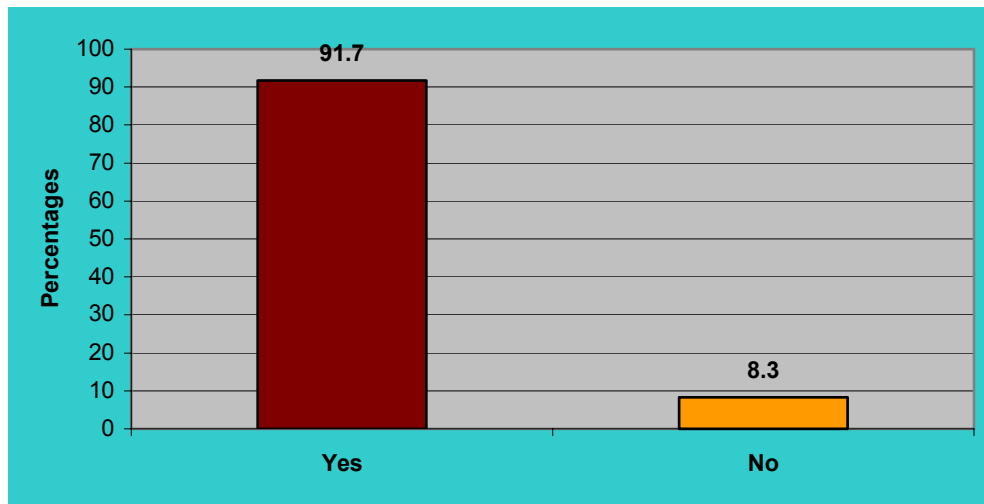
According to table 5, 18 respondents (51,4% of the sample) indicated that they receive clients at home. It must be noted that due to the inherent nature of the job or job requirements, the employees operating in the Business Development environment are more likely to receive clients at home than in the case of Credit Control staff.

Exploring in greater depth, question 8 called upon the respondents to rank, four (4) variables given, from what they perceive to constitute or present categories best described from “*most often*” to “*very seldom*”. Detailed analysis of these variables reflect the following:

- a) ***Clients call unannounced:*** 18,4% of the respondents felt that clients do *most often* call unannounced whilst 10,5% both feel that clients call *often*, and *very seldom* unannounced.
- b) ***Clients view the home as a place to interact socially and expect of you to be sociable:*** according to the sample, 13,2% of the respondents are of the opinion that clients view the home to be a sociable place whilst 10,5% are of the opinion that clients very seldom take this view.

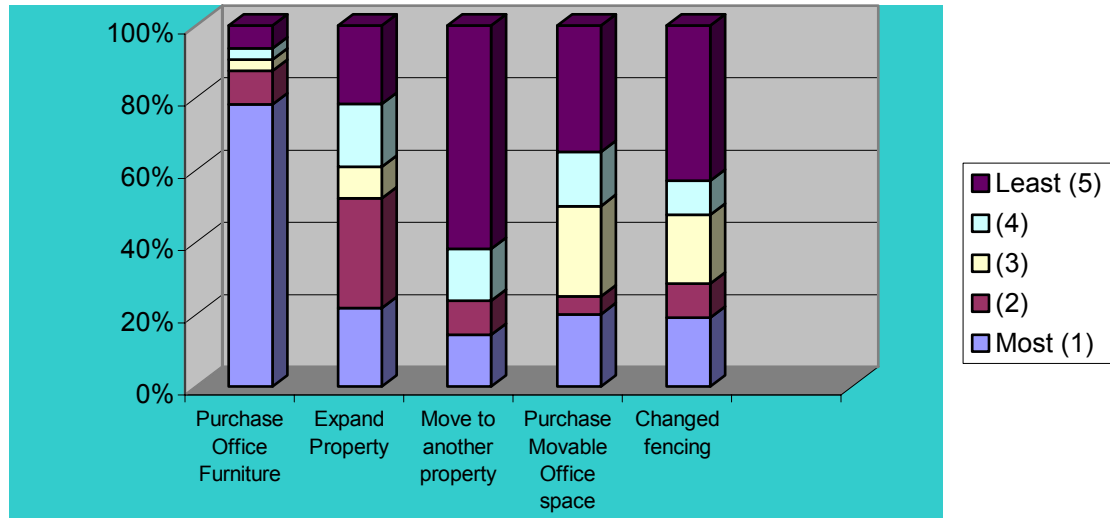
- c) ***Clients call on your privacy wanting to use a bathroom:*** the respondents from the sample indicated that in 80% of the instances clients *seldom or very seldom* would call on your privacy in this regard.
- d) ***Clients' children explore your home while you have to attend to the client's needs:*** according to the analysis of this variable, only 5,3% of the respondents were inclined to think that this happens *most often* whilst 21,1% of the respondents are of the opinion that clients' children *very seldom* explore the home.

Histogram 3. Incurring costs (Q 9)



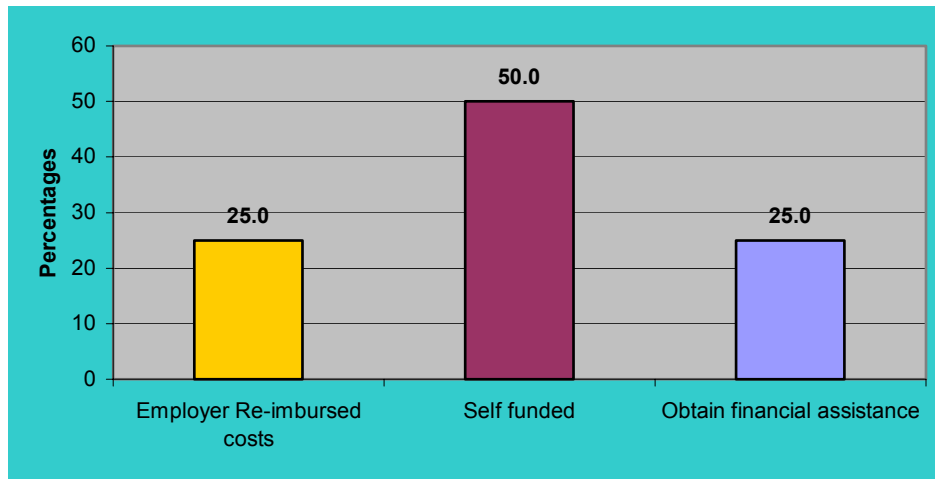
Based on the information obtained as illustrated in histogram 2, the majority of the respondents (91,7%) indicated that they had to incur additional costs when they moved their office to their homes. In some instances respondents elaborated on the type of costs they had to incur when they were granted an opportunity to comment and support their views with examples in questionnaire 1 already.

Histogram 4. Nature of costs incurred (Q 10)



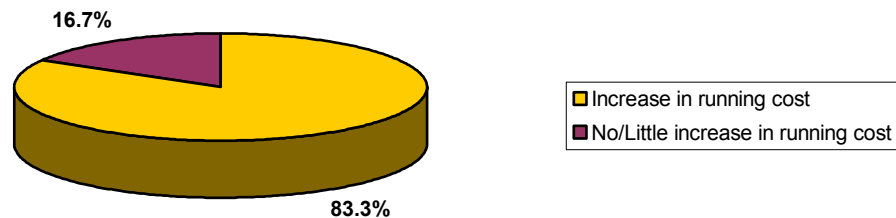
According to *histogram 4*, it shows in **column 1** that 78,1% of the respondents spent additional costs on purchasing office or alike furniture. It is evident from **column 2** that 52,1% of the respondents indicated that expanding their property to accommodate the office were *most applicable* or *applicable*. **Column 3** shows that the majority (61,9%) of the respondents did not have to purchased or moved to another property to accommodate the new office needs. However, 23,8% of the respondent had to move property indicating *most applicable* and *applicable*. According to **column 4** there is nearly an equal distribution between the categories *most applicable* (1) to *least applicable* (5) as regards additional expenses incurred to purchase moveable office space. However, the majority of respondents felt that it was not necessary or applicable to them to acquire movable office space such as a Wendy house (normally a prefabricated wooden structure). As is evident from **column 5**, 42,9% of the sample regarded additional expenses incurred relevant to fencing as least applicable whilst 19% of the respondents indicated that it was most applicable to them.

Histogram 5. Financial assistance (Q 11)



According to this histogram, of those respondents who in fact incurred additional expenses, 50% self-funded their expenses whilst another 25% had to obtain financial assistance i.e. bond, overdraft or loan.

Pie Chart 3. Running Costs (Q 12)



Pie Chart 3 refers to increases in the running costs at home deriving from the office. It is evident that 83,3 % of the respondents experience an increase in the running costs at home with only a small minority having the opposite experience.

Detailed analysis relating to **question 13** gives a breakdown of how these expenses or running costs are incurred. The respondents indicated that based on experience in 73,9% of the instances it is *least applicable* to offer refreshments to clients, 61,3% indicated that the *most applicable* source of running costs are due to higher electricity usage. Additional costs deriving from domestic and / or gardening maintenance is seen as average importance, however, the categories of *most applicable* and *average applicable* contributes 66,7% to the increase in the running costs at home.

Table 6. Working Hours (Q 14.a)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (most applicable)	22	57,9	64,7	64,7
2.00 (applicable)	8	21,1	23,5	88,2
3.00 (less applicable)	3	7,9	8,8	97,1
4.00 (least applicable)	1	2,6	2,9	100,0
Total	34	89,5	100,0	
Missing System	4	10,5		
Total	38	100,0		

According to table 6, 64,7% of the sample indicated that working longer hours is *most applicable (Category 1)* to the change in working hours. Only 2,9 % of them considers it as *least applicable*. This finding thus proves hypothesis 2.

Table 7. Working over week-ends and Public Holidays (Q 14.b)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	8	21,1	23,5	23,5
	(most applicable)				
	2.00	15	39,5	44,1	67,6
	(applicable)				
	3.00	4	10,5	11,8	79,4
	(less applicable)				
	4.00	7	18,4	20,6	100,0
	(least applicable)				
Total		34	89,5	100,0	
Missing System		4	10,5		
Total		38	100,0		

This table shows that 44,1% of the sample see the working over week-ends and public holidays as of importance to the change in their working hours. The categories of *most applicable* and *quite applicable* contribute 67,6% to the appreciation of work over week-ends. This further supports hypothesis 2.

Table 8. Working less hours (Q 14.c)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	2,6	3,4	3,4
	(most applicable)				
	2.00	1	2,6	3,4	6,9
	(applicable)				
	3.00	1	2,6	3,4	10,3
	(less applicable)				
	4.00	26	68,4	89,7	100,0
	(least applicable)				
Total		29	76,3	100,0	

Table 8	(Continues)			
Missing System	9	23,7		
Total	38	100,0		

It is evident from table 7 that 89,7% of the respondents see working less hours as *least important* (Category 4).

Table 9. Managing working hours(Q 14.d)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	10	26,3	32,3	32,3
	(most applicable)				
	2.00	1	2,6	3,2	35,5
	(applicable)				
	3.00	12	31,6	38,7	74,2
	(less applicable)				
	4.00	8	21,1	25,8	100,0
	(least applicable)				
Total		31	81,6	100,0	
Missing System		7	18,4		
Total		38	100,0		

As regards to the management of hours to create time during the week for leisure and family, table 9 shows that 32,3% considers this as most important / applicable (category 1) and 38,7% as of little importance (category 3) to the change in their working hours.

Table 10. Controlling Privacy relating to Customers (Q 15)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	3	7,9	10,3	10,3
(most often)					
	2.00	4	10,5	13,8	24,1
(often)					
	3.00	3	7,9	10,3	34,5
(seldom)					
	4.00	19	50,0	65,5	100,0
(very seldom)					
Total		29	76,3	100,0	
Missing System		9	23,7		
Total		38	100,0		

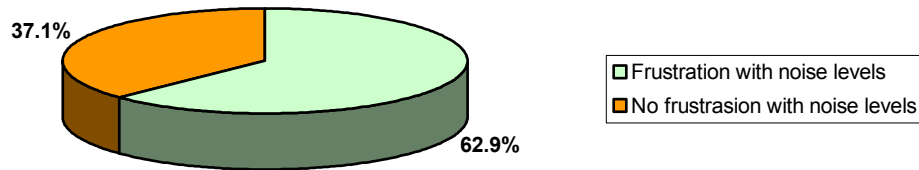
According to table 10, 65,5% of the respondents see not opening of the door when somebody knocks as *very seldom* used to control privacy to the public or clients. However, based on further analysis (not expressed in table 10) the variables indicated that 53,3% of the respondents do *most often* to *often* switch their cell phones off as a measure of controlling privacy whilst 46,7% *very seldom* do switch their phones off. It was also noted that 63,6% of the respondents *seldom* or *very seldom* exercise no control at all. Supporting the above it is also evident that 65,5% of the respondents do not or *very seldom*, let the family to answer or screen calls or visits.

Table 11. *Managing personal privacy (Q 16)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	11	28,9	34,4	34,4
(most often)					
	2.00	2	5,3	6,3	40,6
(often)					
	3.00	7	18,4	21,9	62,5
(seldom)					
	4.00	12	31,6	37,5	100,0
(very seldom)					
Total		32	84,2	100,0	
Missing System		6	15,8		
Total		38	100,0		

It is evident from table 11 that 34,4% of the respondents *most often* let the family needs take preference. Further analysis of the variables (not listed in table 11) indicated that 44,1% of the respondents would often work odd hours in order not to interfere with family life. Becoming reserved as an indicator of control over ones personal privacy has borne little fruit as the responses to this came out fairly equally. Only 21,1% of the respondents indicated that they most often ignore the family and concentrate on what has to be done. In opposition to this, 34,2% indicated that they very seldom ignore the family. Taking all the above into consideration, it could be argued that it is more likely for people working virtually from home to let the family needs take preference and therefore “offer” personal sacrifices in terms of working odd hours in order to manage or limit conflict.

Pie Chart 4. Noise Levels (Q 17)



This pie chart shows that the majority of the respondents (62,9% of the sample) (category 1) experience frustrations with noise levels from the domestic environment. According to some of the examples given in questionnaire 1 it would typically relate to children, dogs barking, vacuuming or garden services.

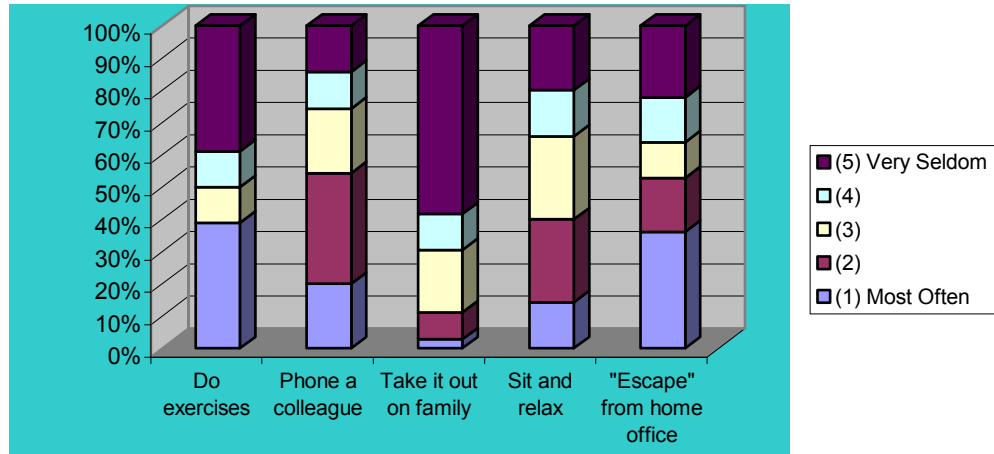
Table 12. Professional Image (Q 18)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (yes)	19	50,0	55,9	55,9
2.00 (no)	15	39,5	44,1	100,0
Total	34	89,5	100,0	
Missing System	4	10,5		
Total	38	100,0		

According to table 12, there is only a marginal difference between those of the opinion that the noise levels have a negative influence on portraying a professional image and those who do not agree with this opinion. Some real life comments passed were that senior or executive office staff has

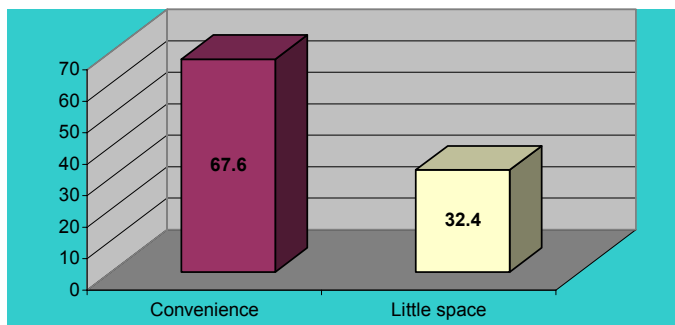
complained that they cannot talk to the virtual representative when there is a small child crying in the background.

Histogram 6. Managing Work Stress (Q 19)



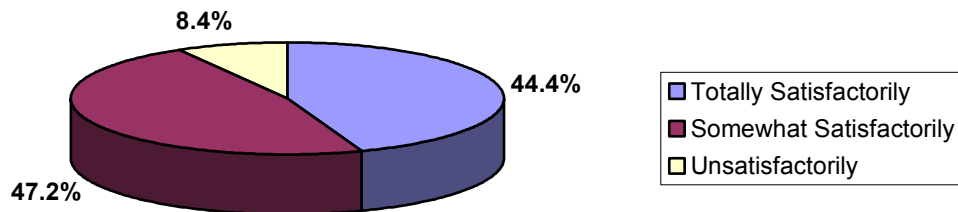
The analysis of the variables relevant to question 19, as illustrated in histogram 6, indicates that exercises to manage stress (38,9%) and “escaping” from the home office (36,1%) are *most often* (columns 1 & 5) applied as ways of managing stress. Column 3 on the other hand, indicates that the majority of the respondents (58,3%) *very seldom* take their stress out on the family

Histogram 7. How are you operating (Q 20)



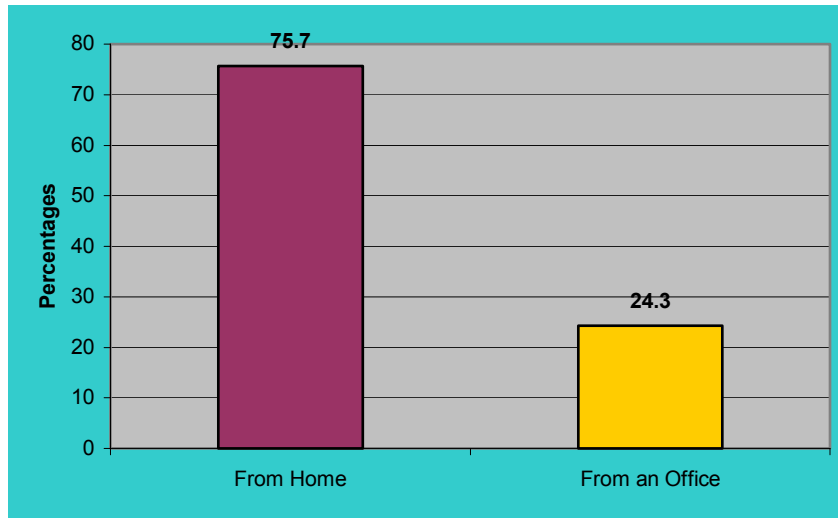
According to histogram 7, the majority of respondents (67,6%) operates in their current office at their convenience and at optimal productivity. Only 32,4% of them indicated that they are cramped with little space but functional in their present office. Not a single respondent concedes the present situation as dysfunctional.

Pie Chart 5. Success (Q 21)



As regards to the perceived success of the respondents in their work at the present situation, Pie chart 5 shows that 91,6% (*Totally satisfactorily* and *satisfactorily*) consider their work to be successful. The minority of 8,4% of the respondents would describe their success in their work as unsatisfactorily.

Histogram 8. Working Environment (Q 22)



Interesting to note from the data in this histogram (8) that the vast majority of the respondents (75,7%) would rather work from home than from an office should they now have a choice. These results do not support hypothesis 1 and therefore hypothesis 1 would be considered to be a null hypothesis. (Null Hypothesis can be described as a statistical hypothesis that one usually expects to reject.)

Table 13. Becoming Operational (Q 23)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (less than a week)	8	21,1	22,2	22,2
2.00 (one to two weeks)	6	15,8	16,7	38,9
3.00 (two to four weeks)	11	28,9	30,6	69,4
4.00 (four weeks and longer)	11	28,9	30,6	100,0
Total	36	94,7	100,0	
Missing System	2	5,3		
Total	38	100,0		

It is evident from table 13 that it took the minority (38,9%) of the respondents up to two weeks to become fully operational when they started to work from home. It took 69,4% two weeks and longer to become operational.

Table 14. *Employer Support (Q 24)*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (yes)	13	34,2	37,1	37,1
2.00 (no)	22	57,9	62,9	100,0
Total	35	92,1	100,0	
Missing System	3	7,9		
Total	38	100,0		

According to this table (14), in 13 of the cases (37,1%) the employer offered support to set up the home office and in 62,9% of the cases the respondents had to set up themselves. From further data analysis retrieved from **question number 25**, 28,9% of the respondent received assistance from technical staff. It should be stated that 57,9% of the sample did not respond to this question.

Analysis relevant to **question 26** enquiring on how the respondents obtain office related stationary the majority (68,8%) indicated that they obtain the stationary by means of ordering it from a central point and have it delivered whilst 31,3% purchase the stationary and then submit a claim.

Responses to **question 27**, determining the process time in the event of a claim being submitted, the majority of the sample (70%) indicated that it takes from a day to a week or two weeks having their claim for costs finalised. In 30% of the cases it takes longer than two weeks.

Question 28 determined whether the respondents have Business Credit Cards or mainly self-fund of which 96,9% of the sample confirmed that they hold business cards for business related expenses.

In the quest to determine the impact on the relationships with superiors since working from home the following results were obtained as illustrated in Tables 15 to 19:

Table 15. Telephonic and Electronic relationship (Q 29.a)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (most applicable)	13	34,2	48,1	48,1
2.00 (applicable)	6	15,8	22,2	70,4
3.00 (somewhat applicable)	2	5,3	7,4	77,8
4.00 (less applicable)	6	15,8	22,2	100,0
5.00 (least applicable)	0	0	0	
Total	27	71,1	100,0	
Missing System	11	28,9		
Total	38	100,0		

According to this table, 48,12% of the respondents mostly have telephone and electronic relationships with their superiors.

Table 16. Relationship remained unchanged (Q 29.b)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	4	10,5	13,3	13,3
	(most applicable)				
	2.00	3	7,9	10,0	23,3
	(applicable)				
	3.00	4	10,5	13,3	36,7
	(somewhat applicable)				
	4.00	1	2,6	3,3	40,0
	(less applicable)				
	5.00	18	47,4	60,0	100,0
	(least applicable)				
Total		30	78,9	100,0	
Missing System		8	21,1		
Total		38	100,0		

This table proves that the *least applicable* of the five variables relevant to Question 29 is that no change in the relationship occurred.

Table 17. Remote – Professional relationship (Q 29.c)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	3	7,9	10,7	10,7
	(most applicable)				
	2.00	6	15,8	21,4	32,1
	(applicable)				
	3.00	12	31,6	42,9	75,0
	(somewhat applicable)				
	4.00	1	2,6	3,6	78,6
	(less applicable)				
	5.00	6	15,8	21,4	100,0
	(least applicable)				
Total		28	73,7	100,0	

Table 17	(continues)			
Missing System	10	26,3		
Total	38	100,0		

According to table 17, 75% of the sample views that the relationship with their superior has elements of “professional distant – not personal”, and therefore falls in the combined category of being applicable.

Table 18. Remote Electronic driven relationship (Q 29 .d)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (most applicable)	12	31,6	44,4	44,4
2.00 (applicable)	1	2,6	3,7	48,1
3.00 (somewhat applicable)	7	18,4	25,9	74,1
4.00 (less applicable)	4	10,5	14,8	88,9
5.00 (least applicable)	3	7,9	11,1	100,0
Total	27	71,1	100,0	
Missing System	11	28,9		
Total	38	100,0		

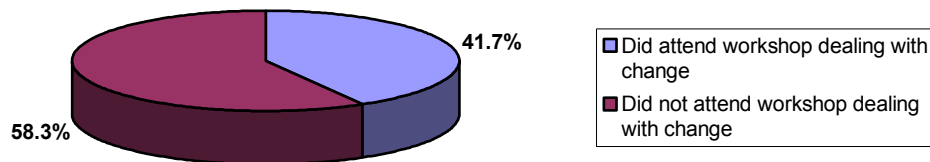
As regards to electronic and telephonic relationships with their superiors and professional distant relationships (not personal) table 18 shows that in 44,4% of the cases it is *most applicable* whilst it is only of *average applicability* to 25,9% of the sample.

Table 19. Trust relationship (Q 29.e)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (most applicable)	8	21,1	27,6	27,6
2.00 (applicable)	6	15,8	20,7	48,3
3.00 (somewhat applicable)	3	7,9	10,3	58,6
4.00 (less applicable)	7	18,4	24,1	82,8
5.00 (least applicable)	5	13,2	17,2	100,0
Total	25	76,3	100,0	
Missing System	9	23,7		
Total	38	100,0		

It is evident from table 19 that there is not much of a variation between the *most applicability* and *least applicability* of trust relationships with their superiors. To only 10,3% it is of *average applicability*.

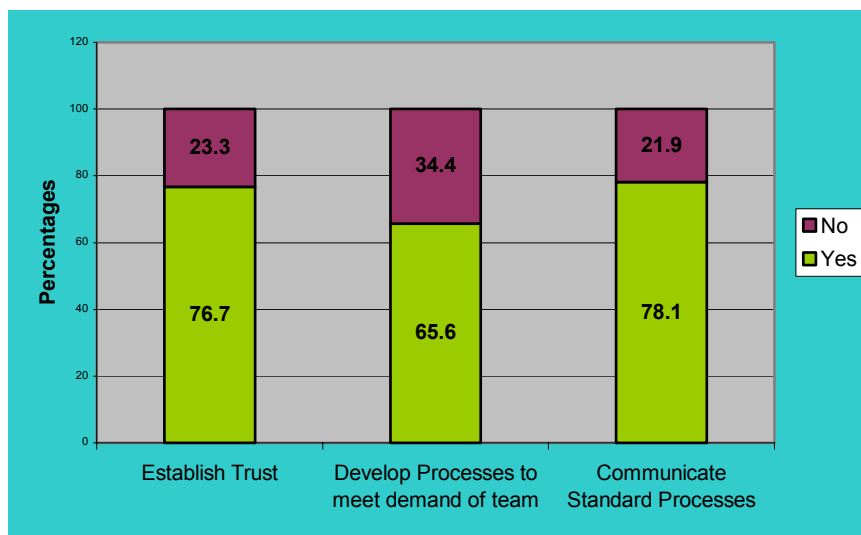
Pie Chart 6. Change Workshops (Q 30)



Pie Chart 6 shows that in the majority of cases, 58,3% of the respondents claimed that they were not invited or granted any opportunities to attend any workshops dealing with change prior to the transition.

Stemming from an affirmative response to question 30, **question 31** endeavoured to determine issues that were addressed during the workshops. Some 43,8% indicated that the issue of virtual teams were addressed but it should be noted that the non response rate to this part of question 31 equated to 22 respondents abstaining. Data obtained regarding the topic of working virtually shows that 21,1% of the respondents indicated that this topic was not covered in the change workshops whilst 18,4% disagrees. Here to, it should be noted that 23 of the respondent abstained from answering. Lastly, determining the issue of “keeping in touch and sustaining motivation” in question 31, 28,9% of the sample indicated that these workshops also addressed this issue with 15,8% of the respondent in disagreement. As was the case relevant to 31(a) and 31(b), 31(c) was no exception with a non-respondent rate of 21 responses equating to 55,3%.

Histogram 9. Team Leader’s Actions (Q 32)



Responding to the question: “During this period of transition did your team leader:

a) Establish trust, b) Develop processes to meet the demands of the team, and c) Communicate Standard Processes”, histogram 9 confirms that 76,7% of the respondents indicated that their team leaders built / established trust. Further analysis of the responses indicated that 65,5% of the sample indicated processes were developed to meet the new demands of the team, whilst 78,1% indicated that standard processes were communicated.

Inputs obtained from **question 33** referring to “how to remain competitive” the majority of the respondents (77,1%) indicated that they work harder and this is the most applicable comment from the choices provided.

It is further the opinion of 86,1% (question 34) of the respondents that they have managed successfully to remain competitive. Question 35 shed some light on the perception of the respondent relevant to their personal growth and development and in this case 45,2% of the sample felt that they are mostly responsible for their own development by means of attending courses as set out by them selves, whilst 55,9% indicated that the least applicable statement is that their superiors are driving it as well as them not attending any courses at all.

Some outgoing reactions were pertinent to the responses received relevant to question 36 (“How would you best describe your working relationship with your superiors”). Upon interpretation of the results 54,8% described the relationships as better as there is little interference but in the same token indicates that this is a distant professional relationship. In support to this 67,7% of the respondent indicated that the least applicable description to the relationship would thus be confused and somewhat irritated relationship.

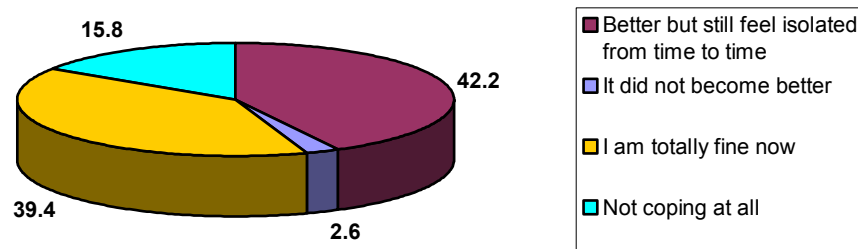
Table 20. *Shift in colleagues (Q 37)*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (yes)	20	52,6	60,6	60,6
2.00 (no)	13	34,2	39,4	100,0
Total	33	86,8	100,0	
Missing System	5	13,2		
Total	38	100,0		

This table reflects the shift on whether there has been a redefinition in who would after the transition considered to be the colleague and as is evident 60,6% of the respondent indicated that there has been a shift. In analysis of the responses relevant to question 38 it became evident that this shift is mainly due to the fact that the interaction changed to other role players according to 62,5% of the sample. There are also some views that this shift is partly due to the fact that there are in the new set-up less interaction with previous colleagues (42,1%).

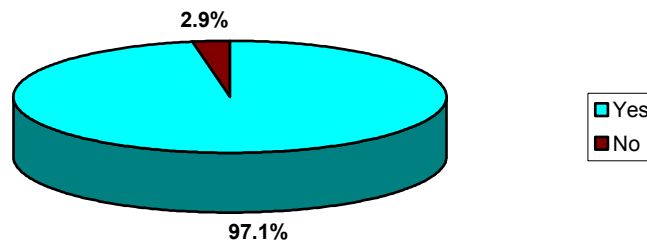
Responses obtained relevant to a sense of isolation (question 39) indicated that in 73,5% of the cases most of the respondents felt or at least had a feeling of isolation after operating from home. In Pie Chart 7 the responses to the question “did this sense of isolation became less intense over time?” are illustrated.

Pie Chart 7. Sense of Isolation (Q 40)



On expanding to this question it was interesting to note that 42,2% of respondents indicated that this sense of isolation became better but they still feel isolated from time to time and a further 39,4% of respondents indicated that they are now totally fine with the concept. It must be noted that 1 respondent indicated that the issue relating to isolation has not become better and another 6 respondents indicated that they are not coping and it became worse. These results confirms observations from previous studies (as per chapter 2) and that it is an individual thing and for each individual the situation would be different. This study, unfortunately, did not determine the reasons to these responses.

Pie Chart 8. Self Reliance (Q 41)



Addressing the issue of self reliance, pie chart 8 reflects that in 97,1% of the cases the respondents become more self reliant after the transition from institutional to virtual employment.

Question 42 posed the following: “With your support infrastructure now being remote, did it impact on your success negatively?” The majority of respondents (70,6%) indicated that it did not have a negative influence on their success. However, of the 29,4% who indicated that it did have a negative impact the majority rated as the *most often* reason being that it takes longer to get what is really needed and also the fact that the respondents in many instances double check everything they receive.

When asked about the perception of the office environment the respondents gave very mediocre rankings. The only ranking that may have some relevance is that 56,7% reacted to the statement that the office is “vibrant, energetic and the place to be” as least descriptive. (This view supports the comments obtained from question 22 leading to a null hypothesis.) Some of the respondents did however, view the office environment as somewhat supportive and interacting as a natural team.

Table 21. Leaving one’s employment (Q 45)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (yes)	18	47,4	51,4	51,4
2.00 (no)	17	44,7	48,6	100,0
Total	35	92,1	100,0	
Missing System	3	7,9		
Total	38	100,0		

The response distribution as is evident from this table, is very much of a much. No significant differences were obtained. It do however, seem to

create the impression that of the nearly 50% of the respondent who did indicate that their views have changed, they their career growth would be most important and second to this “better compensation” as reason for leaving or wanting to leave, whilst “working in an office environment again” would rank least important (once again in support of the null hypothesis).

Responding to **question 47** relating to conflict due to other means of communication, the respondents were of equal stance (50%) regarding a “yes” or “no” answer. The majority of the respondent who stated “yes” in question 47 indicated in **question 48** that the most likely reason for this type of conflict (70,6%) would be due to “high pressures on achieving targets with little back-up support”.

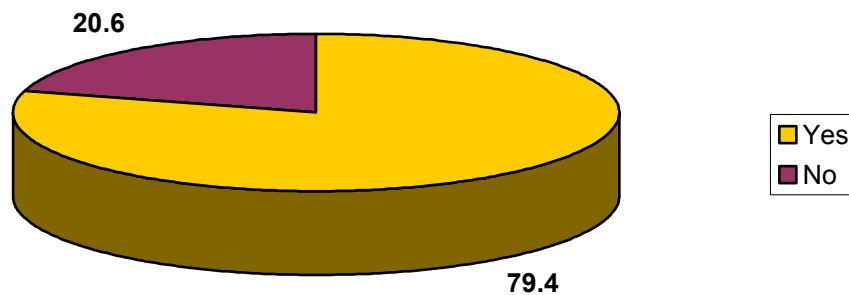
In **question 49** it was indicated by 78,8% of the respondents that when they go on leave, another team member (elsewhere) get to perform their job and therefore implies a situation of doubling up. One could but guess that this has a tremendous impact on working hours and stress levels as it is difficult to perform duties on behalf of another individual with no support for the self and not having easy access to the other persons office.

Table 22. Ranking success (Q 50)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00 (increase by 10%)	2	5,3	6,3	6,3
2.00 (increase 10% to 20%)	10	26,3	31,3	37,5
3.00 (increase 20% to 30%)	8	21,1	25,0	62,5
4.00 (decline by 10%)	9	23,7	28,1	90,6
5.00 (Decline > 10%)	3	7,9	9,4	100,0
Total	32	84,2	100,0	
Missing System	6	15,8		
Total	38	100,0		

In this table it is evident that 71,1% of the respondents considered an increase in success between 10 to 30 +% since working virtually.

Pie Chart 9. Recommending Virtual Employment? (Q51)



Despite all the adjustments that the respondents had to face with the transition it is the view of 79,4% of the sample, as illustrated in pie chart 9,

that they would recommend virtual employment and they support this by indicating the main reason for the recommendation as having the freedom to plan one's own time spent. To those who would not recommend virtual employment, the main reasons indicated are that 1) the sense of isolation, 2) unable to unwind from work as one is confronted with it all the time and in the final instance that it is not a professional environment to deal with clients.

4. SUMMARY

The responses pertaining to the questions that had relevance to privacy indicated that the transition to virtual employment did have an impact on the aspect of privacy. Rooms had to be shared with the rest of the household and this obviously constituted disruptions. As was the case through out the literature overview, this study also gives indications that privacy and the reactions to privacy varies based on the individual's personality and unique characteristics. An undertone depicted was that it seems to be relevant to most instances that the person running / operating a virtual office is making many sacrifices in keeping everybody around them happy, probably this was a mechanism or approach that evolved naturally in order to get family / domestic support. In some of the literature consulted it was stated with exclamation that one of the very first issues to get settled when wanting to work from home, is the fact that there should be support from the family and some new house rules have to be set. Considering that this transition was not a voluntarily independent choice one could possibly argue that some of the ground rules were not followed hence the sacrifices.

The physical environment or lack of available space to operate from has had an impact but this impact did not cause dysfunctional performance. It

surely has hampered performance in the initial stages but this has been overcome by working longer hours to achieve better results.

In terms of relationships, many things can be said. Probably the most important ones have relevance to the aspect that after the transition the employees became more self reliant. With communication means that are “cold” and impersonal (telecommuting and e-mail) and less support from others the only way of surviving has become trusting one self and taking control over the things that one can control directly. Yet again, the most dynamic intervention is choice.

A very interesting notion is the one relevant to perceived achievement. The majority of respondents indicated that there has been an upward trend in their performance and since the transition they have performed from strength to strength.

The cost of the transition has also been looked at. Many respondents indicated that they incurred additional costs due to a number of reason's. It must however, be noted that the cost of travelling did not come into the equation during this study. The reason being that the respondents in this study have a car scheme / company car (with specific allocated private travel), due to the fact that travelling is an inherent job requirement. Therefore the cost of private travel was considered to be marginal.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Organisations are undergoing a fundamental change. In many areas the full extent of this is only starting to become clear. We have been brought up to think about business as a physical entity, with offices that we can visit and people we can talk to. Everything we learn from live and from business teaches us how to manage the physical business. However, it is clear from exploring the virtual world in previous chapters that our world that we are living in is different. This leads us into a new world where new laws and rules are required.

The virtual world is full of opportunities, new markets, new channels to customers and new ways to succeed. For companies and individuals who do not come to terms with this new environment, the world is also full of threats. Overall, the physical business is expensive to run and difficult to change versus the virtual business being expensive to set up, but the unit costs then become marginal and it can accommodate change at a push of a button (Czerniawska & Potter, 1998: 239).

1. OVERVIEW

As indicated in Chapter 1, it was the aim of this study to investigate the factors impacting the people during a transition from institutional employment to that of virtual employment. The hypothesis as set out in chapter 1 was addressed with results being:

H₀: The nature (origin) of transition to virtual employment have no bearing on the acceptance and ownership of the individual subsequently working virtually.

➤ **Null hypothesis (hypothesis accepted)**

In retrospect, a brave executive team took a stance to change, not for the sake of another change but to brand its product's, services and operational capacities as international best practice, thus staying competitive.

In a matter of nine months this transition was planned, researched, possibilities explored, negotiated and implementation took effect. From a comfort zone of stability and the one day being very much like the previous, the foundations of culture were put to the ultimate test and everything and everyone was affected. This transition influenced not only the way things used to be done, but presented a new concept to internal operations as well as utilising staff and their skills. Even the customer base had to get au fait to the new service environment.

Predominantly younger staff, on a non-managerial level had to cope in their homes, be that a 1 bedroom flat, or a dwelling in a township environment. The time has come to face the challenges head on and performance became a very important issue. Success had to be achieved at all costs. The costs were high, privacy was sacrificed, physical space became an issue and most of all came the longer hours due to lack of infrastructure or support in the form of hands. The infrastructure and support now offered were predominantly technology.

Individual performance as well as company performance was driven hard and some may even say it was driven by a fear factor. Performing in one's own home, in one's own way and own time built resilience, a new team spirit (different from the old one) and entrepreneurship. Some respondents indicated that one of the toughest issues that they had to deal with is when an unsatisfactorily performance discussion is conducted in the employee's own bedroom or kitchen. The managers responsible for these performance discussions felt that it is not an appropriate way to deal with

performance issues nor any other related personal issues that may derive as a result of the working environment .

This study considered the inputs given by the respondents relating to the factors impacting the transition. Although no significant relations could be established, the results obtained in this study have relevance to the literature that has been consulted. Issues that are often present in similar situations were addressed in this study and these issues would include subjects such as:

- Are you making time for yourself?
- Helping your family adapt to your home office.
- It takes phenomenal self discipline to start work when you don't feel like it.
- Work place friendships: asset or liability.
- Irregular working hours.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS / PROPOSALS

In South Africa more and more companies are faced with the realities of staying relevant and competitive as measured in the global arena. New technology is consistently developed to iron out any existing problems and risks. The world of telecommunication and electronic communication poses new challenges daily. This could be considered as a journey of changes and transitions This study gives a broad overview on some of the factors impacting the transition from institutional to virtual employment in a financial institution. This transition was inevitable from the employer's perspective as operational costs were far too high and this necessitated a review relating to the operational processes. Needless to say that this transition, at the time, was not the choice of the employees and therefore

challenged each and every employee to adopt and adapt as best and fast / quick to the new operational way of work.

From comments made by some customers and management alike, the negative impact of such a transition is best described as:

- i) Not having / or having limited face to face contact with the service provider.
- ii) The home office is not perceived as a professional environment.

Opposite to the negatives, some of the positives would be:

- i) Technology made it better and faster.
- ii) Partnership relations enhanced and developed.

The data obtained in this study confirmed the hypothesis. Based on this information obtained, possible further studies could be to research the impact, if any, should an employer decide to rather convert some of its operations from virtual to that of institutional, or would it once again be a matter that the unique nature of man is to adapt to the environment?

It became evident that longer and irregular hours are being worked since working virtually. Further information also obtained indicated that respondents became far more self reliant since working virtually. Based on this, future research may be conducted in order to establish at what point will the individuals (operating virtually but for an employer) decide that since they are self reliant and working odd hours, they may well become self-employed and even render an outsourced function on an independent contract basis.

A third topic for further research could be to determine the stance of the employer. What would the employer recommend as best practice relevant

to this type of transition and what would the employer label as problematic areas in such a transition.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure “A”

Dear Colleague

You have been earmarked as an ideal participant and really can make a valuable contribution in the study of "the factors impacting people in transition from institutional (office based) to virtual (home based) employment." Your insights will be most helpful in this regard.

Specifically, we need you to identify and explore on the factors that impacted you when, after the Stannic restructuring at the end of 1998 beginning 1999, your home became your new working environment.

The results will be used as part of the requirements for an academic research project.

I am attaching the first in a series of questionnaires designed to seek your assistance to clarify these issues. Please complete either the Afrikaans or English questionnaire, as attached, and return it to the writer in time for analysis by on later than **17 February 2003**. The responses will be treated as strictly confidential and no responses will be used in an unprocessed format. Therefore your responses will be anonymous.



Afr - Vraelys 1.doc



Eng -

QUESTIONNAIRE 1.doc

Thanking you in anticipation for your inputs and participation.

Kind Regards

Erika Lewis
(012) 351-3690

Annexure “C”

From: Lewis, Erika E
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2003 4:28 PM
To:
Subject: Participating in a research project re: working from home

Dear Colleague

Thank you so much to each and every one of you who made a contribution relating to the first questionnaire that was sent to you. Your inputs have been most valuable and enabled me to develop the next questionnaire.

May I once again call on each one of you to take time, from your already hectic schedules, to complete the enclosed questionnaire.



Questionnaire 2.xls

Your participation and inputs in this round is much needed and I would appreciate it if you could return this to me by no later than **2 April 2003**. You simply have to complete and after completion, forward the document to me or click on the "file" icon and then select the "send to - Mail recipient" message and send it to Lewis, Erika as it reflects on the address book.

Should you wish to clarify any of the questions you are most welcome to contact me on (012) 351-3690 or even fax your respons to me on (012) 351-3685.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Kind regards

Erika Lewis

Annexure “D”

1 Kindly indicate your job level (mark applicable box only)

- a) Managerial
- b) Non-Managerial

2 Kindly indicate your job type (mark applicable box only)

- a) Credit Control
- b) Business Development

3 Are you living alone or do you have anyone living with you? (mark applicable box only)

- a) Living alone
- b) People living with me

4 Do you have children living with you?

- a) Yes
- b) No

5 If Yes @ Nr 4 above, kindly tick applicable boxes below

- a) Children ageing from babies to before school
- b) Primary School
- c) Secondary School (High School)
- d) Ages 18 + but still living with you

6 When you started to operate from home did you have:

- a) A dedicated area to work from?
- b) Shared an area with the rest of your family?

7 Do you receive clients at home?

- a) Yes
- b) No

8 If yes @ Nr 7 above please rank (1 = most often and 4 = very seldom)

- a) Clients call unannounced
- b) Clients view the home as a place to interact socially and expect of you to be sociable
- c) Clients call on your privacy wanting to use a bathroom
- d) Clients children explore your home while you have to attend to the clients needs

9 Did you have to incur any additional costs when you moved office to your home?

- a) Yes
- b) No

10 If yes @ Nr 9 above please rank (1 = Most applicable and 5 = least applicable)

- a) Purchasing office or alike furniture
- b) Expanded property to accommodate office
- c) Purchased / moved to another property to accommodate your new office needs
- d) Purchased movable office space (e.g. Wendy)
- e) Changed fencing

11 If yes @ Nr 9 above - kindly indicate the financial means you used

- a) Employer re-imbursed you for costs
- b) Self - funded
- c) Obtained financial assistance (I.e. bond / overdraft or loan)

12 Where / are there any increases in your running costs at home deriving from your office?

- a) Yes
- b) No

13 If yes @ Nr 12 above - please rank (1 = most applicable and 3 = Least applicable)

- a) Offering clients refreshments
- b) Electricity usage is higher
- c) Additional costs deriving from domestic and / or gardening maintenance

14 Since working from home, has there been a change in your hours of work? (Rank 1 = most applicable and 4 = least applicable)

- a) Working longer hours
- b) Working over week-ends and public holidays
- c) Working less hours
- d) Managing you hours to create time during the week for leisure and family

15 How do you control your privacy relating to the public / clients? (Rank 1 = most often and 4 = very seldom)

- a) Do not open door when someone knocks
- b) Switch off the cell phone
- c) No control at all
- d) Let the family answer or screen calls or visits

16 How do you manage your personal privacy versus the needs of the family? (Rank 1 = most often and 4 = very seldom)

- a) Family needs take preference
- b) Work odd hours not to interfere with family life
- c) Become reserved
- d) Simply ignore family and concentrate on what has to be done

17 Are you experiencing any frustrations with noise levels from the domestic environment? (e.g. barking dogs, domestic vacuuming, children crying etc)

- a) Yes
- b) No

18 In your opinion, do these noise levels have a negative influence on portraying a professional image?

- a) Yes
- b) No

19 How do you manage your work stress? (Rank 1 = Most often and 5 = very seldom)

- a) Do exercises
- b) Phone a colleague
- c) Take it out on the family
- d) Quietly sit and relax by reading or listening to music
- e) "Escape" from the home office to the outdoors

20 In your current office set up - are you operating (Tick applicable statement/s)

- a) at your convenience and at optimal productivity
- b) Cramped with little space but functional
- c) Dysfunctional

21 Your success in your work, would you describe it as:

- a) Totally satisfactorily
- b) Somewhat satisfactorily
- c) Unsatisfactorily

22 Should you have a choice - would you rather work:

- a) From home
- b) From an office

23 When you started working from home how long did it take before you were fully operational?

- a) Less than a week
- b) One to two weeks
- c) Two to four weeks
- d) Four weeks and longer

24 Were any support offered to you setting up your home office by your employer?

- a) Yes
- b) No

25 If yes @ Nr 24 above, in which way did you receive support?

- a) Technical people came to install the equipment and showed me how it works
- b) I was given a help line number to phone
- c) Printed guidelines or manuals were handed to me

26 Currently, if you require any office related stationary how do you obtain it?

- a) Order it from a central point and have it delivered
- b) Buy self & claim back

27 Should you submit a claim for costs, is it being processed:

- a) within a day or two
- b) a week or two
- c) Longer than two weeks

28 Do you have a business credit card that you can use or do you self-fund and claim back?

- a) Business credit card
- b) Self - fund

29 Since working from home, how would you describe your relationship with your superiors?
(rank 1 = most applicable and 5 = least applicable)

- a) Telephonic and Electronic relationship
- b) No change at all from previous office environment
- c) Professional distant relationship - not personal
- d) A & C above
- e) Trust relationship

30 Prior to the transition from an office environment to that of a home environment, were you invited or granted any opportunities to attend any workshops dealing with change?

- a) Yes
- b) No

31 If yes @ Nr 30 above, did any of these workshops addressed issues such as:

- a) Virtual teams - (Please indicate **Yes** or **No** in block)
- b) Working virtually (Please indicate **Yes** or **No** in block)
- c) Keep in touch & sustain motivation (Please indicate **Yes** or **No** in block)

32 During this period of transition did your team leader:

- a) Establish Trust (Indicate **Yes** or **No** in block)
- b) Develop Processes to meet the demands of the team (Indicate **Yes** or **No** in block)
- c) Communicate Standard Processes (Indicate **Yes** or **No** in block)

33 How do you remain competitive? (rank 1 = most applicable and 3 least applicable)

- a) Working harder to meet targets
- b) Get own support from private sources (e.g. family member helping out)
- c) Networking relationships

34 In your opinion, have you managed successfully to remain competitive?

- a) Yes
- b) No

35 How do you manage your personal development and growth? (rank 1 = Most applicable and 3 = Least applicable)

- a) Self development - attending courses as per a planned schedule developed by self
- b) Superiors driving the process - on a needs basis
- c) Not attending any courses

36 How would you best describe your working relationship with your superiors? (Rank 1 = Most applicable and 3 = least applicable)

- a) Better as there is little interference
- b) Distant professional relationship
- c) Confused and somewhat irritated relationship

37 Would you say there was a shift in who you now consider to be your colleagues?

- a) Yes
- b) No

38 If yes @ Nr 37 above, why do you think this change took place? (rank 1 = most likely and 3 = least likely)

- a) Interaction changed to other role players
- b) Less interaction with previous colleagues
- c) Lesser need to interact in general

39 After you started working from home, have you ever sensed a feeling of "it is lonely out here" ?

- a) Yes
- b) No

40 If yes @ Nr 39 above, did this sense of isolation became less intense over time?

- a) Yes, it became better but I still feels isolated from time to time
- b) No it did not become better
- c) Yes, I am now totally fine with the concept
- d) I am not coping at all and it became worse

41 With your colleagues now being remote, did you become more self reliant

- a) Yes
- b) No

42 With your support infrastructure now being remote, did it impact on your success negatively?

- a) Yes
- b) No

43 If yes @ Nr 42 above, in which way did it have a negative influence: (Rank 1 = most often and 4 = very seldom)

- a) I now became a voice asking for assistance and personal favours are minimal.
- b) It now takes longer to get what I really need
- c) I have to rely more on other people's quality of work
- d) I double check everything I receive

44 Kindly rank your current perception of the office environment that you are not part of (1 = Most descriptive and 4 = least descriptive)

- a) Vibrant, Energetic and the place to be
- b) Noisy and filled with distractions
- c) Supportive and a natural team
- d) Meeting and understanding your needs

45 Have your views changed, since working from home, relating to reasons for leaving one's employment?

- a) Yes
- b) No

46 If yes @ Nr 45 above, what would be your main considerations for leaving your current employment? (Rank 1 = Most important and 5 = least important)

- a) Career Growth
- b) Better Compensation
- c) Working in an office again - not being isolated
- d) Becoming part of a team having daily personal interaction
- e) Working in an office environment - not sacrificing privacy & family life

47 Operating virtually requires constant telephonic and electronic communication with all role-players & clients. Would you say that conflict has escalated with this way of communication?

- a) Yes
- b) No

48 If yes @ Nr 47 above, what do you consider to be the main causes? (rank 1 = Most often and 4 = very seldom)

- a) Lack of mutual respect due to distance
- b) Misunderstanding & misinterpretations
- c) Tone of voice and no eye contact
- d) High Pressures on achieving targets with little back-up support

49 When you proceed on leave who become responsible for doing your job? (rank 1 = most often and 4 = very seldom)

- a) Team member (colleague elsewhere)
- b) Support staff in your home
- c) Support staff based elsewhere
- d) Team leader

50 Working virtually, how would you best describe **your** success? (tick applicable box only)

- a) Success increased by 10%
- b) Success increased between 10% and 20%
- c) Success increased between 20% and 30%
- d) Success increased by more than 30%
- e) Success declined by 10%
- f) Success declined by more than 10%

51 Would you recommend virtual employment to anybody asking your advice?

- a) Yes
- b) No

52 If NO @ Nr 51 above, what would you regard as the main reasons? (rank **1** = Biggest Impact and **5** = least impact)

- a) Lack of Privacy
- b) Sense of isolation
- c) To costly
- d) Unable to unwind from work as you are confronted with it all the time
- e) Not a professional environment to deal with clients

53 If Yes @ Nr 51 above, what would you regards as the main reasons? (rank **1** = Biggest advantage and **5** = least advantage)

- a) Comfortable and meeting your needs
- b) betters quality and productivity in your work
- c) Less emotional than to deal with and listen to other's problems
- d) Grants freedom to plan your own time spent
- e) Saving commuting or travelling costs

Annexure “E”

Table 23. Variable Summary

VAR IAB LE	QUESTION NR	MEAN	MEDIAN	MODE	SKEWNESS	KURTOSIS
2	1	1,67	2,00	2,00	-,74	-1,54
3	2	1,36	1,00	1,00	,61	-1,74
4	3	1,89	2,00	2,00	-2,58	4,94
5	4	1,22	1,00	1,00	1,40	-,06
6	5(a)	1,00	1,00	1,00		
7	5(b)	2,00	2,00	2,00		
8	5(c)	3,00	3,00	3,00		
9	5(d)	4,00	4,00	4,00		
10	6	1,63	2,00	2,00	-,56	-1,80
11	7	1,49	1,00	1,00	,06	-2,12
12	8(a)	2,07	2,00	1,00	,80	-1,11
13	8(b)	3,07	3,00	1,00	2,61	8,41
14	8(c)	3,20	3,00	3,00	-,38	-1,12
15	8(d)	3,23	4,00	4,00	-1,27	,15
16	9	1,08	1,00	1,00	3,15	8,37
17	10(a)	1,50	1,00	1,00	2,40	4,82
18	10(b)	2,87	2,00	2,00	,24	-1,49
19	10(c)	4,00	5,00	5,00	-1,25	-,13
20	10(d)	3,40	3,50	5,00	-,47	-1,16
21	10(e)	3,48	4,00	5,00	-,48	-1,36
22	11(a)	2,00	2,00	2,00	,00	1,50
23	11(b)	2,08	2,00	2,00	4,16	20,99
24	11(c)	3,10	3,00	3,00	1,91	6,34
25	12	1,17	1,00	1,00	1,87	1,57
26	13(a)	2,61	3,00	3,00	-1,61	1,13
27	13(b)	1,42	1,00	1,00	,93	-,08
28	13(c)	2,08	2,00	2,00	-,15	-1,26
29	14(a)	1,50	1,00	1,00	1,58	1,99
30	14(b)	2,29	2,00	2,00	,49	-,91
31	14(c)	3,79	4,00	4,00	-3,47	11,92
32	14(d)	2,58	3,00	3,00	-,32	-1,482
33	15(a)	3,31	4,00	4,00	-1,24	,049
34	15(b)	2,63	2,00	4,00	-,08	-1,89
35	15(c)	2,70	3,00	3,00	-,39	-1,29
36	15(d)	3,38	4,00	4,00	-1,35	,58
37	16(a)	2,63	3,00	4,00	-,25	-1,74
38	16(b)	2,53	2,00	2,00	,25	-1,18
39	16(c)	2,41	3,00	1,00	,01	-1,51
40	16(d)	2,74	3,00	4,00	-,32	-1,61
41	17	1,37	1,00	1,00	,56	-1,80
42	18	1,44	1,00	1,00	,25	-2,06
43	19(a)	3,11	3,50	1,00	-,17	-1,85
44	19(b)	2,66	2,00	2,00	,52	-,81
45	19(c)	4,14	5,00	5,00	-1,07	-,01
46	19(d)	3,00	3,00	2,00	,15	-1,11
47	19(e)	2,69	2,00	1,00	,31	-1,55
48	20	1,32	1,00	1,00	,79	-1,47
49	21	1,67	2,00	2,00	1,09	1,77
50	22	1,30	1,00	1,00	2,72	9,26
51	23	2,69	3,00	3,00	-,33	-1,29
52	24	1,63	2,00	2,00	-,56	-1,80

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53	25	1,38	1,00	1,00	1,51	1,58
54	26	1,31	1,00	1,00	,85	-1,37
55	27	1,97	2,00	2,00	,06	-1,45
56	28	1,97	2,00	2,00	-5,66	32
57	29(a)	2,04	2,00	1,00	,74	-1,10
58	29(b)	3,87	5,00	5,00	-,90	-,84
59	29(c)	3,04	3,00	3,00	,29	-,65
60	29(d)	2,44	3,00	1,00	,39	-1,30
61	29(e)	2,83	3,00	1,00	,11	-1,52
62	30	1,58	2,00	2,00	-,35	-1,99
63	31(a)	1,56	2,00	2,00	-,28	-2,22
64	31(b)	1,53	2,00	2,00	-,15	-2,31
65	31(c)	1,35	1,00	1,00	,68	-1,77
66	32(a)	1,23	1,00	1,00	1,33	-,26
67	32(b)	1,38	1,00	1,00	1,16	,49
68	32(c)	1,25	1,00	1,00	1,97	3,37
69	33(a)	1,23	1,00	1,00	1,35	-,19
70	33(b)	2,53	3,00	3,00	,07	1,48
71	33(c)	2,69	2,00	3,00	5,11	27,81
72	34	1,14	1,00	1,00	2,18	2,91
73	35(a)	1,87	2,00	1,00	,27	-1,71
74	35(b)	2,00	2,00	2,00	,00	-,89
75	35(c)	2,37	3,00	3,00	,04	-,17
76	36(a)	1,58	1,00	1,00	,85	-,52
77	36(b)	1,69	2,00	2,00	,48	-,70
78	36(c)	2,58	3,00	3,00	-,26	1,08
79	37	1,39	1,00	1,00	,46	-1,91
80	38(a)	1,69	1,00	1,00	,73	-1,59
81	38(b)	1,68	2,00	2,00	,49	-,57
82	38(c)	2,33	3,00	3,00	-,78	-1,35
83	39	1,29	1,00	1,00	1,56	1,84
84	40(a)	1,00	1,00	1,00		
85	40(b)	3,00	3,00	3,00		
86	40(c)	2,80	3,00	3,00	-2,92	8,39
87	40(d)	3,33	4,00	4,00	-1,73	
88	41	1,03	1,00	1,00	5,92	35
89	42	1,71	2,00	2,00	-,95	-1,18
90	43(a)	3,15	4,00	4,00	-1,14	-,03
91	43(b)	5,08	1,00	1,00	3,55	12,69
92	43(c)	2,08	2,00	1,00	,68	-,76
93	43(d)	2,15	2,00	1,00	,51	-1,55
94	44(a)	3,03	4,00	4,00	-,76	-1,19
95	44(b)	2,55	3,00	1,00	-,11	-1,88
96	44(c)	2,16	2,00	2,00	,65	-,77
97	44(d)	2,38	2,00	1,00	,11	-1,29
98	45	1,49	1,00	1,00	,06	-2,12
99	46(a)	2,50	2,00	1,00	,71	-1,36
100	46(b)	2,47	2,00	2,00	,94	-,61
101	46(c)	3,57	3,50	5,00	-,56	-1,00
102	46(d)	3,53	4,00	4,00	-,78	-,29
103	46(e)	3,36	3,5	5,00	-,44	-1,59
104	47	1,50	1,50	1,00	,00	-2,13
105	48(a)	3,07	3,00	4,00	-,46	-,55
106	48(b)	2,25	2,00	1,00	,32	-1,72
107	48(c)	2,19	2,00	1,00	,38	-,95
108	48(d)	1,59	1,00	1,00	1,68	1,54
109	49(a)	1,42	1,00	1,00	2,18	3,53
110	49(b)	3,89	4,00	4,00	-3,70	17,29
111	49(c)	2,72	3,00	4,00	-,27	-1,22

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112	49(d)	2,33	2,00	1,00	,12	-1,29
113	50	3,03	3,00	2,00	,08	-,88
114	51	1,21	1,00	1,00	1,52	,34
115	52(a)	3,50	3,50	2,00	,00	-2,30
116	52(b)	2,17	2,00	1,00	,33	-2,25
117	52(c)	4,83	5,00	5,00	-2,45	6,00
118	52(d)	1,83	1,50	1,00	1,59	2,55
119	52(e)	2,17	1,50	1,00	1,35	1,24
120	53(a)	2,52	2,00	2,00	,47	-,39
121	53(b)	2,18	2,00	1,00	,77	-,38
122	53(c)	3,19	3,0	5,00	-,14	-1,46
123	53(d)	2,03	2,00	1,00	,90	-,41
124	53(e)	2,81	3,00	1,00	,09	-1,59