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APPENDIX A: LETTER OF REQUEST



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Tel.: 012-420-3074
Fax: 012-420-3438
To:

RE: STUDY ON ROLE IDENTITY AND BURNOUT AMONGST CLIENT SERVICE EMPLOYEES

I am conducting research on the relationship between role identity and burnout amongst client service employees and hereby request permission to use (insert organisation name) as a site for the research. The research forms part of a PhD in Organisational Behaviour at the University of Pretoria and will be conducted in an ethically sound and responsible manner. The purpose of the research, benefits of participation and methodology will be outlined in the paragraphs that follow.

Purpose of the research

Burnout syndrome, characterised by feelings of reduced personal accomplishment, emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation of both clients and co-workers, can prove detrimental to both the individual employee and the organisation. Burnout has been linked to symptoms such as anxiety, depression and diminished levels of self esteem, and withdrawal behaviours such as turnover intention, absenteeism, reduced organisational commitment and a decrease in job performance. Previous research on burnout in client service organisations suggests that the client-employee relationship remains a critical contributing variable to burnout amongst client service employees.

The proposed study will therefore investigate the relationship between role identity and burnout amongst client service employees through the use of a pen and paper based survey conducted amongst client service employees and semi-structured interviews with approximately five selected employees¹.

What are the benefits to the organisation?

The results of both the survey questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews will be made available to (insert organisation name) at an aggregated level. A burnout score indicating the level of burnout (emotional exhaustion, feelings of depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment) will form part of the data produced by the survey. Since high levels of burnout can have a detrimental impact on employee job satisfaction and performance and consequently result in high turnover intention, absenteeism and reduced organisational commitment, an indication of current burnout levels amongst employees will enable (insert organisation name) to react appropriately should burnout levels be high. By combining the data from the survey and the interviews, the research will provide an excellent indication of

- a) how employees perceive themselves in relation to the client and
- b) whether there is a relationship between this perception and burnout

The identity of (insert organisation name) and its employees will remain confidential throughout the dissertation and any future publications that derive there from.

I hereby ask permission to conduct the above-mentioned research at (insert organisation name). As outlined in Appendix A, the research would require that:

- approximately two randomly selected client service employees participate in a voluntary interview of approximately 10 minutes each

¹ For a more detailed explanation of the methodology, please refer to Appendix A attached.

- all client service employees within (insert organisation name) be asked to complete a pen and paper based survey that should take no longer than fifteen minutes to complete
- approximately five client service employees be invited to participate in a forty-five minute semi-structured interview.

In order to fulfil the objectives outlined above, I would need to have access to the names, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of all client service employees. Access to general company documents such as vision, mission, strategic plans and general job descriptions would also prove helpful.

Please advise as to whether you would regard the above arrangements as feasible. Please do not hesitate to contact me at the numbers listed below should you require any additional information regarding the above.

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your kind consideration of my request.

Kind Regards

Carly Steyn (Researcher)

083 543 5794

carly.steyn@gmail.com

Dr. Mias de Klerk (Study leader)

Tel: 011 344 2533

E-mail: Mias.deklerk@sasol.com

Appendix

Research Methodology

In order to address the objectives of the study, use will be made of a pen and paper based survey and approximately five semi-structured interviews. Prior to implementation of the survey, two short interviews of approximately ten minutes each will be conducted with a random sample of two employees. The aim of these interviews will be to elicit a number of adjective pairs describing the nature of client service employee and client. These adjective pairs will be used as items in the questionnaire.

The survey will consist of two sections measuring role identity and burnout and should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. All questions included in the survey questionnaire are derived from validated and established instruments.

Survey respondents will be asked to provide their names when completing the questionnaire and informed that they may be contacted by the researcher and invited to partake in a follow-up interview. Despite this loss of anonymity to the researcher, confidentiality of responses will be guaranteed and respondents will be assured that only the researcher will be able to link their names to their responses. Anonymity and confidentiality of participant towards the employer will be guaranteed. Employees will be reminded that participation in both the survey and the interview is completely voluntary.

Following administration of the questionnaire, approximately five employees will be selected for participation in semi-structured interviews of approximately 45 minutes each. Potential participants will receive an invitation to participate and it will be stressed that participation is voluntary. Participants will also be informed that the researcher will treat all information gathered during the course of the interview as confidential and that their names will in no way be linked to their responses.

All respondents (survey and interview) will be requested to sign informed consent forms protecting their rights as participants in the research.

In order to avoid response bias, respondents will not be informed that the research is concerned with measuring “burnout”. Respondents will instead be informed that the research aims to elicit feedback regarding perceptions of and attitudes towards the client and client relationships.

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, QUESTIONNAIRE AND CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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DEPARTEMENT
MENSLIKE
HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Tel.: 012-420-3074
Fax: 012-420-3574

Q #

Dear respondent

I, Carly Steyn, am conducting a study on the role identity of client service employees and their perceptions of the client service relationship. The research forms part of a doctoral thesis in Organisational Behaviour at the University of Pretoria. The study is supported by the senior management of TNS Research Surveys and your participation would be greatly valued.

Purpose of the survey

This survey forms a component of the research and seeks to elicit responses from client service employees regarding perceptions of and attitudes towards their clients and client service in general. All research executives, account managers and business managers within (insert company name) have been posted a copy of the questionnaire.

Your participation

Although completion of the survey is completely voluntary, your participation in this research will make a huge contribution to the success of the study. It is intended that the results of the research contribute towards our understanding of the pressures and challenges facing client service employees and I would thus like to encourage you to participate.

Confidentiality of participation and responses

The questionnaire will take no longer than twenty minutes to complete and your participation and responses to each of the questions will be completely confidential and will be strictly used for research purposes. You will be asked to complete your name on the questionnaire, and the researcher may contact you via e-mail to participate in a follow-up interview lasting approximately 45 minutes. Your name will therefore only be used for the purpose of follow-up by the researcher, and only the researcher will be able to link your name to your questionnaire. Your name and your specific responses will always be treated as confidential and will under no circumstances be divulged to any other source, especially your employer.

Participation in the follow up interview is completely voluntary, and you may decide to withdraw from the research at any stage without any adverse consequences.

Should you have any questions, concerns or queries relating to the research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Carly Steyn, or her study leader, Dr. Mias de Klerk, at the contact details below.

Carly Steyn (researcher)

Tel: 083 543 5794

E-mail: Carly.steyn@gmail.com

Dr. Mias de Klerk (study leader)

Tel: 011 344 2533

E-mail: Mias.deklerk@sasol.com

If you are willing to participate in the study and complete the survey questionnaire on role identity and client service, please complete the attached consent form, and post it, together with your completed questionnaire, back to the researcher no later than 8 December 2008. You merely need to place your completed questionnaire and consent form in the self-addressed pre-paid envelope provided and post it back to the researcher, Carly Steyn.

Thank you for your time and effort in participating in this study. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

By signing the consent form you are entering into a consent agreement between yourself and the researcher. This agreement protects your rights as a person participating in the research.

- 1) I hereby consent to take part in a research study by participating in a questionnaire on perceptions of the client service role.
- 2) I further state that I am aware that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any adverse consequences.
- 3) I understand that my name and my specific responses will always be treated as confidential and will under no circumstances be divulged to any other source, especially my employer.
- 4) I understand that the data gathered will be confidential and that in the event of publication of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed.

Signature of participant

Date

ROLE IDENTITY AND CLIENT SERVICE QUESTIONNAIRE

Q#

The purpose of this questionnaire is to measure how client service employees feel about their work and their day to day interactions with their clients. For the purposes of this survey, client service employees, like yourself, are defined as people that interact with the client and provide a service to a client or a client organisation on a regular basis. The questionnaire is derived from validated and established measurement instruments and consists of three sections. The first section covers your perceptions of the client and the client service role. The second section covers your perceptions of client interaction in your company, while the last section covers selected biographical and work related information. There are no right and wrong answers to any of the questions. I am purely interested in your personal attitudes and perceptions of client service and client relationships.

Please read and follow all instructions carefully.

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

SECTION 1: Perceptions of the client and the client service role

Each scale on the next page is composed of a pair of adjectives separated by a series of horizontal lines. Each pair has been chosen to represent two kinds of contrasting states. Each one of us and our clients belong somewhere along the line between the two extremes. For instance, since most of us are neither the most competitive nor the least competitive person we know, we may put a cross mark on the line between the two extremes.

Example:

Competitive ___ ___ ___ X ___ ___ ___ Uncompetitive

If, for instance, you regard yourself as a highly competitive person, you may place your cross (X) on one of the lines closer to the word “competitive.”

Competitive ___ X ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ Uncompetitive

If you regard yourself as uncompetitive, you may place your cross on one of the lines closer to the word “uncompetitive.”

Competitive ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ X ___ ___ Uncompetitive

Now, please read each pair of adjectives below and place a cross (x) on the blank space that comes closest to your first impression feeling as to where **client service employees in general** usually fit in. Please note that you are not being asked to describe yourself in this section, but rather where you believe client service employees (employees that provide a service to a client) **in general** fit in. Please make sure that your cross falls on the line and not in the spaces between the lines. There are no right or wrong answers.

Usually, **client service employees** are...

V1	Powerful	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Powerless
V2	Submissive	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Domineering
V3	Helpful	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unhelpful
V4	Appreciated	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unappreciated
V5	Considerate	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Inconsiderate
V6	Weak	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Strong
V7	Nice	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Mean
V8	Aggressive	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Defensive
V9	Restricted	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unrestricted
V10	Understanding	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Not understanding
V11	Superior	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Inferior
V12	Active	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Passive
V13	Respected	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Not respected
V14	Flexible	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Rigid
V15	Important	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unimportant
V16	Patient	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Impatient
V17	Leading	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Following

Now, place a cross (x) on the blank space between each of the adjective pairs below that comes closest to your first impression feeling as to how **you personally** experience **your clients**. Please ensure that your cross falls on the line and not in the spaces between the lines.

In my experience, my **clients** are usually...

V18	Powerful	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Powerless
V19	Submissive	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Domineering
V20	Helpful	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unhelpful
V21	Appreciated	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unappreciated
V22	Considerate	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Inconsiderate
V23	Weak	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Strong
V24	Nice	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Mean
V25	Aggressive	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Defensive
V26	Restricted	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unrestricted
V27	Understanding	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Not understanding
V28	Superior	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Inferior
V29	Active	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Passive
V30	Respected	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Not respected
V31	Flexible	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Rigid
V32	Important	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unimportant
V33	Patient	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Impatient
V34	Leading	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Following

Now, based on your **own personal experience as a client service employee**, place a mark on the blank space between each of the adjective pairs below that comes closest to your first impression feeling as to how **you feel** as a client service employee. Again, please ensure that your cross (X) falls on the line and not in the spaces between the lines.

As a client service employee, I usually am

V35	Powerful	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Powerless
V36	Submissive	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Domineering
V37	Helpful	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unhelpful
V38	Appreciated	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unappreciated
V39	Considerate	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Inconsiderate
V40	Weak	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Strong
V41	Nice	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Mean
V42	Aggressive	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Defensive
V43	Restricted	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unrestricted
V44	Understanding	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Not understanding
V45	Superior	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Inferior
V46	Active	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Passive
V47	Respected	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Not respected
V48	Flexible	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Rigid
V49	Important	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Unimportant
V50	Patient	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Impatient
V51	Leading	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	Following

SECTION 2: CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTION

People have different experiences when working with and interacting with clients. The statements listed below reflect a number of feelings that could be associated with the client service role. Please indicate on the scale provided, how often, if at all, you experience the particular feeling. Indicate your response by circling the appropriate category.

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
V52. I feel emotionally drained from my work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V53. I feel used up at the end of the workday	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V54. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another workday	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V55. I can easily understand how my clients feel about things	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V56. I feel I treat some clients as if they were impersonal objects	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V57. Working with clients all day is really a strain for me	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V58. I deal very effectively with the problems of my clients	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V59. I feel burned out from my work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V60. I feel I am positively influencing my clients through my work	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V61. I've become more callous towards people since I took this job	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V62. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V63. I feel very energetic	0	1	2	3	4	5	6



	Never	A few times a year	Once a month	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
V64. I feel frustrated by my job	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V65. I feel I'm working too hard on my job	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V66. I don't really care what happens to some clients	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V67. Working with clients directly puts too much stress on me	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V68. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my clients	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V69. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my clients	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V70. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V71. I feel like I am at the end of my rope	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V72. In my work, I deal with my client's problems very calmly	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
V73. I feel my clients blame me for some of their problems	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statements listed below:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
V74. My clients are understanding	1	2	3	4	5
V75. I feel that I live up to the expectations of my clients	1	2	3	4	5
V76. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort to assist my clients	1	2	3	4	5
V77. I have power over my clients	1	2	3	4	5
V78. I have built effective relationships with my clients	1	2	3	4	5

Section 3: Biographical and work-related information

The last couple of questions make reference to biographical, lifestyle and work related information and will be used purely for statistical purposes.

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone number: _____

(please note that only the researcher will be able to link your name to your responses. Your name is purely needed so that the researcher can contact you should you be selected to participate in a follow up interview).

V79. Position in organisation: _____

V80. Department: _____

V81. Region: _____

V82. Age (in years): _____

V83. Gender:

Tick the appropriate response

	<i>Please tick</i>
Male	1
Female	2

V84. Are you currently:

Tick the appropriate response

	<i>Please tick</i>
Married	1
Unmarried but cohabiting with a partner	2
Divorced	3
Separated	4
Widowed	5
Single	6

V85. Qualifications (mark highest level attained):

Tick the highest level attained only

	<i>Please tick</i>
Secondary/high school	1
Std. 10 or equivalent	2
Post school certificate/diploma	3
National diploma/national higher diploma	4
Bachelors degree or equivalent	5
Honours degree or equivalent	6
Masters degree or equivalent	7
Doctoral degree or equivalent	8

V86. How long have you been working for this (your current) employer/organisation?

Years: _____; Months: _____

V87. How long have you been working in a client service environment?

Years: _____; Months: _____

V88. How long have you been working in total i.e., since you left school/university?

Years: _____; Months: _____

V89. How many hours do you on average work per week?: _____

V90. How many hours do you officially have to work per week?: _____

For each of the following, indicate how important or unimportant it is in your life by circling the appropriate response. Would you say it is:

	Very important	Rather important	Neither important nor unimportant	Not very important	Not at all important
V91. Family	1	2	3	4	5
V92. Friends	1	2	3	4	5
V93. Religion	1	2	3	4	5
V94. Work	1	2	3	4	5
V95. Service to others	1	2	3	4	5

For each of the following, please indicate (by circling the appropriate response) how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with:

	Not satisfied at all	Not Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	Extremely satisfied	Not applicable
V96. Relationships with your co-workers	1	2	3	4	5	6
V97. Relationships with your supervisors	1	2	3	4	5	6
V98. Relationships with your subordinates (if applicable)	1	2	3	4	5	6
V99. Relationships with your clients	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your job by circling the appropriate response:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
V100. I am willing to work hard to make this organisation successful	1	2	3	4	5
V101. I tell friends this is a great organisation to work for	1	2	3	4	5
V102. I feel very little loyalty towards this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
V103. I am proud to tell others that I work for this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
V104. Deciding to work for this organisation was a mistake	1	2	3	4	5

V105. Population group (for statistical purposes only)

Tick the appropriate response

	Please tick
Black	1
White	2
Coloured	3
Indian	4
Asian	5

Thank you! Your survey is now complete. Please return the survey to the researcher, Carly Steyn, by placing the questionnaire along with your signed consent form in the self-addressed, pre-paid envelope provided, sealing it and posting it. Please note that the survey form goes directly to the researcher's post box, and that only the researcher has access to your questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing the questionnaire. Should you wish to receive feedback regarding the results of the study, please tick the box provided.

Yes, I would like to receive feedback on the results of the study. Please send feedback to:

Name _____

Address _____

No, I do not wish to receive feedback on the results of the study

APPENDIX C: MBI-HSS CHANGED ITEMS

Client service employee survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory HSS	Motivation for change
V46. I feel emotionally drained from my work	I feel emotionally drained from my work	No change
V47. I feel used up at the end of the workday	I feel used up at the end of the workday	No Change
V48. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another workday	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job	No Change
V49. I can easily understand how my <u>clients</u> feel about things	I can easily understand how my <u>recipients</u> feel about things	Replaced “recipients” with “clients”
V50. I feel I treat some <u>clients</u> as if they were impersonal objects	I feel I treat some <u>recipients</u> as if they were impersonal objects	Replaced “recipients” with “clients”
V51. Working with people all day is really a strain for me	Working with people all day is really a strain for me	No change
V52. I deal very effectively with the problems of my <u>clients</u>	I deal very effectively with the problems of my <u>recipients</u>	Replaced “recipients” with “clients”
V53. I feel burned out from my work	I feel burned out from my work	No change
V54. I feel I am positively influencing <u>my clients</u> through my work	I feel I am positively influencing <u>other people’s lives</u> through my work	Replaced “other people’s lives” with “my clients” in order to focus the attention of the respondent on the client and not colleagues or co-workers
V55. I’ve become more callous towards people since I took this job	I’ve become more callous towards people since I took this job	No change
V56. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally	I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally	No change
V57. I feel very energetic	I feel very energetic	No change
V58. I feel frustrated by my job	I feel frustrated by my job	No change
V61. Working with <u>clients</u> directly puts too much stress on me	Working with <u>people</u> directly puts too much stress on me	Replaced “people” with “clients” in order to focus the respondent’s attention on the client and not on colleagues or co-workers
V62. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my <u>clients</u>	I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my <u>recipients</u>	Replaced “recipients” with “clients”
V63. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my <u>clients</u>	I feel exhilarated after working closely with my <u>recipients</u>	Replaced “recipients” with “clients”
V64. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job	I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job	No change



Client service employee survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory HSS	Motivation for change
V66. In my work, I deal with <u>my client's problems</u> very calmly	In my work, I deal with <u>emotional problems</u> very calmly	Replaced "emotional problems" with "my client's problems". Because of the nature of service work conducted by employees in the sample, the word "emotional" was deemed inappropriate.
V67. I feel my <u>clients</u> blame me for some of their problems	I feel <u>recipients</u> blame me for some of their problems	Replaced "recipients" with "clients"

APPENDIX D: ADJECTIVE INTERVIEW INVITATION LETTER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Tel.: 012-420-3074
Fax: 012-420-3438

Dear

My name is Carly Steyn and I am conducting a research study on the role identity of client service employees and their perceptions of the client service relationship in [insert organisation name]. The research forms part of a doctoral thesis in Organisational Behaviour at the University of Pretoria. The study is supported by the senior management of [insert organisation name].

In order to address the objectives of the research, use will be made of an electronic, web-based survey and semi-structured interviews. Prior to the implementation of the survey, however, a couple of ten minute telephonic interviews with a randomly selected sample of client service employees will be conducted. The purpose of these interviews is to elicit perceptions of the nature of the client-service relationship in [insert organisation name] so that an appropriate and relevant questionnaire can be constructed.

Your name has been randomly selected as a possible participant in this ten minute interview. Although participation in this interview is completely voluntary, your participation in this research will make a huge contribution to the success of the study and I would thus like to encourage you to participate. It is intended that the research contribute to our understanding of the issues and challenges facing the client service role. During the interview, you will be asked to describe your role as a client service employee in [insert organisation name] and asked to comment briefly on your daily

interactions with the client and your perceptions thereof. Your name and your specific responses will always be treated as confidential and will under no circumstances be divulged to any other source, especially your employer.

The researcher will contact you telephonically in a couple of days time to find out whether you would be willing to participate in the interview. The researcher will then set up a date and time most convenient to you. Please note that participation in this interview will exclude you from further participation in the electronic web-based survey.

Your time and effort in participating in this research is greatly appreciated.

Kind Regards

Carly Steyn (researcher)

Tel: 083 543 5794

E-mail: Carly.steyn@gmail.com

Dr. Mias de Klerk (study leader)

Tel: 011 344 2533

E-mail: Mias.deklerk@sasol.com

APPENDIX E: ADJECTIVE INTERVIEW INFORMED CONSENT



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Tel.: 012-420-3074
Fax: 012-420-3438

Dear (INSERT RESPONDENT NAME)

Thank you for your willingness to participate in a ten minute telephonic interview. The information derived from the interview will be used to construct a survey questionnaire on role identity and client service interactions that will be administered amongst client service employees in [insert organisation name].

The interview will take no longer than ten minutes and the information you provide during the interview will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. In the event of publication of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the interview at any time without any adverse consequences.

Participation in this interview will exclude you from further participation further components of the research.

You are kindly requested to complete the informed consent form enclosed herein and return it to the researcher using the self-addressed envelope provided.

Should you have any questions, queries or comments regarding this interview, you may contact the researcher, Carly Steyn, or her study leader, Dr. Mias de Klerk, at the contact numbers below.

Thank you for your time and effort in participating in this research.

Kind regards

Carly Steyn (Researcher)

Tel: 083 543 5794

E-Mail: Carly.steyn@gmail.com

Dr. Mias de Klerk (Study leader)

Tel: 011 344 2533

E-mail: Mias.deklerk@sasol.com



INFORMED CONSENT FORM

By signing the consent form you are entering into a consent agreement between yourself and the researcher. This agreement protects your rights as a person participating in the research.

- 5) I hereby consent to take part in research study by participating in a ten minute telephonic interview
- 6) I further state that I am aware that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any adverse consequences.
- 7) I understand that the data gathered will be confidential and that in the event of publication of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed

Signature of participant

Date

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (PARTICIPANTS COPY)

By signing the consent form you are entering into a consent agreement between yourself and the researcher. This agreement protects your rights as a person participating in the research.

- 8) I hereby consent to take part in research study by participating in a ten minute telephonic interview
- 9) I further state that I am aware that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any adverse consequences.
- 10) I understand that the data gathered will be confidential and that in the event of publication of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed

Signature of participant

Date

APPENDIX F: ADJECTIVE PAIR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Adjective pairs generation interview schedule

Duration: 10 Minutes

Organisation name: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Hello, my name is Carly, and as I explained in my e-mail to you, I am conducting research on the role identities of client service employees. The research forms part of a PhD study at the University of Pretoria and is supported by the senior management of [insert organisation name].

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this ten minute interview and for completing the informed consent form. The purpose of this short interview is to gain insight into the nature of client service work in [insert organisation name] so that an appropriate and relevant questionnaire can be constructed and disseminated to your colleagues. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the interview at any time. Your participation in this interview will be treated as confidential, as will your responses to all of the questions. Participation in this interview will, however, exclude you from further participation in any further components of the research. Are you happy to continue?

I am now going to ask you a couple of questions about your work as a client service employee in [insert organisation name]. By client service employee I mean an employee that interacts with clients on a regular and consistent basis.

1. Could you describe your day to day activities in your current position as they relate to client service?

2. As a client service employee within [insert organisation name], what is your primary role in relation to the client?



3. How would you describe the relationships you have built and maintained with your clients up to now?

4. What words would you use to describe your clients? Probe for motivation.

5. What do you like most about being a client service employee? Probe for motivation

6. What do you like least about being a client service employee? Probe for motivation



7. What characteristics would you say make you successful at what you do?
Probe for motivation.

APPENDIX G: SURVEY NOTIFICATION LETTER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Tel.: 012-420-3074

Fax: 012-420-3438

Dear respondent

My name is Carly Steyn and I am conducting a research study on the role identity of client service employees and their perceptions of the client service relationship in [insert organisation name]. The research is supported by the senior management of [insert organisation name] and forms part of a doctoral thesis in Organisational Behaviour at the University of Pretoria.

In a few days time, all client service employees in [insert division/department name] will be mailed survey to complete. The survey forms a component of the research and seeks to elicit responses from client service employees regarding perceptions of and attitudes towards their clients and client service in general.

Although completion of the survey is completely voluntary, your participation in this research will make a huge contribution to the success of the study. It is intended that the study contribute to our understanding of the issues and challenges facing the client service role and I would thus like to encourage you to participate.

Should you have any questions, concerns or queries relating to the research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Carly Steyn, or my study leader, Dr. Mias de Klerk at the numbers below.

Kind Regards

Carly Steyn (researcher)

Tel: 083 543 5794

E-mail: Carly.steyn@gmail.com

Dr. Mias de Klerk (study leader)

Tel: 011 344 2533

E-mail: mias.deklerk@sasol.com

APPENDIX H: FIRST REMINDER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Tel.: 012-420-3074

Fax: 012-420-3574

Dear Participant

You should have recently received a letter and questionnaire relating to client service role identity. As explained in the letter attached to the questionnaire, you have been selected to take part in a research study measuring the role identity of client service employees and related perceptions.

This e-mail is a further request to you to complete the questionnaire and return it to (insert name) by the 8th December 2008. If you did not receive the previous letter and questionnaire or have any questions relating to the study, please contact us at the numbers listed below.

Carly Steyn (Researcher)

083 543 5794

carly.steyn@gmail.com

Dr. Mias de Klerk (Study leader)

Tel: 011 344 2533

E-mail: Mias.deklerk@sasol.com

The success of this study is entirely dependent on your participation. Please assist us by completing the questionnaire. If you have already completed the questionnaire and returned it, we wish to thank you for your participation.

Kind Regards

Carly Steyn (Researcher)

APPENDIX I: SECOND REMINDER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Tel.: 012-420-3074

Fax: 012-420-3574

Dear Participant

You should have recently received a letter and questionnaire relating to client service role identity. As explained in the letter attached to the questionnaire, you have been selected to take part in a research study measuring the role identity of client service employees and related perceptions.

This e-mail is a further request to you to complete the questionnaire and return it to (insert name) by the 8th December 2008. If you did not receive the previous letter and questionnaire or have any questions relating to the study, please contact us at the numbers listed below.

Carly Steyn (Researcher)

083 543 5794

carly.steyn@gmail.com

Dr. Mias de Klerk (Study leader)

Tel: 011 344 2533

E-mail: Mias.deklerk@sasol.com

The success of this study is entirely dependent on your participation. Please assist us by completing the questionnaire. If you have already completed the questionnaire and returned it, we wish to thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX J: FINAL REMINDER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Tel.: 012-420-3074

Fax: 012-420-3574

Please ignore this e-mail if you have already completed the questionnaire on client service role identity.

Dear Participant

In November of last year you were sent a questionnaire measuring your perceptions of the client service role. The response to this questionnaire is, however, still too low for scientific purposes. If you have not had time to complete the questionnaire, we are requesting you to please do so, if at all possible. The questionnaire can be returned to the researcher, Carly Steyn, before the **19th January 2009** using the pre-paid self-addressed envelope provided.

We would very much like to obtain a representative sample since the information gathered by this survey will be valuable to both client service employees and their organisations.

If you have discarded or misplaced the questionnaire and return envelope, please contact Carly Steyn (carly.steyn@gmail.com or steync@cput.ac.za), who will send you a new questionnaire.

Please assist us by completing the questionnaire. The success of the study depends entirely on the number of responses attained.

Yours truly

Carly Steyn (researcher)

Tel: 083 543 5794

E-mail: Carly.steyn@gmail.com

Dr. Mias de Klerk (study leader)

Tel: 011 344 2533

E-mail: Mias.deklerk@sasol.com

APPENDIX K: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Semi-structured interview schedule

Respondent ID _____
Date _____
Location _____
Start time _____

Hello, my name is Carly, and I am the researcher on the project. Thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview. As was mentioned in the consent form that you just signed, all the information you share with me today will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. The interview is being tape recorded purely for purposes of transcription, and once the interview has been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed. No personally identifiable information will be contained in the transcriptions, so no one will be able to link this interview to you personally. During the interview, I will refrain from referring to you by name, so as to ensure anonymity of the transcriptions. The interview should not take longer than 45 minutes, and your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose to leave the interview at any time without any adverse consequences. Your participation is, however, greatly appreciated, since it is hoped that through the results of the study we can gain better insights into the exact nature of client service work and how client service employees feel about their roles. Your perceptions, opinions and experiences as a client service employee will greatly assist us in doing so.

During the next 45 minutes, I will be asking you questions related to your role in the organisation, your relationships with your clients and how you feel about being a client service employee. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions, I would just like you to answer them as honestly as you can.

Would you still like to continue?

I am first going to ask you some questions about your role in the organisation, your clients and your interactions with them.

1. How would you explain your specific role in the organisation?
 - a. When you say you are responsible for what does that entail?

2. So what would be your specific responsibilities in terms of the client?

3. Using the pen and in front of you, could you list a couple of words or phrases that describe what it is like to be a client service employee at (insert company name). *Probe for reasons*
 - a. *Why do you use the word....*
 - b. *Why do you say*
 - c. *Could you explain what you mean by*

4. Tell me about your clients. What are they like?
 - a. How would you describe the relationships that you have built with your clients?

5. In your opinion, what would the perfect client be like? *Probe for reasons*
 - a. *Why would that make the perfect client?*

6. To what extent do your clients resemble the perfect client?

I am now going to ask you some questions about the client ethic, or culture of the organisation, and the expectations that management have of you when dealing with the client.

1. All client service organisations (those that provide a service to the client) have a specific service culture or ethic that sets them apart from other service organisations in the same industry. The service culture or service ethic generally includes the service values and norms that the organisation seeks to uphold when dealing with the client. The service culture or ethic can also be described as the image the organisation wants to portray to clients about the service it provides. How would you describe the service culture or ethic at (insert company name)?
 - a. Why do you say the company has a service culture of
 - b. How is this culture communicated to you

2. What are the implications of this kind of service culture for you as a client service employee? *Probe for reasons*
 - a. *Why do you say that?*

3. What expectations do you think management of (insert company name) has of you when dealing with the client?
 - a. How are these expectations communicated to you?
 - b. What are your feelings of these expectations?

4. Are you always able to meet these expectations? If not, probe for reasons as to why? If not, ask whether anything could be done about it?
 - a. In what instances are you not able to meet these expectations?
 - b. Can you provide me with an example or describe a specific incident of when you were not able to meet these specific expectations?
 - c. How did that make you feel?
 - d. What was management's reaction to this? What was the client's reaction to this?
 - e. Do you think the majority of client service employees are able to meet these expectations?

5. How do you know whether or not you are meeting the expectations of management?
6. Do you feel these expectations are fair?
7. What kinds of people do you think management looks for when recruiting and selecting client service employees like yourself?
 - a. Why do you think they look for people that are
8. Do you feel that you fit the profile?
9. If you were to advise management on the kind of people they should employ as client service employees in (insert company name), what would you tell them?
 - a. Why would you say that they should employ people that are like.....

I am now going to ask you some questions about how you feel about your role as a client service employee at (insert company name)

1. Could you describe some of the primary challenges you face as a client service employee? *Probe in terms of how these challenges make the employee feel? And whether they have managed to do anything about the challenges?*
 - a. *Could you describe a specific instance or situations when you found that challenging*
 - b. *How did it make you feel?*
 - c. *What did you do about it?*
 - d. *What did management do about the situation?*
2. What do you like best about being a client service employee at (insert organisation name)?
 - a. Why do you like that best?
3. What do you like least about being a client service employee at (insert organisation name)?
 - a. Why do you like that least?
 - b. How does it make you feel?
4. Is there anything you would like to change about your job?
 - a. Why would you like to change that
5. Do you intend staying with (insert organisation name) or would you eventually like to move on to another organisation? *If respondent wishes to leave ask:*



- a. Do you think you would like to stay in client service?
- b. Why would you like to move from this organisation?

Thank you. That concludes the interview. I really appreciate your honesty and the time that you have devoted to discuss these issues with me. Is there anything from your side that you would like to say or ask?

Close time:

APPENDIX L: INTERVIEW INVITATION LETTER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Tel.: 012-420-3074
Fax: 012-420-3438

Dear [INSERT PARTICIPANT NAME]

Thank you so much for taking the time to complete the role identity and client service questionnaire. Your response is greatly appreciated.

You have been selected to participate in a follow up interview during which you will be asked to share your experiences and opinions regarding your role as a client service employee. The interview forms part of a PhD research project at the University of Pretoria.

Your participation in this interview would be of great value. Although participation in the interview is completely voluntary, your participation in this research will make a huge contribution. It is intended that the research contributes to our understanding of the challenges and issues facing the client service role and I would thus like to encourage you to participate. Participation is completely voluntary, and you will be free to leave the interview at any time. The information you provide during the interview will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. In the event of publication of the research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed.

I will contact you telephonically in a couple of days to find out whether you would be willing to participate.

Thank you for your time and effort in participating in this research.

Kind regards

Carly Steyn

APPENDIX M: INTERVIEW INFORMED CONSENT



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

DEPARTEMENT MENSLIKE HULPBRONBESTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Tel.: 012-420-3074
Fax: 012-420-3438
Dear Participant

Thank you for your willingness to participate in an interview on role identity and client service. The purpose of this interview is to gather information on your experiences as a client service employee and on your day to day interactions with the client.

The interview will take no longer than 45 minutes and the information you provide during the interview will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes. In the event of publication of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed.

Although the interview will be recorded, all recording will be destroyed as soon as they have been transcribed. Until then, recordings will be kept under lock and key and only the researcher will have access to them. The content of the transcriptions will not contain any personally identifiable information and only the researcher will have access to them.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the research at any time without any adverse consequences.

Should you have any questions, queries or comments regarding this interview, you may contact the researcher, Carly Steyn, or her study leader, Dr. Mias de Klerk, at the contact numbers below.

Thank you for your time and effort in participating in this research.

Kind regards

Carly Steyn (Researcher)
Tel: 083 543 5794
E-Mail: Carly.steyn@gmail.com
Dr. Mias de Klerk (Study leader)
Tel: 011 344 2533
E-mail: Mias.deklerk@sasol.com

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

By signing the consent form you are entering into a consent agreement between yourself and the researcher. This agreement protects your rights as a person participating in the research.

- 1) I hereby consent to take part in research study by participating in an interview of approximately 45 minutes long
- 2) I further state that I am aware that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any adverse consequences.
- 3) I understand that the data gathered will be confidential and that in the event of publication of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed
- 4) I understand that in order to facilitate transcription of the interview, the interview will be tape recorded. Only the researcher will have access to the tapes and they will be kept under lock and key until they are transcribed, after which they will be destroyed. No personally identifying information will be contained in the transcriptions.

Signature of participant

Date

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (PARTICIPANT COPY)

By signing the consent form you are entering into a consent agreement between yourself and the researcher. This agreement protects your rights as a person participating in the research.

- 1) I hereby consent to take part in research study by participating in an interview of approximately 45 minutes long
- 2) I further state that I am aware that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without any adverse consequences.
- 3) I understand that the data gathered will be confidential and that in the event of publication of this research, no personally identifying information will be disclosed
- 4) I understand that in order to facilitate transcription of the interview, the interview will be tape recorded. Only the researcher will have access to the tapes and they will be kept under lock and key until they are transcribed, after which they will be destroyed. No personally identifying information will be contained in the transcriptions.

Signature of participant

Date