Leadership sacrifice for organisational change

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Abstract

As organisations strive to become more competitive and leaner, leadership and leading change have become key ingredients in the recipe for success. However leaders in times of difficult organisational change may not be effective in leading the change for themselves and their people. The leader's ability to see and work beyond his or her personal needs is becoming more prevalent - leaders like Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Ghandi showed a special kind of behaviour that was fulfilling to a greater purpose.

This has prompted the need to gain a deeper understanding into self-sacrificial leadership that will bring about a crucial benefit to organisational sustainability by increasing the ability to lead change and shape leaders into 'Level 5' leadership. This qualitative research was accomplished by collecting primary data through 15 semi-structured in-depth interviews from South African business leaders.

The findings in terms of the factors that encourage a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation reveal that it is not about self, but what is best for the organisation as well as the people. Self-motivation, managing own emotions, and internalisation were the findings of the process which the leader goes through in processing loss to lead others on the journey of change. Lastly, the personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and are prepared to sacrifice themselves were found to be an advocate for the value of their people; have humility at their core; and are bold, outspoken and strong minded with a gentle exterior. Recommendations were centered on the crucial role of organisations in shaping an authentic leadership environment and ingredients for leaders of the 22nd century.

As a result, this research demonstrates leadership is about self-sacrifice, managing change and leading people.

Keywords

Leadership, Organisational change, Sacrificial leadership, Self-sacrifice

Declaration

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

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to Research Problem

1.1 Introduction

Organic growth has put transformational change on the corporate agenda (Karp, 2006). As companies strive to become more competitive and leaner, leadership and leading change have become key ingredients in the recipe for success. Ross (2008, p. 1) suggested that "some people believe the solution to problems of growth is to avoid growth, unfortunately, very soon after an organisation is founded it must grow or it will die". Although much change literature exists about organisational change, the lack of practice in not just implementing but also bringing about change has left many leaders in search of help. Followers look to leaders for strength, courage and hope in times of organisational uncertainty. The requirements of a leader have now increased during change.

Leadership means influencing the organisation to follow the leader's vision; influencing the organisation to face its problems and to take its opportunities; and mobilising people to tackle tough challenges (Taylor, 2007). Organisational changes are abundant in both the private and public sectors, which continuously face new challenges and need to adapt to changing environments (Oreg & Berson, 2011). The 2008 tidal wave known as the global economic downturn touched South African shores in late 2009, igniting change in many organisations. This gave rise to the competitor landscape becoming more aggressive and the search to reduce internal waste becoming more efficient and smarter in the ways to deliver products and services. During these times of organisational change, leadership is needed to lead the change for their people.

Businesses that face transition challenges require leaders with a new level of awareness, self-management and interpersonal skills – "those willing to adapt will be on the right path to go from growing pains to greatness" (Ross, 2008, p. 3). "Self-sacrifice may help build a basis for leadership effectiveness that is more stable and enduring and that goes beyond the situation in which the self-sacrifice was made" (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005, p. 26). According to Singh and Krishnan (2007), self-sacrifice is defined as the willingness on the part of the leader to incur personal costs (or run the risk of such costs) to serve the goals and mission of the group or organisation.

Leading change involves taking people on a journey and making them understand, accept and appreciate the change and the impact that it brings to the organisation. This impact is not always positive for the individual and the leader, however. In this situation, the leader will need to internalise the change and the impact (positive or negative) before he/she can begin to lead the change for his/her people. Ross (2008, p. 2) wrote that general manager Russell Burnett said that "good leadership is critical to organisational performance".

Collins (2001) suggested that 'Level 5' leaders are ambitious first and foremost for the cause, the organisation, and the work – not themselves – and they have the fierce resolve to do whatever it takes to make good on that ambition. These are ordinary individuals who quietly lead by maintaining a low profile and acting with modesty, restraint, patience, mutuality and care (Morris *et al.,* 2005).

This qualitative study aims to understand self-sacrificial leadership. These are leaders who lead their people through organisational change whilst accepting there could be a personal negative impact on them. In the context of a negative impact, the study will include how leaders sell the dream (lead the change) to their people whilst accepting that the change could result in their role/contribution being made redundant, consolidated or changed significantly.

Notten (2008, p. 1) wrote that Hylton Bannon of Toyota Tsusho Africa (TTAF) stated that "when searching for sustainable competitive advantage, we couldn't change our product; what we needed to change was how we lead our people". Columbine (2009) emphasised that leadership is key to keeping employees inspired, motivated and loyal to the company. The hunger for effective leadership is needed now more than ever. Steyn (2012) spoke of African humanism or Ubuntu – a person is a person because of other people. Is this the foundation of effective leadership?

Taylor (2007) suggests the real heroism of leadership involves having the courage to face reality and help the people around you to face reality – 'the capacity to see'. "There are many things in life that are worth pain and leadership is one of them" (Taylor, 2007, pg. 6).

1.2 Problem statement

Leaders in times of difficult organisational change may not be effective in leading the change for themselves and their people.

This study will attempt to gain a deeper understanding into the self-sacrificial leadership that is needed in leading organisational change. Jim Collins (2001, p. 10) stated that "we keep putting people in positions of power who lack the seed to become a level 5 leader, and that is one major reason why there are so few companies that make a sustained and verifiable shift from good to great". Taylor (2007) suggested that good listening is fueled by curiosity and empathy, and the enemy of listening is grandiosity, therefore leaders need to check their sense of self-importance. Empirical research on humility is in short supply, however recent studies are beginning to chip away at the many unknowns of this complex construct (Nielsen, Marrone & Slay, 2010).

"Creating a successful and effective company is an inside-out job. The quality of organisational culture, of management practice and strategic initiative all rests with leadership" (Ross, 2008, pg. 2). Organisations are dependent on the willingness of their employees to cooperate towards collective goals and to get personally involved in the job; leadership may thus play a key role in organisational effectiveness (Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004). However according to Cremer (2006), little effort has been done to directly look-in the relationship between motivation and self-sacrifice.

The new growth path announced in 2010 by the South African (SA) government is striving to create five million new jobs over the next 10 years. This aims to reduce the unemployment rate from 25% to 15% by 2020, therefore SA needs to grow at 7% a year for the next 20 years, explained finance minister Pravin Gordhan. Joubert (2010) stated that 'South Africans must savour and nurture this leadership insight'. "The root cause of our failure to implement strategies with the lofty ideal of creating a better life for all lies in the management of behaviour during change. "The past failures were caused by our inability to manage the transformation effectively" (Joubert, 2010, pg. 1).

'I stand here before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people. Your tireless and heroic sacrifices have made it possible for me to be here today - I therefore place the remaining years of my life in your hands' (Mandela, 1990).

1.3 The significance of the research study

The rationale behind this research is both personal and significant for business in South Africa. On a personal level, the purpose of this research is to give the researcher insights into the path of great leadership. The researcher has a huge passion for people and has listened to many accounts of frustration regarding poor leadership. The researcher would also like to understand how and why some of his leaders were able to display 'Level 5' leadership in leading organisational change and displayed self-sacrificial behaviour - what are these secrets?

In addition to the personal accounts, Karp (2006) stated that organic growth has put transformational change on the corporate agenda. During these times of organisational change, leadership is needed to lead the change for their people. However emphasis is placed on the leader to navigate through the forest of uncertain change and make decisions - either in the interests of themselves or the organisation/others.

Collins (2001) suggested that there is no credible list of steps for getting to Level 5, however the research conducted does expose Level 5 as a key component inside the black box of what it takes to shift a company from good to great – the black box being the inner development of the leader. "Modern leadership theories indicate that leaders are made not born" (Morris *et al.,* 2005, p. 1344). The leader's ability to see and work beyond his or her personal needs is becoming more prevalent - leaders like Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Ghandi showed a special kind of behaviour that was fulfilling to their purpose.

According to Columbine (2009), people are the sustainable lifeblood of a business and will determine its success or failure. Steyn (2012, p. 1) highlighted that leadership at its best is service to the followership. "The idea of leadership is not populism or domination, but ethically centered and devoted to the common good".

Van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) suggested that leader self-sacrifice is associated with factors that determine leader effectiveness, therefore investigating self-sacrificial leadership could bring about a crucial benefit to organisational sustainability by:

- Increasing the ability to lead change
  - Empirical studies have shown that leader self-sacrifice lifts up the spirits and hopes of followers, which is reflected particularly in the influence it has on followers' emotions and motivation (Cremer, 2006).
  - Studies suggest that leader's self-sacrificial behaviours influence followers by inciting norms of reciprocity (Singh & Krishnan, 2007).

- Shaping leaders into 'Level 5' leadership
  - Self-sacrifice builds trust, earns followers' acceptance of leaders as role models and helps in making a leader transformational (Bass, 1985; Yukl, 2002 in Singh & Krishnan, 2007).
  - By fostering collective identification, a self-sacrificing leader may thus shift the emphasis from the pursuit of solely his or her own interests to the pursuit of group or organisational interest (Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004).

1.4 Research objectives

The following three research objectives will be investigated in this study:

I. To investigate what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation.
II. To reveal the process which the individual (leader) goes through in processing loss to lead others on the journey of change.
III. To identify the personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves.

1.5 Scope

The scope of the research is described by the definitions of the following relevant terms:

- Leaders will be used as an umbrella term to include men and women that hold leadership roles. These leaders:
    - Have undergone organisational change over the last five-year period where the change has brought about some kind of loss to them.
    - Have control over a function or team in the organisation and the power to influence people and decisions in their roles.
    - May not necessary hold a senior management position/title but rather by the virtue of their role are directed to act in the duty of leadership.
    - Have a varying degree of leadership experience and qualification.

- The delimitation of the study will take place within the boundary of the financial banking industry in Gauteng.

1.6 Potential research limitations

Due to the nature of this study and time constraints, various limitations have been identified. These include:

- The scope of the study took place within the boundary of the financial banking industry in Gauteng.
- Only leaders that had undergone organisational change over the last five-year period, where the change had brought about some kind of loss to them, were interviewed to gain a better understanding of their motives towards self-sacrifice. However it would be advisable to interview leaders that have undergone organisational change and subsequently left the organisation.
- Access to senior members (leaders) of the organisation could potentially be limited in getting the adequate required amount of time in their schedule to conduct in-depth interviews. This could be a restraint in gathering a larger sample size.

- As a researcher I acknowledge the possibility of my subjectivity (preference) towards leaders that hold the commitment to people first and the commitment to delivery/work second.

1.7 Assumptions of the research

The following assumptions have been made and hence implicitly accepted and included in the research:

I.   Leaders interviewed believe in self-sacrificial behaviour.
II. The magnitude and severity of loss is not prescribed and could encompass any type and scale.
III. Organisational change in the financial industry over the last five years has been initiated as a result of some form of market competitiveness and/or operational efficiency.

1.8 Layout of the study

The below is a brief indication of what the content of the upcoming chapters will entail:

Chapter 2: Literature Review
The literature review presents an argument within academic literature to show the need for the research.

Chapter 3: Research Objectives
In this chapter, the precise purpose of the research is defined.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology
This chapter gives details of, and the defense of, the methodology used, the definition of the unit of analysis, the population, the sample size and sampling method.

Chapter 5: Results
This chapter presents the sample and results of the research with sparse commentary.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

In this chapter, the results are discussed in terms of the research objectives and the literature.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter highlights the main findings of the research, pulling the results together into a cohesive set of findings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The theory that is reviewed in this section defines and describes the concepts of self-sacrificial leadership and its effects on leading change. The research problem that has been identified alludes to a type of leadership that is created and moulded that allows organisations to move from good to great, as described by Collins (2001). The make-up of this leadership personality will be reviewed in order to gain a clearer understanding of the drivers behind self-sacrificial leadership.

2.2 Leadership

DeSpain (2002) in Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson and Jinks (2007, p. 401) defined leadership as "an imperfect art practiced by those who lead in which the leader defines reality for his or her followers while creating and nurturing a vision of a new, better reality to come". Today's business pressures have changed from yesterday. Organisations are faced with dynamic challenges that require profit maximisation, internal waste optimisation, radical change implementation that meet the demands of consumer behaviour and staying ahead or catching up quickly to competition. In the face of such pressures, people look for leaders of character and integrity to provide direction and help them find meaning in their work (Garder, Avolio, Luthans, May & Walumbwa, 2005). Kotter (1995) argued that someone needs to get people together, help them develop a shared assessment of the company's problems and opportunities, and create a minimum level of trust.

The challenge of leadership is to raise above the day-to-day management concerns and focus on the larger purpose of work and the organisation as an ecosystem (Taylor *et al.*, 2007). Leaders often get stuck in a bubble and do not realise their true contribution. Kotter (1995) suggested that no matter how capable or dedicated the staff, groups without strong leadership never achieve the power that is required. Taylor *et al.* (2007) highlighted that traditional leaders were often viewed as those who established direction, held the decision-making capacity and were responsible for followers. Leadership is becoming no longer about position, title, power and self-importance.

From the authors above, it is apparent that the role and work of a leader has changed. "Leadership begins on the inside, with a focus on the heart" (Taylor *et al.,* 2007, pg. 404). Gardner *et al.* (2005) argued that to address present and future leadership needs, a model of authentic leadership is required. This necessitates the role of leadership to be genuine and mindful with regard to people and self.

2.3 Organisational change

It is often thought that there is a paradox with organisational change that people want to change, which means the organisation has to break away from its familiar patterns (Smid, van Hout & Burger, 2006), however organisational change is a destination many people fear. Potter (2001) concurred and added that people love change but they just do not like to be changed. Smid *et al.* (2006) went further by elaborating that many managers experience enormous pressure to act – something has to happen and yet they often do not know exactly what they must act for. Kotter (1995) mentioned that during 1985 and 1995, over 100 companies had undergone change, including Ford, General Motors and British Airways. In most of these companies the basic goal was common; to make fundamental changes in the make-up of the business in order to help cope with a new and more challenging market environment.

Potter (2001) described five prime drivers of change:

I. People in terms of expectations and idea generation;
II. A greatly increased amount of information available to all;
III. An increased ability to communicate;
IV. The impact of technology; and
V. Globalisation and global competition.

He suggested that these drivers taken together produce a multi-variate, highly dynamic and unstable set of factors which impact on organisations at every level, from strategic marketing to the front line engine, and even middle and back office functions. With these unpredictable forces of change surging at and through the organisations, Potter (2001) explained the challenges which organisations face:

- The ability to sense changes in their environment;
- To adapt their strategic and operational approaches to those changes; then
- Engage the hearts and minds of the workforce to grasp the challenges presented.

These challenges are often the result of comfort zones, contentment, denial and ignorance that have been created in different levels of the organisation. Watson and Pillai (1999) explained that the forces of demographic diversity, technological change and increased international competition places new demands on the leaders of tomorrow. "Whether the change will eventually take root depends on how management handles it" (Smid *et al.*, 2006, p. 36). What is needed here is leadership, particularly strong leadership, in terms of focusing people's energy into specific goals and outcomes (Potter, 2001). Gill (2003, p. 307) explained that "while change must be well managed – it must be planned, organised, directed and controlled – it also requires effective leadership to introduce the change successfully: it is leadership that makes the difference".

Perhaps what all organisations are searching for is a state of renewal whereby they review where they are now, decide where they intend going in the future and then create strategies and plans to take them there - it is this state that the effective change leader is trying to create (Potter, 2001). According to Taylor *et al.* (2007), an effective leader helps establish a vision, has the ability to passionately communicate the vision to others and has the ability to inspire trust and build relationships. Gill (2003) presented the key to successful change in the table below from the American Management Association survey.

Table 1: Keys to successful change: survey of 259 senior executives in Fortune 500 companies in the USA

Factor	% mentioning this as important
Leadership	92
Corporate values	84
Communication	75
Teambuilding	69
Education and training	64

Table 1 depicts that the most important factor in successful change is leadership, followed closely by corporate values and communication. "If change is a process of taking an organisation on a journey from its current state to a desired future state and dealing with all the problems that arise along the journey, then change is about leadership as well" (Gill, 2003, p. 309). Therefore effective change leaders bring this transition about by focusing on building confidence, competence and self-esteem, and by giving the individual the opportunity to experience success in the new ways of working as soon as possible (Potter, 2001).

2.4 Leading change

Leading change involves developing a vision of the future, crafting strategies to bring that vision to reality and ensuring that everybody in the organisation is mobilising their energies towards the same goal (Gill, 2003). Gill calls this process "emotional alignment". Roberto Goizueta, late chairman and CEO of the Coca-Cola Company, suggested that what it took to be a leader in the 1990s and beyond was really about handling and leading change (Eisenback, Watson & Pillai, 1999).

Leading change involves a skill that requires leaders to sell the dream authentically to their people. Change can be received with excitement and happiness or anger and fear, while employees' responses to it may range from positive intentions to support the change to negative intentions to oppose it (Nikolaou, Gouras, Vakola & Bourantas, 2007). Eisenbach *et al.* (1999) suggested that leaders may not need to create dissatisfaction with the present, but instead can provide a vision of a possible future that is attractive and engaging. Eisenbach further explained that this could be done through intellectual stimulation, whereby the leader sets challenging goals for the employees and motivates them to rethink old ways of doing business. Therefore framing the change by appealing to followers' needs for achievement and growth induces the follower to find the change attractive.

Higgs and Rowland (2010) suggested that leaders are successful in leading change if they possess high levels of self-awareness, are able to work in the moment and can remain in tune with the overall purpose of the change.

They further suggested that good leaders are aware of their impulses, their struggles and can reflect (put themselves into the shoes of others to view their own leadership).

However self-awareness is one of the dimensions of humility, as stated by Morris *et al.* (2005). This alludes to the self-sacrifice seed of a leader and his or her ability in placing others' needs ahead of their own. Collins' (2001) description of a Level 5 leader supports this argument for putting people first. The question still remains, however, how do leaders get followers to support the change?

Van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) explained that a leader's self-sacrificing behaviour will place pressure on followers to do as is done to them: forgo self-interest and commit oneself to the collective. This is supported by Nielsen *et al.* (2010), who believed that when followers perceive humility in their leaders, they will be more committed to the vision, more receptive to vision implementation and more trusting that the leader's communication is genuine.

However Nielsen *et al.* (2010) contended that followers must similarly attribute humility to the leader in believing that the leader is trustworthy and honest. These attributes will foster higher levels of loyalty and trust in the leader, which will in turn inspire greater willingness and commitment to follow the leader's vision. This shows that in leading change, if the leader exhibits behaviours of humility and self-sacrificing, the follower will in turn reciprocate that behaviour. Once these two processes are realised there will be a stronger motivation for the follower to accept the change led by the leader.

Gill (2003) spoke of the most difficult challenges that leaders face in leading change today: alignment and adaptability. Gill further explained that alignment is demonstrated by a shared understanding, common orientation, common values and shared priorities. Adaptability is demonstrated by environmental sensitivity, tolerance for contrary views, willingness to experiment, an ability to tolerate failure and learn from it, and the ability to respond quickly. Gill called this 'organisational agility'. Some of these powerful forces of resistance to change are emotional barriers. Leading change is about showing the way: using personal power to win the hearts and minds of people towards a common goal (Gill, 2003) - it is about helping others understand the need for change, both intellectually and emotionally.

Nikolaou *et al.* (2007) suggested five dispositional characteristics that represent effective change agents that have the ability to lead change:

I. Self-efficacy – refers to persistence, resilience in the face of failure, effective problem solving and self-control of a change agent. The change agent demonstrates confidence in the ability to cope with change.

II. Locus of control – refers to the change agent's high internal locus of control. Through this high internal locus of control, the change agent has the ability to exercise control over the environment. This is the belief that he or she has control over their personal success and has strong problem-focused coping strategies.

III. Core self-evaluation – refers to a fundamental appraisal of one's worthiness, effectiveness and capability as a person. The change agent demonstrates a positive self-concept that is self-aware in coping with stressful activities such as change.

IV. Openness to experience – refers to intelligence, perceptiveness, creativity, imagination, tolerance and inquisitiveness of the change agent. The change agent demonstrates openness to new ideas and suggestions.

V. Personal resilience – refers to self-esteem, optimism, and the perceived control of the change agent. The change agent demonstrates the ability to bounce back from a negative emotional experience by flexibly adapting to the changing demands of a situation. Thus change agents are optimistic, zestful, and energetic about life, with 'high positive emotionality'.

However in order for leaders to exhibit behaviours of humility and self-sacrificing, Higgs and Rowland (2010) suggested that:

- Leaders need to be able to step back with a degree of detachment;
- Leaders who appear to be self-aware use their presence in the organisation in mindful, not impulsive ways;
- To be self-aware which often included painful acceptance of one's own 'shadow' – enabled a leader to break free of getting caught up in the organisation projections (Higgs & Rowland, 2010).

Thus leaders need to internalise the change for themselves before trying to lead followers. This requires processing the change and separating their interests in combating any resistance. Successful organisational change will need to combine the 'inner' shift in people's values, aspirations, mental models and behaviours, with 'outer' shifts in processes, strategies, practices and systems (Karp, 2006).

2.5 Self-sacrificial leadership

"Mahatma Gandhi lived a life of forbearance, voluntary poverty and humility. He ate his meals together with soldiers, using tin trays and washing his own tray as they did theirs".

"Ross Perot, president of Electronic Data Systems 'never believed' in executive dining rooms, special parking facilities or similar privileges. To him every employee was a full partner".

"Lee Iacocca, president of Chrysler Corporation, reduced his salary to one dollar a year before he asked the union members for a radical wage cuts to salvage the company from imminent bankruptcy. Iacocca called this 'equality in sacrifice' ".

These examples above from Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) share a common thread in leadership, which involves denying various levels of self-interest or personal comfort and safety, limiting personal privileges or sharing pains and hardships with followers (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

People are inspired and astonished by the self-sacrificing behaviour of others and assign meaning and purpose to these acts (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). Collins (2001) suggested that leaders with compelling modesty look in the mirror, not out the window, to apportion responsibility for poor results. Never blaming other people, external factors or bad luck thus demonstrates personal humility.

Morris, Brotheridge and Urbanski (2005) defined humility as a crest of human excellence between arrogance and lowliness. Morris *et al.'s* definition involved three connected, but distinct, dimensions: self-awareness, openness and transcendence:

I. Self-awareness – the ability to understand one's strength is an enduring orientation to objectively appraise one's abilities and limitations.

II. Openness – the ability to be open to new ideas and ways of knowing, thus willingness to learn from others.

III. Transcendence – the ability to appreciate others and recognition that others have a positive worth.

Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) described the model of self-sacrificial leadership in an organisational setting as the total/partial abandonment and/or permanent/temporary postponement of personal interest, privileges or welfare in three categories, namely:

I. Division of labour;

II. Distribution of rewards; and

III. Exercise of power.

Self-sacrifice in the division of labour involves volunteering for additional work activities, even though it could involve a higher risk or extra effort. An example includes the Vietnam war captain who covered a hand grenade thrown by the enemy with his body to save the rest of the company (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

Self-sacrifice in the distribution of rewards involves forgoing or delaying one's rightful share of organisational rewards such as salary, benefits, and promotions and awards, either permanently or temporarily. An example includes Lee Iacocca's decision to reduce his salary (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

Self-sacrifice in the exercise of power involves voluntarily forgoing or abstaining from using one's positional power or privileges at hand. An example includes Gandhi, who would eat only after his people were fed first (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) further highlighted the difference between self-sacrifices in the distribution of rewards and in the exercise of power. The latter involves forgoing consuming the privileges of power and resources which one has already earned and has on hand, whereas the former involves forgoing claiming privileges, benefits and rewards that are to be awarded as compensation, resulting from one's contribution.

Van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) explained that being self-sacrificial is one of the most direct ways for a leader to state that he or she considers the group's welfare to be important, and it also explicitly shows his or her commitment to the collective. There seems to be a common link between self-sacrifice and humility - leaders who are selfless in their approach but yet relentless for the outcome, have humbleness at the core of their being.

Collins (2001) spoke of a Level 5 leader – an individual who blends extreme personal humility with intense professional will. Professional will in leaders demonstrates an unwavering resolve to do whatever must be done to produce the best long-term results, no matter how difficult, and looks out of the window - not in the mirror - to apportion credit for the success of the company – to other people, external factors and good luck (Collins, 2001).

This Level 5 discovery is a result of empirical research that Collins undertook, highlighting something special in eleven companies that went from 'good to great'. Van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) provided well-known anecdotes pertaining to the self-sacrificial behaviour of organisational leaders, for example the CEO of a Dutch airline company who decided on a cutback in his own salary first when faced with economic difficulty, and only then did he ask his employees to do the same. Morris *et al.* (2005) suggested Nelson Mandela, Pope John Paul II and Mother Teresa as leaders who have sacrificed much so that others might benefit.

Young and Dulewicz (2006) advocated self-awareness as the heart beat of self-sacrificial behaviour. They went further to suggest that leaders who most accurately assessed their own performance were not only more effective performers, but were also emotionally self-aware. External or congruent self-awareness allows leaders to be sensitive to the effectiveness of their leadership style, whilst their internal or emotional self-awareness allows leaders to challenge their own underlying assumptions and emotions. This results in 'situationally aware' leadership (Young & Dulewicz, 2006). However Cremer and van Knippenberg (2005) suggested that the more trust people experience, the more willing they are to go beyond their own self-interest. Thus trustworthiness has become a critical element in self-sacrifice.

Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) suggested that the model of self-sacrificial leadership provides benefits in an organisational setting both at the macro and micro level of analysis.

- At a macro level, self-sacrifice is seen as a cog that facilitates individual and organisational adaptations to changing situations.
    - This is supported by van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005, p. 26), who said that "self-sacrifice may help build a basis for leadership effectiveness that is more stable and enduring and that goes beyond the situation in which the self-sacrifice was made".

- At a micro level, the theory proposes:
    - A self-sacrificing leader compared with a self-benefiting leader, eliciting more cooperation and higher levels of performance on behalf of the group (Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2005).
    - A leader's self-sacrificing behaviour will create the pressure on followers to do as is done to them: forgo self-interest and commit oneself to the collective. A self-sacrificing leader thus clearly prescribes what kind of behaviour is expected and appreciated in light of the collective or greater good. Self-sacrifice usually contains an unspoken demand of payment (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005).
    - Self-sacrificial leadership is able to motivate followers in linking their sense of identity to the organisational mission and goals (Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004).

In anything in life, the excessive use or abuse of a quality can become a limitation, for example too much self-confidence can move towards being arrogant and unwilling to learn and appreciate another's worth. Morris *et al.* (2005) argued that:

- Humble people are unlikely to call themselves humble, although others might see this virtue in them. Thus self-rating of humility is not necessarily likely to be accurate. For instance, it may be that individuals who make honest and accurate appraisals of their strengths and weakness receive less compensation and fewer promotions Morris *et al.* (2005).

- A humble leader could be unable or unwilling to put him or her at the centre of attention when this behaviour may be necessary to inspire a shared organisational goal and may actually do a disservice to the organisation.

Humility seems to be the underlining fabric of self-sacrifice. Leaders who are willing and prepared to sacrifice their needs for a greater purpose are standing on the foundation of humility. Humility is a virtue that can be respected and admired, and can help mould good leaders into great leaders.

It is thus clear that making managers and supervisors aware of the potential benefits of self-sacrifice for the welfare of the organisation is urgently needed. "Displaying self-sacrifice creates a 'source of psychological comfort' for followers. Therefore leader self-sacrifice has been suggested to be an effective act of leadership" (Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2005, p. 366).

2.6 Self-sacrificial leadership and followership

The relationship between leaders and followers is dependent upon a shared social identity, and through redefining this identity, leaders are able to shape the perceptions, values and goals of followers (Dick, Hirst & Grojean, 2007). Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) suggested that two main relationship constructs exist between the sacrificial leader and the follower. These are a rational construct and an emotional construct:

- A rational construct relates mainly to a leader's legitimacy - the degree to which the followers believe that the leader deserves to direct, order, and demand their actions and exert influence over them. This is conferred on the leader by the follower who voluntarily accepts and approves the authentic authority of the leader. Legitimacy portrays qualities such as credibility, trust and loyalty (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).
- An emotional construct relates mainly to a leader's charisma. This involves the follower's faith and respect for the leader, an emotional attachment to, and identification with, the leader and their intention. Charisma portrays courage and conviction in the company mission, a means to build trust and is a strategy to earn credibility and acceptance as a role model (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

According to Dick, Hirst and Grojean (2007), leaders are influential because they impact on their followers' self-concepts. A leader who activates followers' self-construal lead followers towards feeling, thinking and acting on behalf of the collective norms. However from the perspective of the follower, the extent to which the leader can be trusted to have the follower's best interests at heart is a key concern in their attitude towards a leader (Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2005). This relationship is moderated by a critical contingency factor of leader competence. If a leader is seen as incompetent, followers are not likely to see him or her as making a sacrifice but merely as naïve or inept (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

Therefore leaders act through their followers and their behaviour is successful because it is translated in the follower's actions by their self-construal (Dick, Hirst & Grojean, 2007).

2.7 Leadership personality

The world has become more complicated and dynamic times require dynamic leaders (Stone, Russell & Patterson, 2004). Collins (2001) explained in his discovery of Level 5 leadership that personality is counterintuitive:

- People assume that transforming companies from good to great requires 'larger-than life' leaders with big personalities;
- These great leaders had personality traits that were shy, unpretentious, modest, willful and fearless. However these were coupled with a fierce, even stoic, resolve towards life.

Morris *et al.* (2005) supported Collins' findings and suggested that leaders with humility are ordinary individuals who quietly lead by displaying leadership traits of a low profile and act with modesty, restraint, patience, mutuality and care.

When leaders are placed in organisational change situations, their people look to them to have their best interest at heart. As a follower you entrust your leader to parent more than your job, but your life career. However for a leader, which objective will supersede – the organisation or consideration for people – the brain or the heart? The answer to this lies in the personality of the leader.

Collins (2001) emphasised that the personality of a charismatic leader comes through as hard driving and egocentric. Collins further added that a charismatic leader is not a Level 5 leader as for them, 'I' is more of a quality than 'we', which will not be sustainable in the long term. This is in contradiction to Nielsen *et al.* (2010), who suggested that socialised charismatic leaders (SCL) are also humble leaders, as opposed to personalised charismatic leaders (PCL). Nielsen also suggested that SCL serve the collective, empower followers and tend to be altruistic, which is in contrast to PCL.

"Humility is likely to be associated with emotional management in which presentations of self are controlled as a means of maintaining effective relationships" (Morris *et al.*, 2005, p. 1338).

Morris *et al.* (2005) suggested that a high emotional intelligence leadership personality:
- Enhances a leader's ability to deal with change; and
- Better equips a leader to generate and maintain enthusiasm, confidence and optimism in employees.

In the different leadership outfits discussed, the premise of self-sacrificial leadership qualities remain - simply being humane, just and people-centric.

Self-sacrifice has a relationship with transformational leadership that is mediated by altruism (concern for others). The reason for this could be that altruism is about the whole personality of the leader as opposed to purely self-sacrifice, which focuses on just personal forgiving (Singh & Krishnan, 2007).

The transformational leader helps group members to understand the need for change - both emotionally and intellectually (Gill, 2003). Gill introduced a new model of transformational leadership that can meet the challenge of change. This model attempts to integrate the multiple dimensions and requirements of leadership – cognitive, spiritual, emotional and behavioural.

Gill's (2003) four dimensions are expanded below:

I.   The intellectual/cognitive dimension of leadership – 'thinking'
     a.   Effective leadership requires the intellectual or cognitive abilities to perceive and understand information, reason with it, imagine possibilities, use intuition, make judgments, solve problems and make decisions Gill (2003). These abilities produce compelling visions that "win people's minds".

II.   The spiritual dimension and requirements of leadership – 'meaning'
     a.   The spiritual dimension of leadership articulates the yearning for meaning and a sense of worth in what they do. Effective leadership "wins people's souls".

III.   The emotional dimension and requirements of leadership – 'feeling'
     a.   Effective leadership requires well-developed emotional intelligence – the ability to understand oneself and other people, demonstrate self-control, self-confidence and to converse with others in appropriate ways. Emotionally intelligent leaders use personal power rather than positional power Gill (2003). Emotionally intelligent leaders "win people's hearts".

IV.   The behavioural dimension and requirements of leadership – 'doing'
     a.   The behavioural dimension requires well-developed communication skills through writing, speaking and listening.

However, Taylor *et al.* (2007) conducted a study that utilised the leadership practices inventory (LPI). This survey instrument was designed to give leaders critical feedback on the leadership they provided in their organisation. This research led to the identification of five elements that are critical to most of the best leadership experiences:

I.   Challenging the process;
II.   Inspiring a shared vision;
III.   Enabling others to act;
IV.   Modeling the way; and
V.   Encouraging the heart.
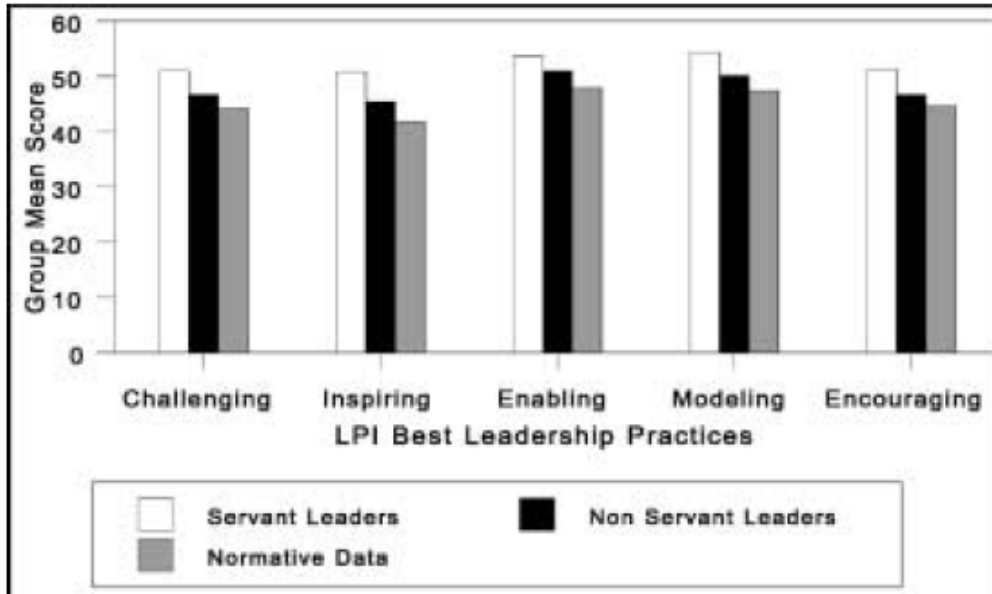
Figure 1: Comparison of LPI mean and normative data

Figure 1 depicts the findings of Taylor *et al*. (2007). Taylor used a sample size of 112 and the normative data was based on 17, 908 business managers. The results show strongly that servant leadership scores higher in all five best leadership practices.

While the argument could be made that one of most critical factors of effective leadership that attracts followers is the ability to clearly see the mission and vision of the organisation, the data above shows that in order to have that vision and to share it effectively with followers, the leader must first be an example of effective leadership (Taylor *et al*., 2007).

According to Spears (1996) in Barnabas and Clifford (2012), the central meaning of servant-leadership is that the leader must first of all become a servant and gain experience as a servant. This is central to his or her greatness – 'the servant as leader'.
An important method of leadership development is by vicarious learning, which is learning from role models (Popper, 2005 in Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).

Barnabas and Clifford (2012) explored the leadership qualities of Mahatma Gandhi in relation to six behavioural dimensions of the Servant Leadership Behavior Scale (SLBS) model. The purpose of Barnabas and Clifford's research was to highlight the qualities, characteristics, effectiveness and importance of servant leadership. The six dimensions of servant leadership behaviour consisted of:

I.   Voluntary Subordination;
II.   Authentic Self;
III. Covenantal Relationship;
IV.   Responsible Morality;
V.   Transcendental Spirituality; and
VI.   Transforming Influence.

I.   Leadership qualities of voluntary subordination
      a. This quality refers to the will to voluntarily abandon one's self to others by being a servant (Sendjaya, 2005 in Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).
      b. Gandhi symbolised service rather than power, and showed this through his own commitment to voluntary poverty with his people (Barnabas & Clifford, 2012). This epitomised his being a servant and his acts of service where he taught English to Indians without any form of remuneration.

II.   Leadership qualities of authentic self
      a. Authentic leaders lead in their consistent display of humility, integrity, accountability, security and vulnerability (Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).
      b. Gandhi remained a humble servant who sacrificed his life for the cause of India. Gandhi gave up material gifts - to serve was its own reward – being accountable for his own actions. Gandhi was a servant leader who worked in the background willingly without the need for acknowledgement from others. He had a secure sense of self, moral conviction and emotional stability. Gandhi was true to the capacity of honesty with feelings and admitting to his own mistakes (Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).

III. Leadership qualities of covenantal relationship

    a. This quality refers to a leader who fosters genuine and lasting relationships with followers (Sendjaya, 2005 in Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).

    b. Gandhi worked with his people collaboratively, giving each an opportunity to excel by putting their individual talents together. He treated everyone with the same courtesy and respect. Gandhi was available to his people and built authentic relationships.

IV. Leadership qualities of responsible morality

    a. A servant leader believes in higher ideals and higher moral values. They employ thoughtful, ethical and moral reasoning (Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).

    b. Gandhi's way of fighting was using Satyagraha – insistence on truth – and he championed love, non-violence, forgiveness and peaceful civil disobedience against unjust laws.

V. Leadership qualities of transcendental spirituality

    a. This quality refers to the inner conviction in a leader that something or someone beyond self and the material world makes life complete and meaningful (Sendjaya, 2005 in Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).

    b. Gandhi had faith in God, whose nature is Truth and Love. Gandhi had strong inner awareness of one's self – faith in self. Gandhi believed he had a sense of mission - a calling to service, not merely a job. "Sacrifice was the law of life" (Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).

VI. Leadership qualities of transforming influence

    a. A servant leader influences others through trust, mentoring, modeling, vision and empowerment (Sendjaya, 2005 in Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).

    b. Gandhi was a model of Satyagraha - he lead by example. Gandhi cleaned toilets with his own hands, showing people the way to act. Gandhi was a man of vision who not only inspired many but empowered people to a common dream. He was a ruler, obeyed by millions not because of fear but because they loved him (Barnabas & Clifford, 2012).

It could be argued that servant leadership, much like transformational leadership, transforms followers by modeling effective leadership behaviour by enabling others to move beyond what they thought possible and by encouraging others to make extraordinary contributions to the organisation (Taylor *et al.*, 2007). Self-sacrificial behaviours could be an initiating strategy of a leader who wants to motivate people to overcome their fears about an uncertain future and to accept the leader's vision as their own. Such a strategy could promote unity in the organisation (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

All leaders, whether they are great or small, can follow the servant leadership qualities of Gandhi and make an impact on their society, country and business (Barnabas & Clifford, 2012). The practice of encouraging the heart promotes sincere care for people that encourages respect, trust and commitment. This type of empowering leadership, which is developed through the utilisation of servant leadership, fosters autonomy, choice and enables employees to develop a sense of ownership" (Taylor *et al.,* 2007).

2.8 Conclusion

Businesses that face transition challenges require leaders with a new level of awareness, self-management and interpersonal skills – "those willing to adapt will be on the right path to go from growing pains to greatness" (Ross, 2008, p. 3). It is apparent that there is substantial evidence in the above literature that the behavioural qualities and characteristics of self-sacrificial leadership offer strong benefits to the organisation and its people during organisational change. "Self-sacrifice may help build a basis for leadership effectiveness that is more stable and enduring and that goes beyond the situation in which the self-sacrifice was made" (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005, p. 26). Servant and transformational types of leaders are needed now more than ever before. These leaders have what it takes to move organisations from good to great and to move people hearts and minds towards the greater purpose. The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding into the self-sacrificial leadership that is needed in leading organisational change.

Chapter 3: Research Objectives

Leaders in times of difficult organisational change may not be effective in leading the change for themselves and their people. The role of leaders during organisational change has become pivotal in how their people see, feel and act to change. Leaders are willing to give up or lose something for a greater organisational purpose. Within this behaviour lies something special. This study attempted to gain a deeper understanding into self-sacrificial leadership.

The precise purpose of the research was:

- *Objective one: To investigate what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation.*

  People are inspired and astonished by the self-sacrificing behaviour of others and assign meaning and purpose to these acts (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005) - leadership that places others' needs first and can see beyond personal gain and loss. Leaders can lead their followers past a struggle and make them see an appealing vision. These leaders stay in tune with a belief that is greater than self. Understanding the elements of this behaviour will unlock the drivers of self-sacrificial leadership.

- *Objective two: To reveal the process which the individual (leader) goes through in processing loss to lead others on the journey of change.*

  Gill (2003, p. 307) explained that "while change must be well managed – it must be planned, organised, directed and controlled – it also requires effective leadership to introduce the change successfully: it is leadership that makes the difference". Organisations look to strong leaders to lead change effectively for their followers. However when the leader is faced with his or her change together with their followers, how does the leader manage this? Discovering the approach to this behaviour will unlock the drivers of effectively leading change.

Higgs and Rowland (2010) suggested that leaders are successful in leading change if they possess high levels of self-awareness, the ability to work in the moment and the ability to remain in tune with the overall purpose of the change. They further suggested that good leaders are aware of their impulses, their struggles and can reflect (put themselves into the shoes of others to view their own leadership).

- *Objective three: To identify the personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves.*

Collins (2001) explained in his discovery of Level 5 leadership that personality is counterintuitive: people assume that transforming companies from good to great requires 'larger-than life' leaders with big personalities, however these great leaders have personality traits that are shy, unpretentious, modest, willful and fearless. They are, however, coupled with a fierce, even stoic, resolve towards life. Different leaders bring their own leadership flavour to how they show up as leaders and lead their people. Leadership style has been debated in literature and the search is still on for the crowning of which type of leader takes the number one spot - transformational or charismatic - however the foundation of these types of leaders lies within their personalities. Uncovering the traits into this behaviour will unlock the person behind the mask.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Research method and rationale

Exploratory research is about discovering general information about a topic that is not well understood by the researcher (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). A researcher would choose exploratory research if he or she would want to seek insights and engage for deeper understanding that will inform the topic. However Saunders and Lewis (2012) further explained that descriptive research seeks to accurately describe persons, events or situations. The researcher would choose descriptive research if he or she would want to seek the answers to more specifically describe the 'what' of these events, persons or situations.

Qualitative (exploratory) research, as described by Mouton (2008), focuses on words and observations to articulate reality, and endeavours to describe people in natural circumstances. Therefore an exploratory approach was followed for this research, as more depth was required to discover what encourages a leader to exhibit self-sacrificing behaviour. The researcher unpacks the motive, thinking and emotion that drives a leader to self-sacrifice.

The motivations in choosing exploratory (qualitative) research were:

I. The empirical information in current literature is in an infancy stage.
    "Empirical research on humility is in short supply, however recent studies are beginning to chip away at the many unknowns of this complex construct" (Nielsen *et al.*, 2010, p. 35).

II. The need to diagnose the situation.
    How and what allows a leader to lead change while placing others' needs before their own. Why does a leader subscribe to a greater purpose?

III. The need to discover new ideas.
    Understanding why leaders self-sacrifice and how they are still able to lead change, creates new insights into successful leadership.

This, however, cannot be achieved through a descriptive (quantitative) study, as this involves the collection of measurable and quantifiable data (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Thus a deductive approach to research design was used as this involved establishing the reasons for self-sacrificial leadership.

4.2 Population

The population of relevance consisted of all leaders that were willing and prepared to sacrifice their own needs in leading organisational change over the last five years. The sample unit was leaders that held a leadership role or position which the individual had the power to influence.

4.3 Size and nature of the sample

The table below indicates the data collection method, sampling technique and sample size.

Table 2: Research sampling information

Aim	Data collection method	Sampling technique	Sample size
Face-to-face interviews with leaders that have sacrificed their own needs in leading organisational change.	Semi-structured, in-depth interviews	Snowball	15

The population was unknown and therefore a non-probabilistic sampling technique was used. The researcher chose the snowball sampling technique as it was difficult to identify respondents (leaders) that had displayed self-sacrificial behaviour during organisational change. Therefore those selected for a snowball sample were most likely to identity others, resulting in a homogeneous sample (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Sample sizes of 15 were used to align to a homogeneous sample nature and protection from data saturation.

4.4 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis was the perceptions of leaders of leadership sacrifice for organisational change.

4.5 Interview guideline design

The design of the semi-structured interviews consisted of a balance of open-ended and closed questions with answer choices. The main objective of this approach was to allow the respondents the opportunity to express their feelings and thinking freely – showing depth, while soliciting a fundamental message behind their story. A four point Likert scale was adopted for the closed questions as opposed to a traditional five point scale, as the in-between answer choice did not provide much significant interpretation and the researcher did not want respondents to choose the less thought through response.

The interview consisted of four sections. The first section covered the background regarding the respondent's age, gender, leadership experience and qualification. The second section elicited opinions linked to objective one: To investigate what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation. The third section elicited opinions linked to objective two: To reveal the process which the individual (leader) goes through in processing loss to lead others on the journey of change. Lastly, the fourth section elicited opinions linked to objective three: To identify the personality traits of a leader who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves.

Each objective had five questions linked to it with a balance of open-ended and Likert scale questions. This was a built-in measure that supported the researcher in extracting meaningful results. A mixture of direct, probing and follow up questions were used in tactfully obtaining all elements of explicit and implicit information. The literature was assessed and used in constructing the questions, examples of which are listed below.

The following key questions were addressed by the researcher in line with the three objectives of the study as follows:

- **Section one:**

  Introductory and background questions

  The introductory and background questions assisted in introducing the researcher to the interviewees and setting the expectation of the interviews. In addition, the background further allowed the researcher to gather the respondents' thoughts with regard to leadership and change.

  o The background of the leader included the respondent's age, gender, leadership experience and qualification.

- **Section two:**

  Objective one: *to investigate what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation.*

  o How would you value your contribution / worth to the organisation?
    Collin (2001) suggested that leaders with compelling modesty look out of the window when valuing others in times of success.
  o What kept you engaged in this kind of change?
    Morris, Brotheridge and Urbanski (2005) suggested that humility involves three connected but distinct dimensions: self-awareness, openness and transcendence.

- **Section three:**

    Objective two: *reveal the process which the individual (leader) goes through in processing loss to lead others on a journey of change.*

    - What were the difficulties and how did you keep yourself balanced?
      In order for leaders to exhibit behaviours of humility and self-sacrificing, Higgs and Rowland (2010) suggested that leaders need to be able to step back with a degree of detachment.
    - Describe the emotion that you went through and what that meant for you?
      Nielsen *et al.* (2010) argued that when followers perceive humility in their leaders, they will be more committed to the vision and more receptive to vision implementation.

- **Section four:**

    Objective three: *to identify the personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves.*

    - Describe your personality traits (the nature of yourself)?
      Morris *et al.* (2005) supported Collins' findings and suggested that humility in leadership is found among ordinary individuals who quietly lead by displaying leadership traits of a low profile and act with modesty, restraint, patience, mutuality and care.
    - What virtues did you keep consistent (before the change, during the change and after the change)?
      "Humility is likely to be associated with emotional management in which presentations of self are controlled as a means of maintaining effective relationships" (Morris *et al.*, 2005, p. 1338).

Pre-testing the semi-structured interview guideline was conducted on three leaders. They were asked to comment on the following:

- Layout and structure;
- Unclear instructions and questions;
- Ambiguous questions - sound interpretation and understanding;
- Contradiction between questions;
- Appropriateness of the Likert scale range;
- Meaningfulness of the questions related to study;
- Spelling and grammar;
- Repetition; and
- Duration of interview.

Feedback was received and the appropriate adjustments were made. However checks were built in by design to solicit deeper meaning behind the respondents' answers and to avoid the questions being seen as repetitive or meaningless.

4.6 Data collection tool

The research project took the form of semi-structured in-depth interviews with leaders that had undergone organisational change in which self-sacrificial behaviour was exhibited. These respondents were identified through personal contacts from the researcher's own network.

Britten (1995) suggested that many advantages are inherent in interviews and can prove beneficial to this type of research. These advantages are:

- Interviews can yield a higher response rate;
- The interviewer can probe deeper into a response given by the participant;
- The participant can get clarification on questions; and
- Interviews are useful for untangling complex topics.

On the other hand, interviews have some constraints with regard to securing interviewee time (60 - 75min), the cost of travel for the researcher and the availability of senior members of an organisation (leaders in the case of this research study). Therefore the delimitation to Gauteng was considered.

4.7 Data collection method and data management

Face-to-face interviews were chosen in order to identify the respondents' tone and appearance of body language when answering the questions. This method allowed for effective analysis after the interviews had taken place as the researcher could play back the interviews and pick up on information that may have been omitted.

The following process was used by the researcher for the data collection and data management:

I.   Drafted interview guide for in-depth interviews.
II.   Conducted interviews.
III.   Voice recorded interviews and respondents answered on interview sheet.
IV.   Reflected on respondents' emotional state, body language and language used. Captured researcher notes.
V.   Captured all respondents' answers from interviewee sheets.
VI.   Played back voice recording of interview and developed themes using the words the respondents used.
VII.   Drafted visual mind map to capture themes, notes and filed in interview folder.
VIII. Understood and interpreted initial meaning of data.
IX.   Performed intensive analysis on captured data.
X.   Synthesised data into tables as per research objectives.

4.8 Data analysis

The researcher has listed the data analysis that will be used during this study in table 3 below.

Table 3: Data analysis methods for research study

Analysis Method	Rationale
Content analysis	This method was used in establishing the frequency/occurrences that a respondent mentioned a concept/thought.
Thematic analysis	This method was used to identify the common themes and trends between respondents. This assisted in determining the rationale behind self-sacrificial leadership.

The researcher encountered the following hurdles during the data capturing process of this research:

I. Some interviewees pre-empted questions in the interview schedule. This caused interviewees to answer questions between/cross research objectives. The researcher had taken a structured approach in capturing the data per research objective to allow for focused analysis which had to be amended during the interview and the data capturing exercise. However the researcher did not see this as problematic during the interview as this showed the interviewees' willingness to go into detail, aiding the in-depth discussion required.

II. Transcribing of the voice recording was difficult for the researcher. The constant pausing and replaying of the voice recording to allow the researcher to capture quotes posed additional time constraints. Data analysis took almost 120min per interview.

III. Some interviewees did not mark some of the Likert scale questions on the paper interview schedule, thus the researcher had to refer to the voice recording during capturing.

4.9 Data validity and reliability

The researcher identified principle factors which could threaten the validity and reliability of the research findings and conclusion. Saunders and Lewis (2012) suggested that validity is simply concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be.

I.   Subject selection

The selection of leaders chosen could be based on varying levels of leadership experience and magnitude of influence (number of people reporting into them). If not selected consistently, some research subjects may have been unrepresentative of the research population. In mitigation of this, the researcher ensured consistency, however there was some degree of variability in leadership experience and ability to influence. This ensured that the research findings and conclusion were not limited to a narrow type of subject.

II.   External validity

The researcher was cognisant that leaders would be selected from one industry, which raised a question with regard to the validity on which the research conclusion was inferred to other industries. However Saunders and Lewis (2012) explained that the concern may not be to produce a theory that is generalisable to all populations, but to try and explain what is going on in this particular research setting.

"Reliability is the extent to which data collection methods and analysis procedures will produce consistent findings" (Saunders & Lewis, 2012, p. 128).

III.   Subject bias

Leaders could be untruthful in portraying their self-sacrificing behaviour during organisational change. This could relate to the sensitivity of information which the researcher was requesting that leaders share. In mitigation, the researcher guaranteed full non-disclosure and that the interview was confidential and anonymous.

4.10 Research limitations

Due to the nature of this study and including time constraints, various limitations were identified. These included:

- The scope of the study took place within the boundary of the financial banking industry in Gauteng, therefore the research findings cannot be generalised.
- Only leaders that had undergone organisational change over the last five-year period, where the change had brought about some kind of loss to them, were interviewed. This was to gain a better understanding of the leaders' motives towards self-sacrifice, however it would have been advisable to interview leaders that had undergone organisational change and subsequently left the organisation.
- Access to senior leaders of the organisations was limited in getting an adequate amount of time in their schedule to conduct in-depth interviews. This was a restraint in gathering a larger sample size.
- The researcher acknowledged the possibility of being subjective (preferential) towards leaders that hold the commitment to people first and the commitment to delivery/work second.

4.11 Ethics of the study

Ethics were important in promoting the authenticity and openness of leaders to participate in this study. As such, the researcher was honest and accountable in the method and procedure that was used in conducting the study.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) suggested that ethical implications should be considered when using individuals in research. These essential ethical principles were maintained by the researcher as follows:

I.   The researcher acquired participants' consent to be interviewed by having them sign an informed consent letter. The nature of the study was explained, including the objective and the duration. As a result participants were given the choice to either accept to participate or decline involvement.

II. The informed consent letter included full confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher assured participants of the protection of their responses on both the voice recording and the paper answer schedule. This guaranteed the participants the right to privacy unless consent was granted.

III. The researcher displayed professionalism in conducting the interview that ensured no harm to the participants' self dignity, or cause embarrassment or psychological harm. Questions were posed in a dignified and professional manner.

IV. The researcher assured participants that all intellectual property shared would be appropriately acknowledged.

Chapter 5: Results

This chapter presents the results of the research study.

5.1 Results of research

This research was a qualitative study that investigated three research objectives, as mentioned in Chapter 3:

- *Objective one: to investigate what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation.*
- *Objective two: to reveal the process which the individual (leader) goes through in processing loss to lead others on the journey of change*
- *Objective three: to identify the personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves*

This research was accomplished by collecting primary data through semi-structured, in-depth interviews.   As described in Chapter 4, the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews consisted of a balance of open-ended questions and closed questions with answer choices. A four point Likert scale was adopted for the closed questions.

A total of 15 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. All 15 interviews were conducted face-to-face at the interviewees' place of work. To allow for effective analysis, 14 interviews were voice recorded. One interviewee denied permission for recording due to the sensitivity of the information being discussed.

The researcher acknowledges the lens in interpreting and displaying the results in this chapter. Although the researcher believes strongly in leading people rather than managing tasks/delivery, he owns this personal interest and is transparent in letting the data speak for itself.

The data analysis approach taken was to accept the face value of the words and messages of the interviewees, i.e. it was taken as true information that could be measured, and therefore content analysis was used.

However due to the nature of this study and to answer the research objectives as stated in Chapter 3, this required some deeper data analysis that looked at the meaning below the surface, therefore thematic analysis was used.

The presentation of these research results are as per the research objectives listed above and in Chapter 3.

5.2 Sample description

The nature of the sample used was leaders that are willing and prepared to sacrifice their own needs in leading organisational change. The sample unit was leaders that hold a leadership role or position in which the individual has the ability to influence. 17 interviews with leaders were held and for reasons such as not meeting the research requirement, two interviews were excluded, i.e. the sample size of leaders was 15. A snowball sampling technique was used to identity leaders who had displayed self-sacrificial behaviour during organisational change.

Figure 1 below depicts the age composition of the sample and Figure 2 depicts the gender composition of the sample.

	30-39	40-49	>=50
■ Number of Leaders	5	9	1
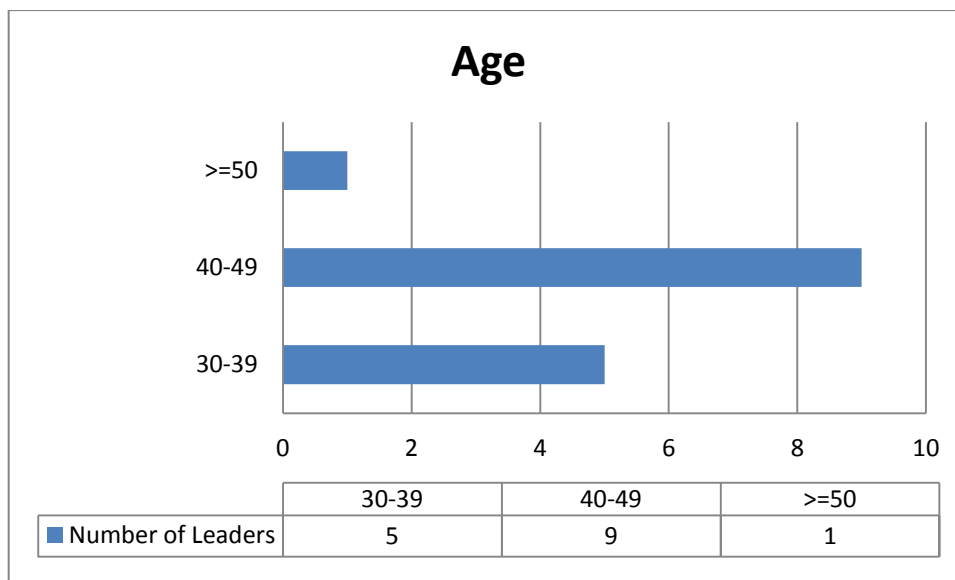
Figure 1: Age composition of sample
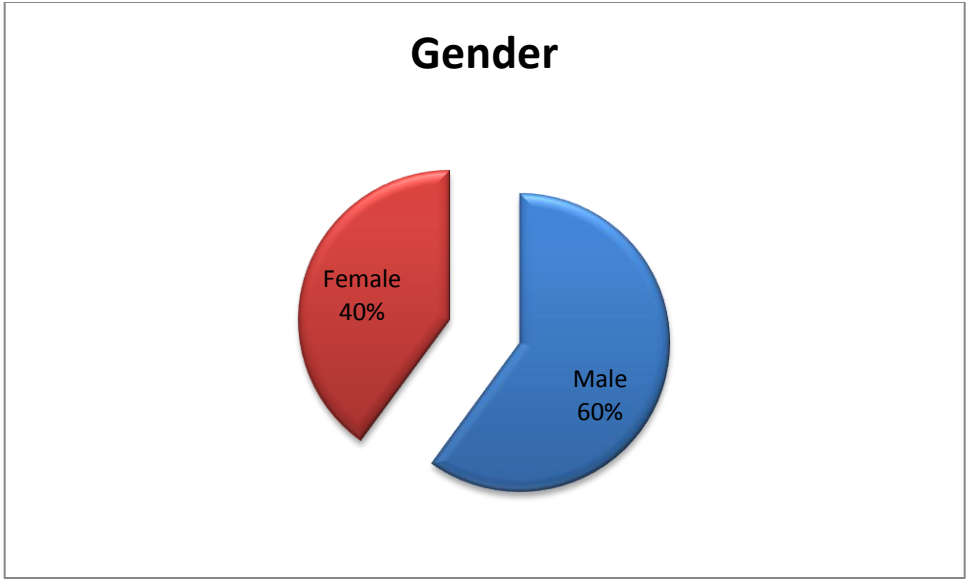
Figure 2: Gender composition of sample

The majority of the sample was between the ages of 30 and 49, while the gender of these leaders was slightly weighted towards males.

Figure 3 below depicts the level of education/qualifications that the leaders had achieved. The total for each qualification was calculated by assigning numerical values of each qualification category to the Likert scale. The numerical values on the Likert scale were then combined to arrive at an overall score that represents the total number of leaders that selected a particular category. The percentage total value was then calculated by dividing the overall score for each category by the sample size.
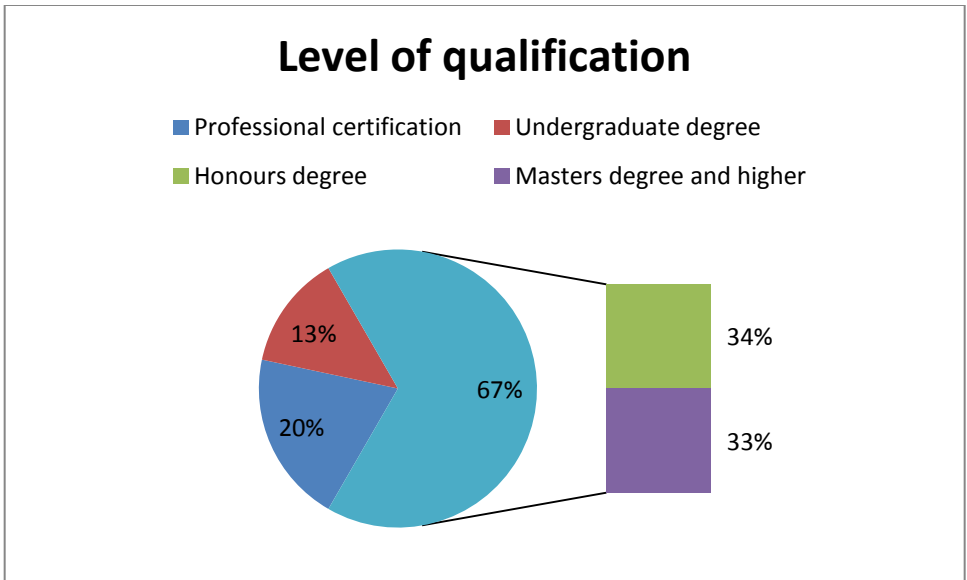
Figure 3: Qualification achieved by leaders

All levels of management had some form of formal qualification, with the majority having at least an Honours degree.

In order to determine the maturity of the sample, respondents were questioned on the number of years of experience they had as leaders as depicted in Figure 4.
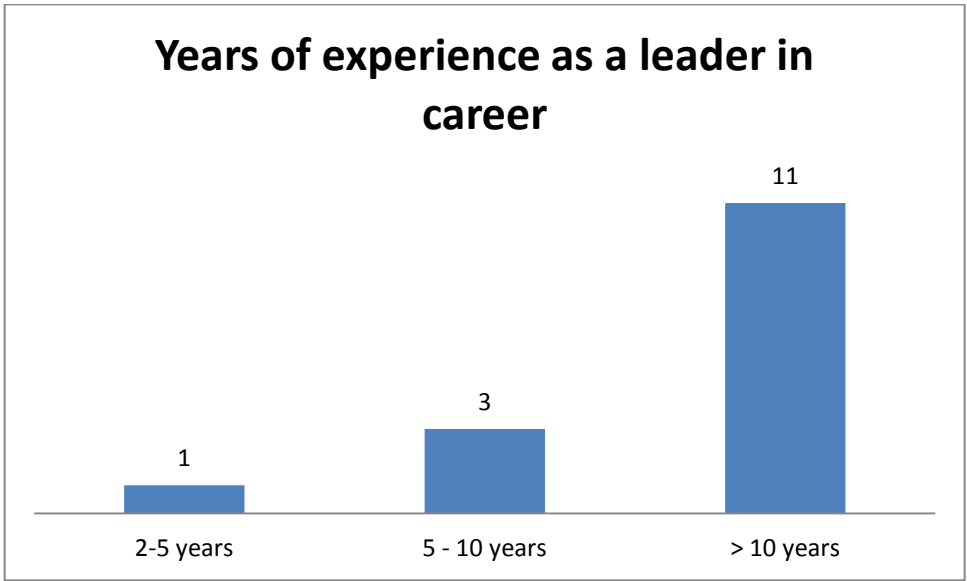
Figure 4: Years of experience practicing as a leader

73% of leaders had in excess of ten years practicing as a leader, which highlights the quality and strength of the subjects used in this research.

5.3 Results for research objective one: To investigate what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation

A total of five questions were used in the semi-structured, in-depth interviews to gather the data for this research objective. Three questions were open-ended questions and two were closed Likert scale questions.

- Respondents were asked to rate their perceived contribution/worth to the organisation using a four point Likert scale. Figure 5 below depicts this.

The total for each category was calculated by assigning numerical values of each category to the Likert scale. The numerical values on the Likert scale were then added to arrive at an overall score that represents the total number of leaders that selected a particular category. The percentage total value was then calculated by dividing the overall score for each category by the sample size.
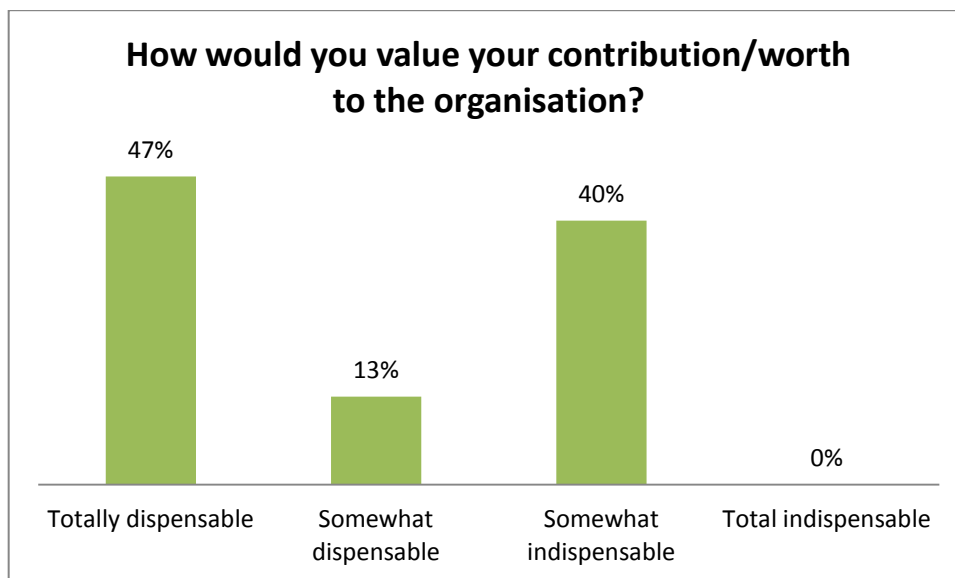
Figure 5: Perceived contribution/worth to the organisation

From the interviews it was evident that a large portion of the sample (60%) was in agreement that they are to some extent dispensable to the organisation.

> *"It's a double edge sword as brilliant succession planning will make you totally dispensable. Good leaders always have a succession plan." – Respondent 1*
>
> *"Anyone can be replaced, as anyone can get a job done. What a leader brings to the table is you create a culture; you steer people and take people on a journey." – Respondent 3*
>
> *"I would think I am very valuable if I am totally dispensable. As I am no key man." - Respondent 11*
>
> *"An organisation is not your family. Tomorrow things will move on." - Respondent 12*

- Respondents were asked to rate the perceived importance of each factor that helped them stay engaged towards the change, using a four point Likert scale. Figure 6 is a rank ordered table according to the critically important factors that helped them stay engaged towards the change.

What kept you engaged towards this kind the change?

Legend:
- ■ Not important at all
- ■ Some-what not important
- ■ Some-what important
- ■ Critically important

Factor	Critically important	Some-what important	Some-what not important	Not important at all
Self-awareness	80%	20%		
Openness	73%	20%	7%	
Ability to remain in tune with the overall purpose	67%	20%	13%	
Transcendence	53%	47%		
Ability to work in the moment	40%	53%		7%
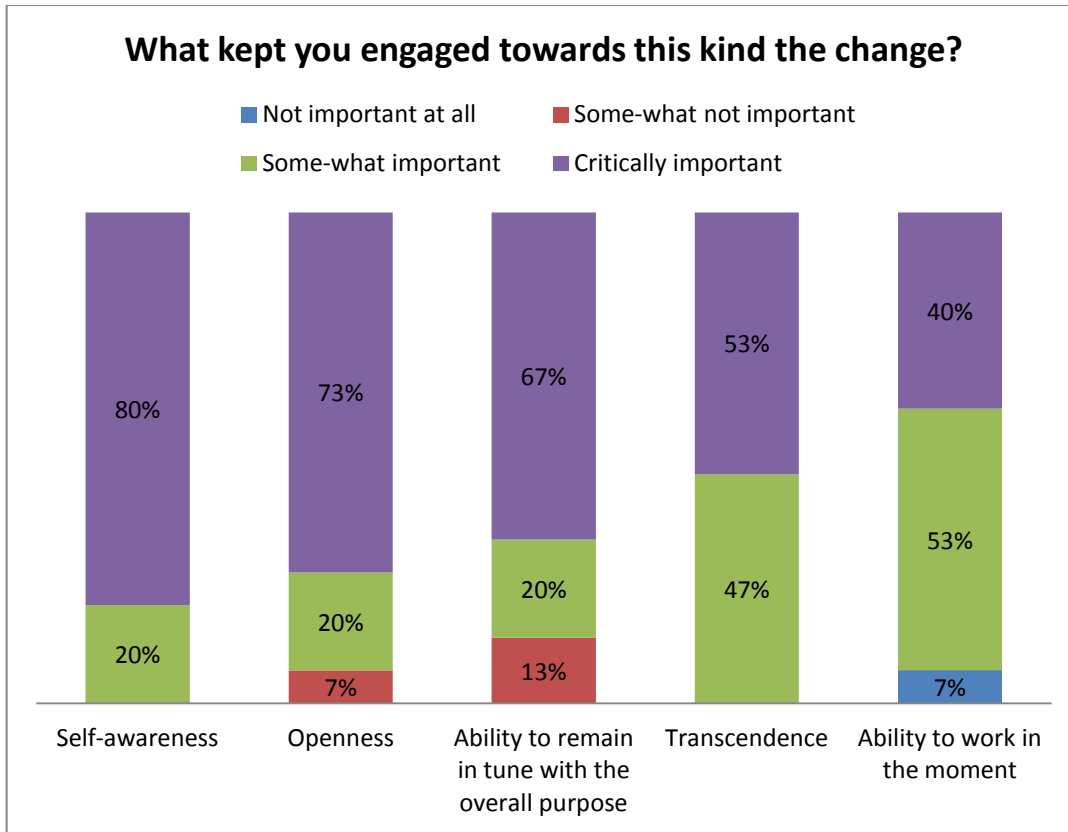
Figure 6: Rank ordered factors according to critical importance that helped leaders stay engaged towards the change

From the six factors, the three most critically important factors, as chosen by the leaders, are:

   I.   Self-awareness;

  II.   Openness; and

 III.   Ability to remain in tune with the overall purpose.

Self-awareness was highlighted as the single most critically important factor that helped leaders stay engaged towards the change.

Self-awareness

"If I didn't believe in it, it would be about self but it was not. Leadership is not about self" – Respondent 1

"If you're not self-aware, you can't play the role, you're dead" – Respondent 3

"Disassociate yourself, this is not a personal attack, and to realise this is best for the organisation" – Respondent 5

"Your body language impacts people. You have got to be cautious, be self-aware" – Respondent 6

"The whole time I had to realise the impact the change was having on me versus the job I needed to do and try to balance throughout been human enough for the people and still having to do work and understanding my own feelings" – Respondent 11

"I am hugely aware of how I am been watched by people, how my reaction to this has an impact to the business and the direction we set. Put a smile on my face, lift my head

---

Openness was highlighted as the second most critical factor that helped leaders stay engaged towards the change.

Openness

"Non-negotiable. Leaders in every facet of life must be transparent; this is where we're going to, this is how we see it. This is the plan." – Respondent 1

"Openness and honesty builds trust. I want to be known and seen that I am real, not that you like me or you don't" – Respondent 13

However 20% of respondents highlighted openness as "somewhat important":

"Need to be integrity based and trustworthy but not totally open" – Respondent 15

"Sometimes you can't be that open especially when the rules are involved. It can derail change" – Respondent 13

Ability to remain in tune with the overall purpose was highlighted as the third most critical factor that helped leaders stay engaged towards the change.

Ability to remain in tune with the overall purpose

"It was important for the people to still believe in the vision even through the leader was being removed. You follow because you believe in the leader and the process. The staff had to see that I believed in it" – Respondent 1

"Without purpose you are lost. Then you deviate, maybe not delivering anything or with no benefits" – Respondent 6

"As emotions run, you can be distracted from the why" – Respondent 11

Transcendence and the ability to work in the moment were highlighted as the second least and least important factors that helped leaders stay engaged towards the change.

Transcendence

"You can't be everything to everyone in terms of what you trying to achieve. Focus is required" – Respondent 6

Ability to work in the moment

"The ability to work in the future world is more important or you lose sight of why you're doing it. As a leader you have to see the future world because your people are so involved in the today world" – Respondent 12

- The interview also compromised of an open-ended question that was constructed with the aim of determining other/additional factors that kept leaders engaged during change. The responses were analysed using a content analysis technique and recorded six additional/other factors in Figure 7 below.
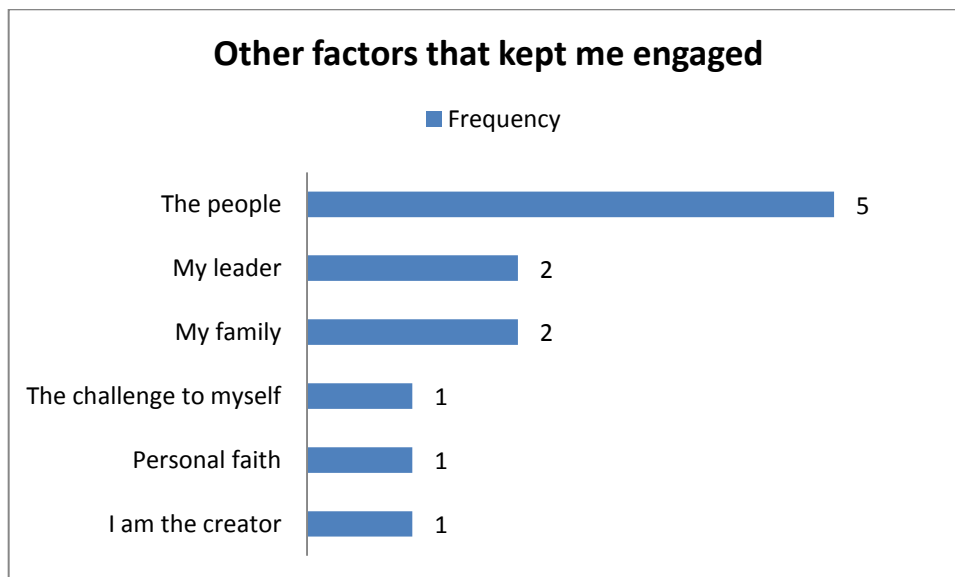
Figure 7: Rank ordered content analysis of other factors that kept leaders engaged during the change

From the interviews it was evident that a large number were in agreement that People was the most important other factor that kept them engaged during the change.

People

"A leader drives for the success of people. You are a catalyst as a leader for people" – Respondent 1

"Trust that my people could come to me. Showing character and strength for them" – Respondent 8

"You see the pain and struggle the people in your team go through. And you travel a couple of wars together, they become your family. The number one responsibility is to make sure that they are ok and navigate them through change" – Respondent 12

My leader

I believe in my leader. I respect him and do things for him. He was humble. You want to please him" – Respondent 5

Personal faith

"My journey is mapped, someone is looking out for me and I trust. The company is not your life" – Respondent 13

- The interview also compromised of an open-ended question that was constructed with the aim of determining what led the leader to support the change - what his or her motivation was. The responses were analysed using a content analysis technique and recorded six categories in Figure 8 below.

What was your thinking that led you to support the change?

■ Frequency

Best for the organisation	11
My credibility	3
Support in my leader	2
New opportunities could arise	2
Loyality towards people	1
Passionate about what I do	1
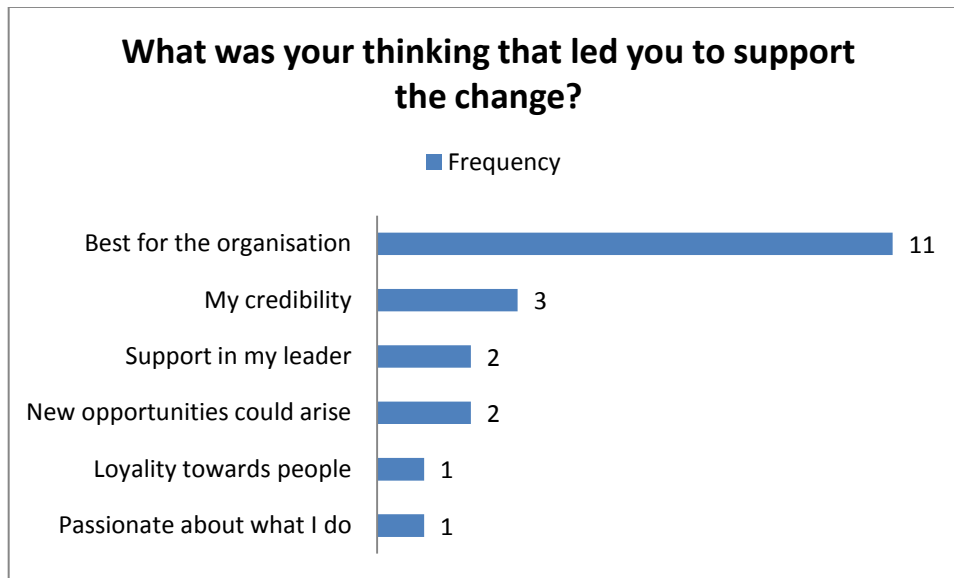
Figure 8: Rank ordered content analysis of what led the leader to support the change

From the interviews it was evident that a large number were in agreement that the organisational benefit was a key reason for them to support change.

"My team delivers, not one person. My main job is to grow my guys. The focus was not me." – Respondent 2

"Accept or learn to live with it. When the dust settles and you start thinking of all the opportunities and challenges of where you landed - I find energy in that. While these big things are happening you can still live your purpose when you land. It's like death, in many ways you take the good stuff with you on the journey - you remember the person you lost, it's the stuff they taught you. I will never allow change to take away my self worth. As that's mine, I need to own that" – Respondent 3

If we don't force ourselves to take a step back, it can overpower us. We build this stuff in our heads that's bigger than it's really is" – Respondent 3

"Talks the talks and walks the walks" – Respondent 6

"First and foremost we work for the company and are accountable to the shareholders" – Respondent 8

"Two things that drive me as a leader: 1. The people that I lead; and 2. The people who lead me. I trusted in it because I trusted my leader" – Respondent 12

- Figure 9 depicts the findings of the content analysis, uncovering the reasons why leaders saw the change as a loss to them. The responses were analysed using a content analysis technique and recorded seven reasons.

Why did you see this as a loss to you?

■ Frequency

Emotional attachment to the people	6
Influence	3
The creator	3
Pride, Status and Ego	2
Comfortable and proud	2
Career	1
My leader	1
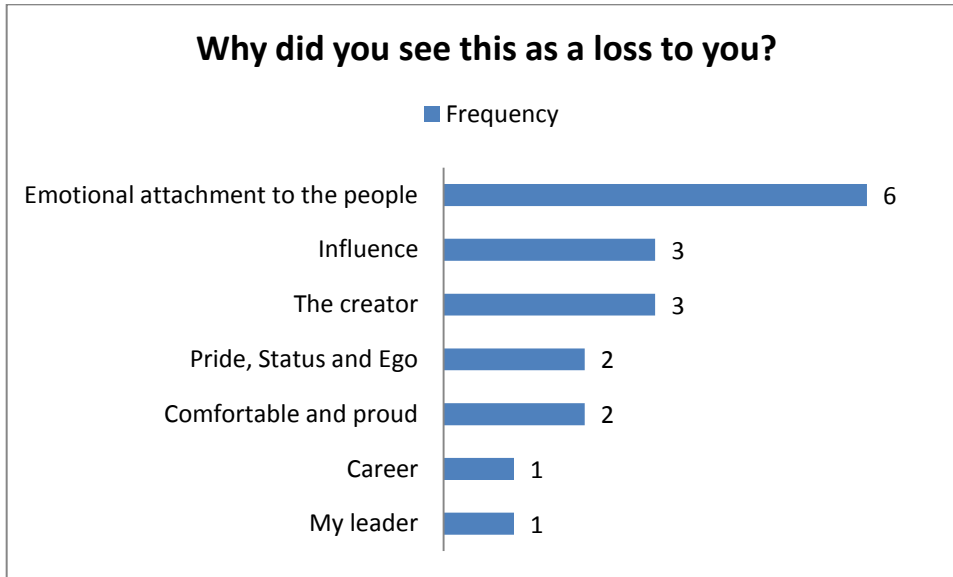
Figure 9: Rank ordered content analysis of reasons why leaders saw the change as a loss

From the interviews it was evident that a large number were in agreement that the biggest loss was the emotional attachment to people.

> *"Working myself out of a position, I was never not confident that I won't have a job in the organisation, but confident that It was right for the business. I have outlived my position, doing it in my sleep. It's for the other person to take on and for me to move on" – Respondent 1*
>
> *"The vision was included in the leader. I had a lot of respect for him. I struggled with believing and associating with the new leader and that is a loss for me. At a personal level, your life changed" – Respondent 3*
>
> *"Your skin in the game will change (strategic vs. tactical). I grew up with my team, it's like a marriage" – Respondent 3*
>
> *"You have your career aspirations and now you have to re-assess" – Respondent 4.*
>
> *"Unfinished work. Not the loss you want to cry about" – Respondent 6*
>
> *"We, management loss credibility in the business. We made sure the business did not get a fine at the cost of people's dignity. Loss of motivation and morale in the business (the energy)" – Respondent 11*
>
> *"I never associated and identified with the title. The true loss was the loss of my team. I like them as people" – Respondent 12*

- Figure 10 depicts the findings of the content analysis, uncovering the rationale of what the leader perceived was to be gained from the change. The responses were analysed using a thematic analysis technique and recorded four themes.
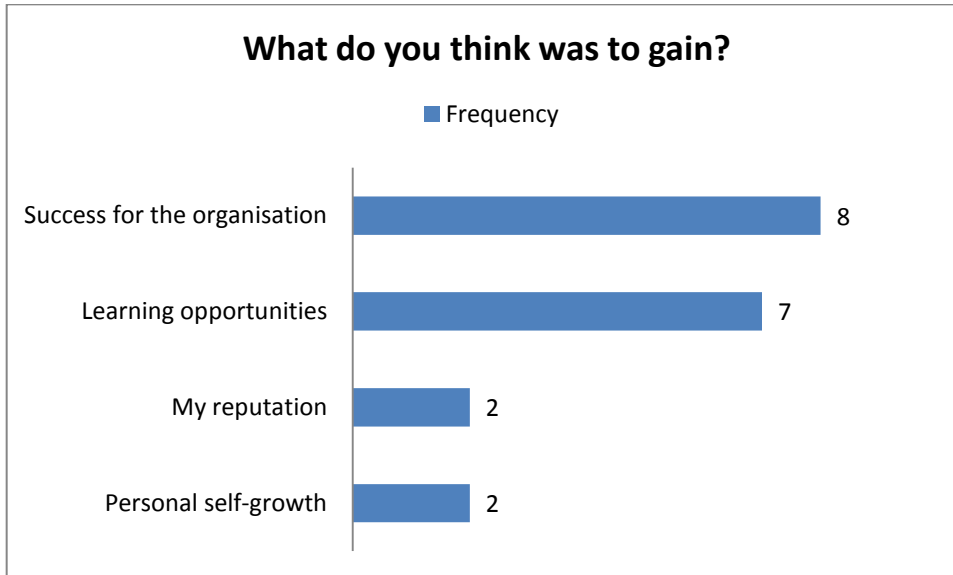
Figure 10: Rank ordered thematic analysis of reasons perceived by the leader to be gained from the change

From the interviews it was evident that the two largest themes were the success for the organisation and learning opportunities.

> *"If you believe in your self-worth the organisation will see it" – Respondent 1*
>
> *"Gave me self-growth. The strengths that I didn't know I had" – Respondent 5*

5.4 Results for research objective two: To reveal the process which the individual (leader) goes through in processing loss to lead others on the journey of change

A total of five questions were used in the semi-structured, in-depth interviews to gather the data for this research objective. Two questions were open-ended questions and three were closed Likert scale questions.

- Respondents were asked to rate the use of their own motivation during the organisational change using a four point Likert scale. Figure 11 below depicts this.

The total for each category was calculated by assigning numerical values of each category to the Likert scale. The numerical values on the Likert scale were then summed to arrive at an overall score that represents the total number of leaders that selected a particular category. The percentage total value was then calculated by dividing the overall score for each category by the sample size.

I found myself motivating myself

Not at all 7%
Rarely 13%
Seldom 0%
Often 80%

Figure 11: The use of the leader's own motivation

From the interviews it was evident that the majority of leaders found themselves often motivating themselves.

"The system is not going to do that for you" - Respondent 3

"Difficult to let go when you built up something. You have to remind yourself why" – Respondent 5

"I had to motivate myself every single day" – Respondent 7

"There are good days and bad days. It required a lot of my own motivation, you can take another day of this. When I came home, I was exhausted" – Respondent 8

"Motivating yourself. Walking up every morning and putting a smile on your face. Very often, its people who are the same level as you who motivate each other" - Respondent 12

However some of the 20% of respondents mentioned:

"Glass empty or half full. I am positive" - Respondent 13

"I am intrinsically motivated. I am learning. This world is so big" – Respondent 15

- The interview also compromised of an open-ended question that was constructed with the aim of determining the difficulties faced by the leader. The responses were analysed using a thematic analysis technique and recorded four themes in Figure 12 below.

What were the difficulties faced?

■ Frequency

Difficulty	Frequency
Managing own emotions	6
Selling it to my team	6
HR process	2
Being a leader	1
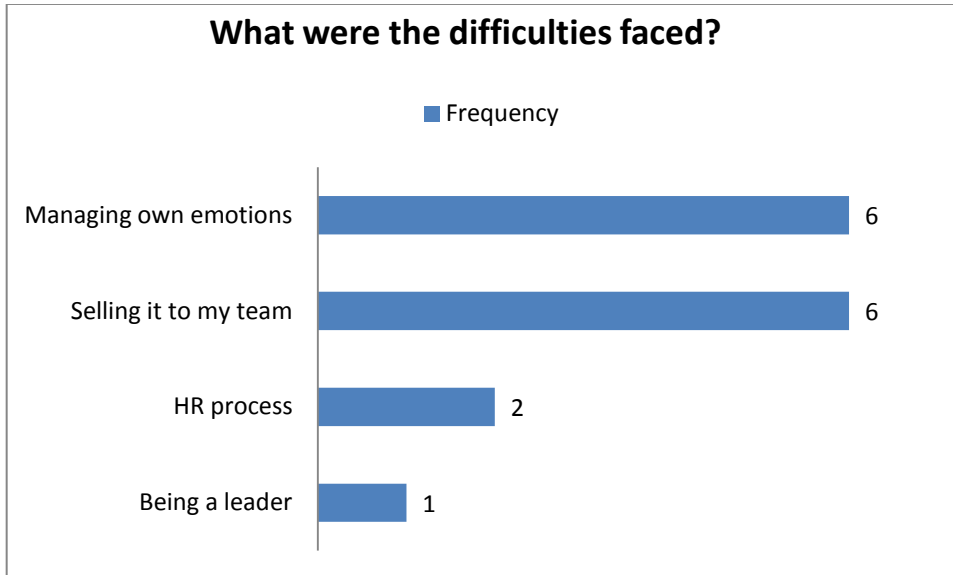
Figure 12: Rank ordered thematic analysis of the difficulties faced by the leader

From the interviews it was evident that the two most common difficulties experienced by leaders were managing their own emotions and selling the change to their team.

"I was very open to my leadership team. They must do a lot more work to put bones to it, to put structure to it. They viewed me as being critical to their decision" – *Respondent 7*

"The organisation's HR process is heartless. Cold decision but you have warm bodies. We still want you to work ever harder even though you going through this. You don't focus on your own emotions, what does this mean for you. A six week leave actually sounds like a great thing now" – *Respondent 8*

"Dealing with the HR people that was so scared of the rules. Form over substance" - *Respondent 11*

"Consistently been the sole lone voice - its gonna work. Personally I had to believe even if its 20%. Until you don't have that belief any more, you keep believing in it" - *Respondent 12*

- All 15 respondents that were interviewed mentioned that they went through a range of emotions when asked to describe what they went through in processing the loss.

> *"Empowering for me, to see the changes through. I can do" – Respondent 1*
>
> *"Disappointment of planting a seed and not watching it grow. I don't associate myself with the company, I associate myself with the team" – Respondent 3*
>
> *"Anger and excitement. You go through both sides" – Respondent 6*
>
> *"Your family gets impacted, you're not a nice person to be with. You put your entire being on hold. A rollercoaster ride of emotions. You have to script your answer and it's hard. You become an actor in the process" – Respondent 8*
>
> *"Not one single emotion" – Respondent 10*
>
> *"Anger of reality of life, life sometimes is not fair. Grief - seeing people going through. Fear - if I get it wrong" – Respondent 11*
>
> *"I cry on my way to work and I come to work and I am 100%. You get into the leader mode. You have no option. You can't sit in front on your team and start crying. This organisation is bigger than you and it is out of your control" – Respondent 12*

Figure 13 depicts the findings of the content analysis uncovering the emotions that the leaders went through in processing the losses. The responses were analysed using a content analysis technique and recorded three main categories of emotions.

I.   Anger;
II.   Hurt; and
III. Empowered and excited.

Describe the emotion that you went through and what did that mean for you?

■ Frequency

Emotion	Frequency
Anger	8
Hurt	8
Empowered and excited	3
Overwhelmed	2
Grief	1
Fear	1
Guilt	1
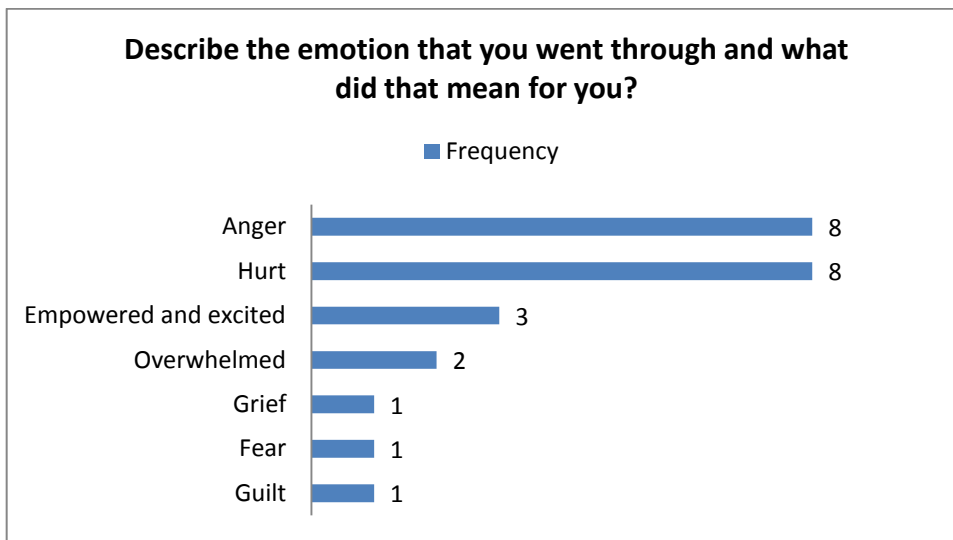
Figure 13: Rank ordered content analysis of emotions that a leader went through in processing loss

- Respondents were asked to rate the benefit of being involved in the process in aiding them to internalise it better, on a four point Likert scale. Figure 14 below depicts this.

The total for each category was calculated by assigning numerical values of each category to the Likert scale. The numerical values on the Likert scale were then added to arrive at an overall score that represents the total number of leaders that selected a particular category. The percentage total value was then calculated by dividing the overall score for each category by the sample size.
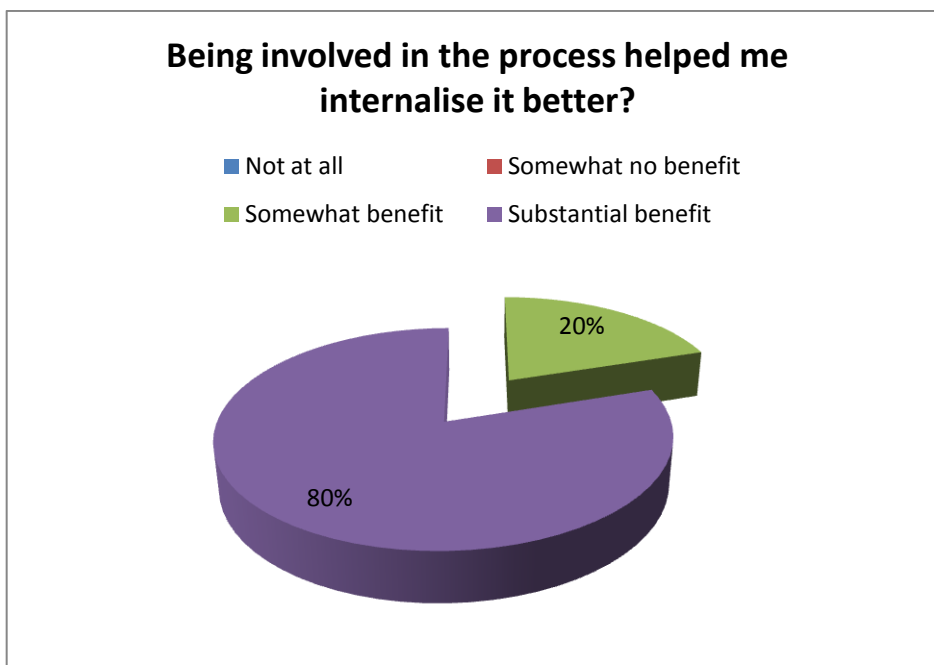
Figure 14: The benefit of the leader being involved in the process

From the interviews, 12 out of 15 leaders indicated how substantial the benefit was for them to be involved in processing the change.

"You feel part of the journey" – Respondent 3

"You can steer the direction, you feel you can better control and influence the process" – *Respondent 4*

"Being part of the process allows you to accept" - Respondent 5

"When you're involved, you understand the why and the what and the thinking. You feel you're part of something" – Respondent 6

You see what it takes to do it" – Respondent 11

"If you're not involving the people in the organisation, in moving the organisation in any direction, they'll still be stuck in the today world. Sometimes you can over process it. The level you bring in people is always a hard call. You don't know if you bringing in people for too much or too little" - Respondent 12

- Respondents were asked to rate the length of time it took to process before leading the change authentically to others, using a four point Likert scale. Figure 15 below depicts this.

How long did it take you to process before you could lead the change onto others authentically?

Category	Percentage
More than 4 weeks	27%
Under 4 weeks	27%
Under 2 weeks	13%
Under 1 week	33%
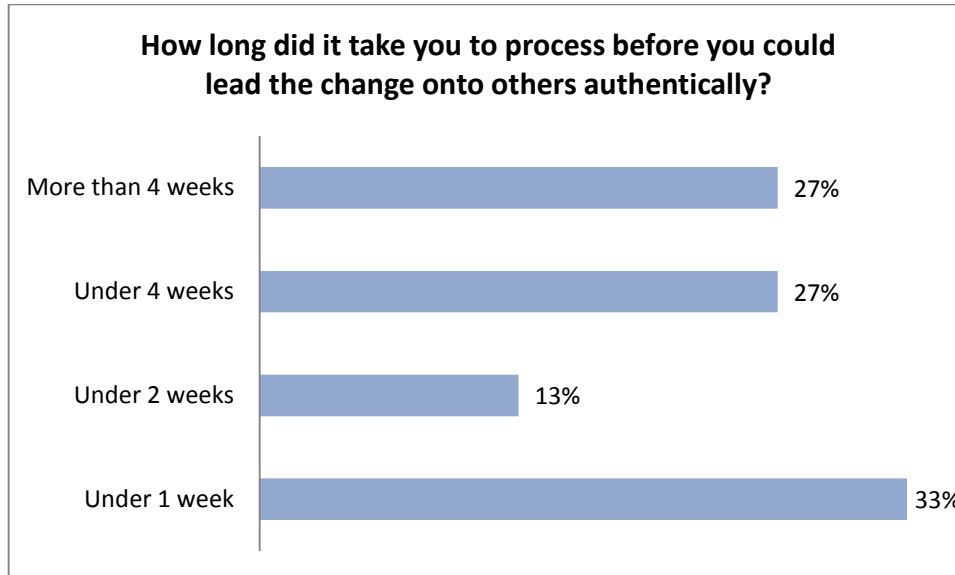
Figure 15: Length of time leaders took to process before leading change onto others

From the interviews it was evident that the most popular response of the sample was under one week, however 54% of respondents rated two weeks and above.

"If I buy into a concept, it's done in my mind. The how to is what I really internalise and that will take time" – Respondent 1

"I was naive of the human impact. It looked quite easy at the time" – Respondent 11

"As a leader you should see these things coming as quickly as they come. Have a story, a story that you could visualise and you take and tell other people and they could identify with it"- Respondent 12

5.5 Results for objective three: To identify the personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves

A total of five questions were used in the semi-structured, in-depth interviews to gather the data for this research objective. Three questions were open-ended questions and two were closed Likert scale questions.

- Respondents were asked to rate their focus as a leader during the organisational change using a four point Likert scale. Figure 16 below depicts this.

The total for each category was calculated by assigning numerical values for each category on the Likert scale. The numerical values on the Likert scale were then combined to arrive at an overall score that represents the total number of leaders that selected a particular category. The percentage total value was then calculated by dividing the overall score for each category by the sample size.


Figure 16: Rating of leader focus during organisational change

From the interviews it was evident that 14 out of 15 respondents indicated that the value of people is critically important and eight respondents indicated organisational objectives are somewhat important.

"People must feel like they're adding value and are excited to come to work. If I focus on just the objectives of the organisation, I change my focus every six months" – *Respondent 2*

"Organisational objectives can shift, but in an organisation, people make an organisation" - *Respondent 3*

"Our business can only be successful on the back of the people. The business objectives are always secondary to development of the people. I am a firm believer that if we get the right teams in place and create the right working environment, we enable our team properly; the business objectives will fall into place as a consequence of that" - *Respondent 7*

"Organisation objectives is the easy piece, the hard piece is the people and ultimately that becomes the important thing" – *Respondent 15*

However:

"Has to be balance, one can't proceed the other" – *Respondents 1 & 5*

"It's situational based. There comes a time when you are in survival mode, where you've got to do radical things. And with radical things, if people can't go along with that, you might lose good people" – *Respondent 9*

"The value of the right people" – *Respondent 10*

- Figure 17 depicts the findings of the content analysis uncovering the personality traits of the leader. The responses were analysed using a content analysis technique and recorded eight categories.

Describe your personality traits (the nature of yourself)?

■ Frequency

Trait	Frequency
Sincere and honest	8
Service others and people oriented	8
Impatient and a task master	7
Committed, passionate and driven	6
Analytical	3
Change seeker	3
Loner (introvert)	2
Value based	2

Figure 17: Rank order content analysis of leader personality traits

From the interviews, the top two categories were tied:

I. Sincerity and honesty; and
II. Service to others and love for people.

- Figure 18 depicts the findings of the content analysis uncovering the virtues that the leader kept consistent before the change, during the change and after the change. The responses were analysed using a thematic analysis technique and recorded four themes.

What virtues did you keep consistent (before the change, during the change and after the change)?

■ Frequency

Category	Frequency
Integrity and trust	8
Belief in the cause and loyalty	6
Transparency and non political	5
Principle based	1
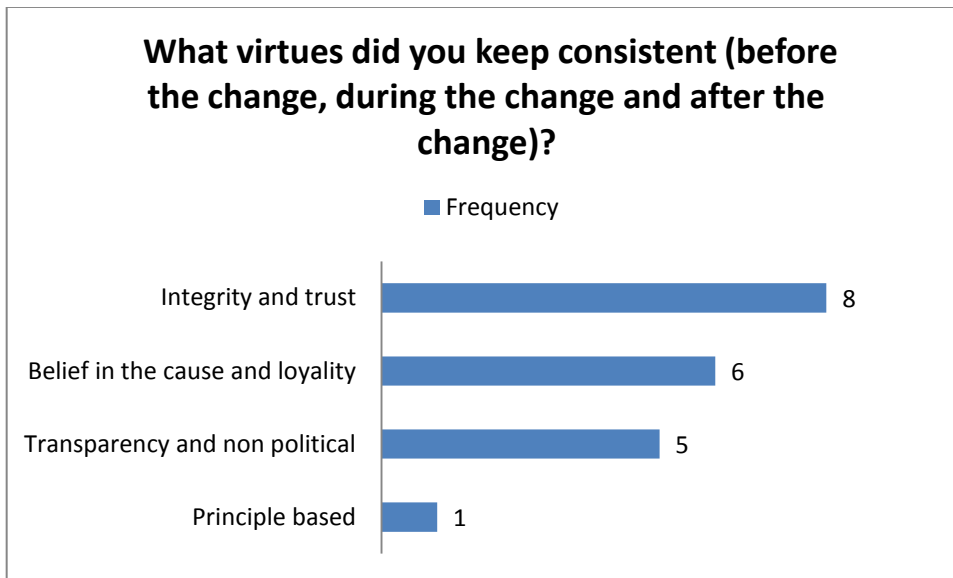
Figure 18: Rank order thematic analysis of virtues that were kept constant

From the interviews, it was evident that integrity and trust were mentioned as the number one virtue that leaders choose to keep consistent.

"Honesty can be a very hard thing. But I think the only way you can work with change, is trust, and trust can form people believing in you and the environment. And that comes from honesty as hard as it may be. Say what you do and do what you say. Those are the things that will keep people following you" – Respondent 9

- Respondents were asked to rate the perceived way in which they show up to others (leadership personality) using a four point Likert scale. Figure 19 below depicts this.

As a leader, are you perceived as?

Legend: ■ Not at all ■ Rarely ■ Seldom ■ Often

bold, outspoken, high visibility with a hard exterior: Often 53%, Seldom 27%, Rarely 20%

low profile acting, strong minded with a gentle exterior: Often 33%, Seldom 33%, Rarely 27%, Not at all 7%
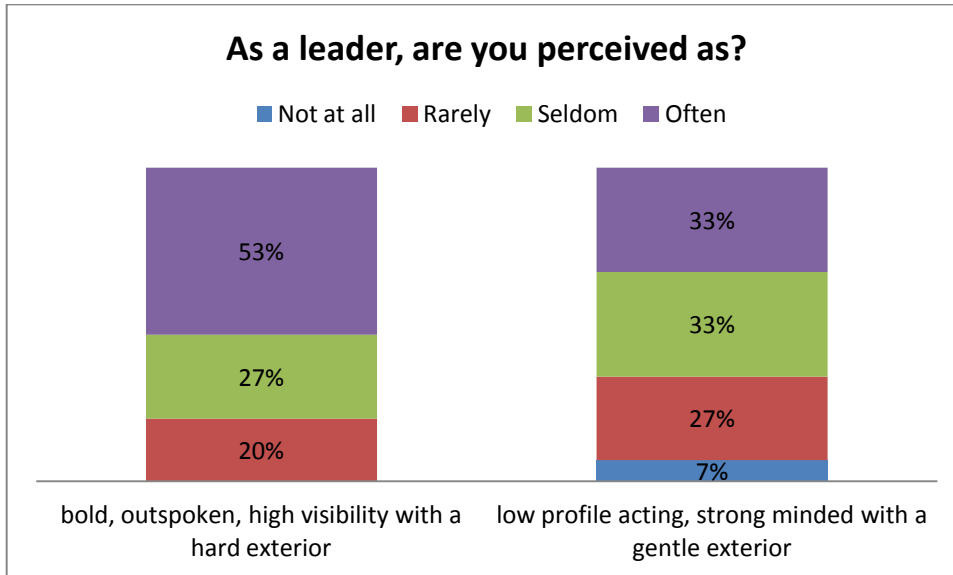
Figure 19: Rating of perceived leadership personality

From the interviews, it is evident that:

I. The leadership personality that is most often rated is "bold, outspoken, high visibility with a hard exterior".

II. The leadership personality that is most seldom rated is "low profile acting, strong minded with a gentle exterior".

"Balanced dependent on the situation" – Respondents 1, 9 &10

"Bold and outspoken with regard to business and the passion" - Respondents 7 & 8

"Swap hard exterior with gentle exterior" Respondents 4 & 11

- Figure 20 depicts the findings of the content analysis uncovering the key lessons learnt about leadership. The responses were analysed using a content analysis technique and recorded five categories.
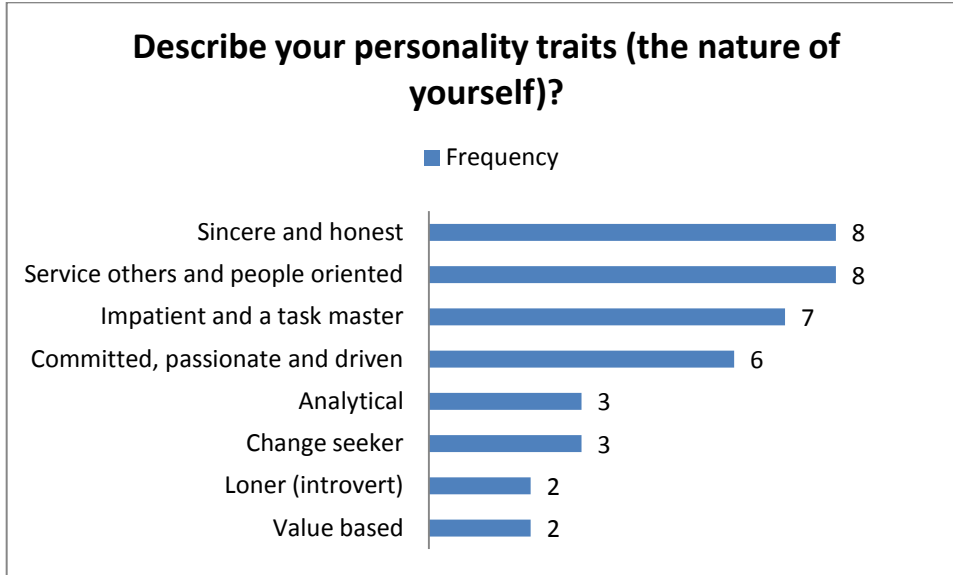

What key lessons about leadership did you learn from the experience?

■ Frequency

Category	Frequency
Leadership is about the management of change	7
Leadership is about leading people	5
Leadership is about relationships, trust and honesty	3
Leadership is about emotional management	2
Leadership is about setting direction and vision	2

Figure 20: Rank order content analysis of key leadership lessons

From the interviews it was clear that the top two categories were:

I. Leadership is about managing change; and
II. Leadership is about leading people.

"Leadership is about self-sacrifice. Leadership is not glamorous; leadership is not about the title or the money you earn. It's about how you can inspire people. It's about having humility" – Respondent 5

"Sometimes companies have to make hard decisions, and as a leader you have to be part of the hard decisions. Sometimes as a leader you have to put others above self. Leaders sometimes have crappy things to do; it's not all glitz and glamour" – Respondent 8

"It's about moving people - moving their hearts and minds from one place to the next. It's much easier to move blocks around on a piece of paper with people names on it, than it is to go do it to the organisation. In implementation, the change sucked the organisation dry, it's been hard. Change is not part of our leadership trait and that's been exposed. Change is made even harder, we spoke about having this change management capacity as some separate role that was going to solve all of this and it's not another role, its leadership role" – Respondent 9

"It's all about the people unless you work in a business with no people. Before then I might have been task-oriented. I learnt about people where they are their work and are they are their job, it's so much of their personality of who they are. A watershed moment in my career - being a leader, it's about leading people. And if you don't want that, don't be a leader, it's how the job comes. If you choose leadership, its people hearts and minds and don't take it lightly" - Respondent 11

"Leadership is hard, it's lonely. Leadership to a great extent is self-sacrifice, not glamorous and it's not about you often, it's about the business. Leadership is thankless, you don't get a pat on the back. People watch you, you can't wear your emotions on your sleeve. Lead from the front. As a leader I don't want everyone to like me, I don't want everyone to not like me. But I hope there is a balance. You must be real; people must want to trust you" – Respondent 13

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

This chapter discusses and interprets the results distilled from the data in chapter five in more detail. The main aim of this chapter is to answer the research questions defined in chapter three and thus close the academic circle. The sections below also detail the findings of the study by drawing a connection to the literature review in chapter two, thus highlighting the relationship between the findings of the research and the literature review.

The discussion of results is presented as per the research objectives.

6.1 Objective one: To investigate what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation

The research objective was focused on understanding the drivers into the behaviour of self-sacrificial leadership for the organisation.

Three drivers into what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation were found to be:

    I.   It's not about self;

   II.   It's what's best for the organisation; and

  III.   It's about the people.

6.1.1. It's not about self

Figure 5 of Chapter 5 highlights the perceived contribution/worth to the organisation rated by respondents. The highest respondent rating of 47% said they are 'totally dispensable' to the organisation. Figure 5 also shows that a combined rating of 60% were in agreement that they are to some extent dispensable to the organisation.

"It's a double edged sword as brilliant succession planning will make you totally dispensable. Good leaders always succession plan." – Respondent 1

"I would think I am very valuable if I am totally dispensable. As I am no key man." - Respondent 11

Taking into consideration Figure 6 in Chapter 5, which highlights the rank ordered factors that helped leaders stay engaged towards the change, from the six factors, the most critical one, as chosen by 80% of leaders, is 'self-awareness'.

"If I didn't believe in it, it would be about self but it was not. Leadership is not about self" – Respondent 1

"If you're not self-aware, you can't play the role, you're dead" – Respondent 3

This verifies the sentiments of Higgs and Rowland (2010) that good leaders are aware of their impulses, their struggles and can reflect – put themselves into shoes of others to view their own leadership. This is further supported by Young and Dulewicz (2006), who believed that self-awareness is the heartbeat of self-sacrificial behaviour.

Therefore the findings of Figure 5 and Figure 6 are supported the authors above. Being self-aware is about truly knowing who you are and are not - allowing yourself to be humble. Morris, Brotheridge and Urbanski (2005) defined humility as a crest of human excellence between arrogance and lowliness. With self-awareness, the leader does not need affirmation of his or her strengths. The leader becomes authentic in nature and authentic to themselves by virtue of their humbleness.

6.1.2. It's what best for the organisation

Figure 8 of Chapter 5 depicts the ranked content analysis of what led the leader to support the change. The highest frequency by a large margin supported the change because it was 'best for the organisation'.

"First and foremost we work for the company and are accountable to the shareholders" – *Respondent 8*

From the four themes in Figure 10, which depicts the thematic analysis of reasons perceived by the leaders to be gained from the change, 'success for the organisation' was the strongest.

"Without purpose you are lost. Then you deviate, maybe not delivering anything or with no benefits" – *Respondent 6*

This verifies the sentiments of Taylor *et al.* (2007), which stated that the challenge of leadership is to rise above day-to-day management concerns and focus on the larger purpose of work and the organisation as an ecosystem. This is further supported by Collins (2001) who spoke of a 'Level 5' leader – an individual who blends extreme personal humility with intense professional will. Professional will in leaders demonstrates an unwavering resolve to do whatever must be done to produce the best long-term results, no matter how difficult.

Therefore the consensus between the findings of Figure 8 and Figure 10 support the authors above. As leaders that work for organisations in producing products or services, the ultimate aim in a business is to create and maximise shareholder value. In saying this, leaders must believe in the vision, and if not, be advocates of it. Being leaders of an organisation means not only believing, but also supporting the organisation during change. Gill (2003, p. 312) suggested that "leading change involves developing a vision of the future, crafting strategies to bring that vision to reality, and ensuring that everybody in the organisation is mobilising their energies towards the same goal". In essence, leaders have a mindful duty to do what is best for the company to succeed and grow.

6.1.3. It's about the people

Figure 7 of Chapter 5 highlights the ranked content analysis of other factors that kept leaders engaged during the change. 'The people' was the most prominent factor of all six.

"A leader drives for the success of people. You are a catalyst as a leader for people" – Respondent 1

"You see the pain and struggle the people in your team go through. And you travel a couple of wars together, they become your family. The number one responsibility is to make sure that they are ok and navigate them through change" – Respondent 12

'Emotional attachment to the people' was the most prominent of all seven factors in Figure 9, which highlights the ranked content analysis of why leaders saw the change as a loss.

"I grew up with my team, it's like a marriage" – Respondent 3

"I never associated and identified with the title. True loss was the loss of my team. I like them as people" – Respondent 12

This verifies the sentiment of Potter (2001), which highlighted that strong leadership is needed in terms of focusing people's energy into specific goals and outcomes (Potter, 2001). This is further supported by Gill (2003), who claimed that leading change is about showing the way: using personal power to win the hearts and minds of people towards a common goal. It's about helping others understand the need for change both intellectually and emotionally.

Therefore the consensus from the findings of Figure 7 and Figure 9 support the authors above. Being sacrificial for the people means supporting them, guiding them and having their best interests at heart. The leaders who feel this, feel motherly towards their people and have an inherent urge to protect and nurture them through the organisational change. Taylor *et al.* (2007) suggested that leadership begins on the inside, with a focus on the heart, thus displaying that self-sacrifice creates a source of psychological comfort for the followers.

In conclusion, research objective I - the drivers into what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation - were found to be:

     I.   It's not about self;

    II.   It's what's best for the organisation; and

   III.   It's about the people.

6.2. Research objective two: To reveal the process which the individual (leader) goes through in processing loss to lead others on the journey of change

The research objective was focused on discovering the approaches into the processing of self-sacrificial leadership to lead change effectively onto others, which were found to be:

I.   Self motivation;
II.   Managing own emotions; and
III. Internalisation.

6.2.1. Self motivation

Figure 11 of Chapter 5 depicts a rating of how leaders found them using self-motivation during the processing of loss. 80% of leaders found themselves 'often' using self-motivation during the processing of organisational change.

"Difficult to let go when you built up something. You have to remind yourself why" – Respondent 5

"I had to motivate myself every single day" – Respondent 7

In assessing Figure 12 of Chapter 5, the ranked thematic analysis of difficulties faced by the leader, 'selling it to my team' was the most prominent theme, together with 'managing own emotions'.

"Consistently been the sole lone voice - its gonna work. Personally I had to believe even if its 20%. Until you don't have that belief any more, you keep believing in it" - Respondent 12

This verifies the sentiment of Nikolaou *et al.* (2007) in highlighting that the two out of five dispositional characteristics that represent effective change leaders, are:

I. Self-efficacy – refers to persistence, resilience in the face of failure, effective problem solving and self-control; and

II. Locus of control – refers to the change agent having a high internal locus of control. The change agent has the ability to exercise control over the environment and believes that he or she has control over his/her personal success and has strong coping strategies.

This is further supported by Eisenbach *et al.* (1999), who suggested that leaders might not need to create dissatisfaction with the present, but rather provide a vision of a possible future that is attractive and engaging. Eisenbach *et al.* (1999) further explained that this could be done through intellectual stimulation, whereby the leader sets challenging goals for the employees and motivates them to rethink old ways of doing business.

Therefore the consensus from the findings of Figure 11 and Figure 12 supports the authors above. Self-motivation is needed to get the leader through his or her internal process, as well as to sell the change/lead the change to others. Self-motivation is a trait that is hard to find when leaders are faced with organisational change, however self-sacrificial leaders possess high levels of this, which enables them to lead effective change onto others. This is supported by van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005), who stated that a leader's self-sacrificing behaviour will create pressure on followers to do as is done to them: forgo self-interest and commit oneself to the collective.

6.2.2. Managing own emotions

Figure 12 of Chapter 5 highlights the ranked thematic analysis of difficulties faced by the leader. 'Managing own emotions' was the most prominent theme, together with 'selling it to my team'.

"You don't focus on your own emotions, what does this mean for you. A six week leave actually sounds like a great thing now" – Respondent 8

Figure 13 of Chapter 5 highlights the ranked content analysis of emotions that a leader goes through in processing loss. There was a range of emotions, most of which occurred with equal frequency. Three main categories of emotions emerged:

I. Anger;
II. Hurt; and
III. Empowered and excited.

"A rollercoaster ride of emotions. You have to script your answer and it's hard. You become an actor in the process" – Respondent 8

"Not one single emotion" – Respondent 10

"Anger of reality of life, life sometimes is not fair. Grief - seeing people going through. Fear - if I get it wrong" – Respondent 11

"I cry on my way to work and I come to work and I am 100%. You get into the leader mode. You have no option. You can't sit in front on your team and start crying" – Respondent 12

This verifies the sentiment of Nikolaou *et al.* (2007), who argued that change could be received with excitement and happiness, or anger and fear. Gill (2003) added that some of the powerful forces of resistance to change are emotional barriers.

Therefore the alignment between the findings of Figure 12 and Figure 13 partially support the authors above, however there is a gap in the literature that would go into the depth of leadership emotion in self-sacrificial behaviour. This finding does add to the body of knowledge of sacrificial leadership during organisational change.

As a leader, rational thinking is what you are paid for, however humans are filled with emotions that come with us and leaders cannot separate the two. The emotions are part of the thinking and decision-making, therefore managing these emotions is emotionally, mentally and physically draining. Self-sacrificial leaders have the ability to manage their emotions effectively in order to lead others into change.

6.2.3. Internalisation

Figure 14 of Chapter 5 depicts the benefit of the leader being involved in the process, with 80% of respondents indicating the 'substantial benefit' of being involved in the process.

"You can steer the direction, you feel you've got better control and influence the process" – Respondent 4

"When you're involved, you understand the why and the what and the thinking. You feel you're part of something" – Respondent 6

Taking into consideration Figure 15 of Chapter 5 that depicts the length of time leaders took to process before leading change onto others, the most popular response at 33% was 'under one week'. However when combining categories, 54% of respondents rated 'two weeks or more', while 46% rated 'under two weeks'. Thus, even though the most popular response was 'under one week', the majority rated 'two weeks or more'.

"If I buy into a concept, it's done in my mind" – Respondent 1

"I was naive of the human impact. It looked quite easy at the time" – Respondent 11

This verifies the sentiment of Higgs and Rowland (2010) that in order for leaders to exhibit behaviours of humility and self-sacrificing, leaders need to be able to step back with a degree of detachment. This is further supported by Karp (2006), who stated that successful organisational change needs to combine the 'inner' shift in people's values, aspirations, mental models and behaviours, with 'outer' shifts in processes, strategies, practices and systems.

The alignment between the findings of Figure 14 and Figure 15 support the authors above, thus leaders need to internalise the change for themselves before trying to lead followers. This requires processing the change and separating their interests in combating any resistance. Internalisation takes longer when leaders feel more attached to the people as they connect to the loss they are going though - these are the leaders that take between two to four weeks to internalise the change. Internalisation for leaders who take under one

week are leaders that have utmost belief in the vision of the organisation and connect less with the people.

In conclusion, research objective II: The approaches to the processing of self-sacrificial leadership to lead change effectively to others, were found to be:

I. Self motivation;
II. Managing own emotions; and
III. Internalisation.

6.3. Research objective three: To identify the personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves

The leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves were found to be:

I.   An advocate for the value of people;
II.   Have humility at the core; and
III. Bold, outspoken, strong minded with a gentle exterior.

6.3.1. An advocate for the value of people

Figure 16 of Chapter 5 reflects the ratings of leader focus during organisational change. 93% of respondents rated 'the value of the people' as 'critically important' and 53% of respondents rated 'organisational objectives' as 'somewhat important'.

"Our business can only be successful on the back of the people. The business objectives are always secondary to development of the people. I am a firm believer that if we get the right teams in place and create the right working environment, we enable our team properly; the business objectives will fall into place as a consequence of that" - *Respondent 7*

Figure 17 of Chapter 5 reflects the ranked order content analysis of leader personality traits, with 'service others and people oriented' being rated equally frequently with 'sincere and honest'.

This verifies the sentiment of Singh and Krishnan (2007) that self-sacrifice has a relationship with transformational leadership mediated by altruism (concern for others). The reason for this could be that altruism is about the whole personality of the leader as opposed to purely self-sacrifice, which only focuses on personal forgiving.

This is further supported by Spears (1996) in Barnabas and Clifford (2012), who said that the central meaning of servant-leadership is that the leader must first of all become a

servant and experience being a servant, as this is central to his or her greatness – 'the servant as leader'.

Therefore the consensus between the findings of Figure 16 and Figure 17 support the authors above. Truly leading people can only be done if a leader has done what their people do. Having felt both extremes of what the job entails makes one a far better leader than someone who leads from a distance. Supporting people means being in the trenches with them, shovel to shovel. Being a servant leader is to serve the people, and if they are served well, they will serve their leaders and the organisation even better. Collins' (2001) idea of a Level 5 leader supports this argument of putting people first - showing love and care for people will lock not only their minds, but also their hearts, into the organisation.

6.3.2. Have humility at the core

Figure 17 of Chapter 5 reflects the ranked order content analysis of leader personality traits. 'Sincere and honest' were rated equally frequently with 'service others and people oriented' by respondents.

The most frequently mentioned theme in Figure 18 of Chapter 5, which reflects the ranked order thematic analysis of virtues that were kept constant, was 'integrity and trust'.

"Honesty can be a very hard thing. But I think the only way you can work with change, is trust, and trust can form people believing in you and the environment. And that comes from honesty as hard as it may be. Say what you do and do what you say. Those are the things that will keep people following you" – Respondent 9

This verifies the sentiment of Nielsen *et al.* (2010) that trustworthiness and honesty are attributes that foster higher levels of loyalty to the leader, which will in turn inspire greater willingness and commitment to follow the leader's vision. This shows that in leading change, if the leader exhibits behaviours of humility and self-sacrificing, followers will in turn reciprocate that behaviour.

This is further supported by Barnabas and Clifford (2012), who stated that one of the six dimensions of servant leadership behaviour is authentic self - when leaders lead in their consistent display of humility, integrity, accountability, security and vulnerability.

Therefore the consensus between the findings of Figure 17 and Figure 18 support the authors above. Humility seems to be the underlining fabric of self-sacrifice. Leaders who are willing and prepared to sacrifice their needs for a greater purpose stand on the foundation of humility. Humility is a virtue that can be respected and admired, and helps mould good leaders into great leaders. Collin (2001) suggested that leaders with compelling modesty look in the mirror, not out the window, to apportion responsibility for poor results, and that never blaming other people, external factors or bad luck demonstrates personal humility.

6.3.3. Bold, outspoken, strong minded with a gentle exterior

Figure 19 of Chapter 5 reflects the rating of perceived leadership personality. The leadership personality that was 'most often' rated was 'bold, outspoken, high visibility with a hard exterior'. However the leadership personality that was 'most seldom' rated was 'low profile acting, strong minded with a gentle exterior'.

"Bold and outspoken with regard to business and the passion" - Respondents 7 & 8

"Swap hard exterior with gentle exterior" - Respondent 4 & 11

This, however, partially contradicts Collins' (2001) discovery of Level 5 leadership personality; these great leaders had personality traits that were shy, unpretentious, modest, willful and fearless. This further partially contradicts Morris *et al.* (2005), who supported Collins' findings and suggested that leaders who exhibit humility are ordinary individuals who quietly lead by displaying leadership traits of a low profile and act with modesty, restraint, patience, mutuality and care.

Therefore the findings of Figure 19 and the quotes above connect to a combination or swapping of some of leadership personalities traits as described by Collins and Morris.

Self-sacrificial leaders are more bold and outspoken in achieving success rather than shy, unpretentious and low profile acting. However the research finding of 'strong minded with a gentle exterior' and 'willful and fearless' does support Collins and Morris. In the different leadership outfits discussed, the premise of self-sacrifice leadership qualities remain – simple beings, humane, just and people centric.

In conclusion, research objective III found that the leadership personalities that have strength to lead change and are prepared to sacrifice themselves were:

I. An advocate for the value of people;

II. Have humility at the core; and

III. Bold, outspoken, strong minded with a gentle exterior.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1.   Introduction

This chapter aims to conclude this research in concurrence with the problem statement outlined in chapter one.   The salient findings of self-sacrificial leadership are briefly discussed in relation to the research objectives.   Recommendations for leaders and organisations are presented based on these findings. Lastly, it highlights possible future research studies emanating from this study.

7.2.   Salient findings

7.2.1. The drivers into what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation

People are inspired and astonished by the self-sacrificing behaviour of others and assign meaning and purpose to these acts (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005) - leadership that places others' needs first and can see beyond personal gain and loss. Leaders that can lead their followers past a struggle and make them see an appealing vision are the future and are needed now more than ever during organisational change and uncertainty.   The research finding suggests three drivers of self-sacrificial leadership behaviour:

I.   It's not about self

"If people feel a sense of loss when they lose a title, they don't really know what a leader is about" – Respondent 12

Being self-aware is about truly knowing who you are and who you not, allowing yourself to be humble about yourself. The leader becomes authentic in showing up to others and authentic to self by virtue of their humbleness.

II.   Its what's best for the organisation

"We are all dispensable but you won't be dispensed of if you're really adding good value" – *Respondent 15*

As leaders that work for organisations in producing products or services, the ultimate aim in a business is to create and maximise shareholder value. In saying this, leaders need to believe in the vision and if not, be advocates of it. In essence leaders have a mindful duty to do what is best for the company to succeed and grow.

III.   It's about the people

"Absence of leadership in uncertain organisational change is probably the biggest mistake. Even if you're present in body alone that is sometimes better than not there at all. People need to feel that you are there with them in these times" – *Respondent 12*

Being sacrificial for the people means supporting them, guiding them and having their best interests at heart. These leaders who feel this, feel motherly towards their people and have an inherent nature to protect and nature them through the organisational change.

7.2.2. The approach into the processing of self-sacrificial leadership to lead change effectively to others

Gill (2003, p. 307) explained that "while change must be well managed – it must be planned, organised, directed and controlled – it also requires effective leadership to introduce the change successfully: it is leadership that makes the difference". Organisations look to strong leaders to lead change effectively for their followers. However when the leader is faced with his or her change together with the followers, how does the leader manage this? The research findings suggest the following approach in processing self-loss and effectively leading change to others:

I. Self motivation

"The more external locus of control that you look for to confirm your self-worth, the less you control your destiny" – Respondent 3

Having self-motivation is needed in getting the leader through his or her internal process, as well as selling the change/leading the change to others. Self-motivation is a trait that hard to find when leaders are faced with organisational change, however self-sacrificial leaders possess high levels of this that enable them to lead effective change onto others.

II. Managing own emotions

"Leaders don't judge, they believe" – Respondent 1

As a leader, rational thinking is what you are paid for. However being human we are filled with emotions that come with us and leaders cannot separate the two. The emotions are part of the thinking and decision-making. Therefore managing these emotions is emotionally, mentally and physically draining. Self-sacrificial leaders have the ability to manage self-emotions effectively in order to leads others into change.

III. Internalisation

Internalisation requires processing the change and separating personal interest in combating any resistance. Internalisation takes longer when the leader feels more attachment to the people and connects to their loss. These are leaders that take between two to four weeks to internalise the change. Internalisation for leaders less than one week, are leaders that have utmost belief in the vision of the organisation and connects less with the attachment of the people.

7.2.3. The personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves

Collins (2001) explained in his discovery of Level 5 leadership that personality is counterintuitive: People assume that transforming companies from good to great requires 'larger-than life' leaders with big personalities, however these great leaders had personality traits that were shy, unpretentious, modest, willful and fearless. They were however coupled with a fierce, even stoic, resolve towards life. Different leaders bring their own leadership flavour in how they show up as leaders and lead their people. The research findings suggest three personality traits of self-sacrificial leadership:

I.   An advocate for the value of people

"I learnt there is a fine line with doing the legally right thing than the humane right thing. And if anything in my career I always erred on doing the humane right thing at the cost of the fine or I pushed the envelope. People have to live lives and we must never forget that" – Respondent 11

Supporting the people means being in the trenches with them, shovel to shovel. Being a servant leader is to serve the people and if you serve them well, they will serve you and the organisational even better. Showing love and care to the people will in turn lock not only their minds, but also their hearts into the organisation.

II.   Have humility at the core

"We chose to tell the people on the day of the Christmas party, we said we couldn't with integrity have the party tonight and tell people tomorrow. It was a terrible Christmas party but I knew we had to do it" – Respondent 11

Humility seems to be the underlining fabric of self-sacrifice. Leaders who are willing and prepared to sacrifice their needs for a greater purpose are standing on the foundation of humility. Humility is a virtue that can be respected, admired and helps mould good leaders into great leaders.

III.   Bold, outspoken, strong minded with a gentle exterior

Self-sacrificial leaders are more bold and outspoken for the achievement of success rather than shy, unpretentious and low profile acting. The research finding also suggests 'strong minded with a gentle exterior' and 'willful and fearless'.

7.3 Recommendation for leaders

Young leaders, and even to an extent Generation-X leaders, are often naïve to the true meaning and value of what a leader brings to the table. These leaders often perceive the title as power over people rather than power to the people. Autocratic leadership has run its course and is no longer needed for the 22nd century. People that leaders serve require leaders that are humble and have humility as a core virtue. These followers require leaders that lead with passion, integrity and authenticity.

The research highlights that sacrificial leadership begins with a heart - a heart for the people, for the organisation and lastly for self. Leaders should serve the organisation and its people first, then self. This involves leaders to abstract their personal interest from the purpose of the change in achieving a bigger objective. The research also highlights that taking things personally will only paralyse thinking and make one question one's self-worth, which is in conflict with being self-sacrificial. Leaders should believe in the organisation's vision and support its people through it. Leading change involves feeling the pain that the people are going through, being human about it and displaying comfort, empathy, trust and integrity. Leading change also involves sharing the organisation's vision and belief with its people in taking them on a journey, giving those people eyes that cannot see. Leaders should get to know their people as people and not as employees, as this only enhances followers' trust. The research shows that leaders are human too and go through a rollercoaster of their own emotions, such as anger and hurt, before a feeling of acceptance. Leaders should manage their emotions well before leading the change onto others, developing a strong emotional management capacity. Leaders should feed off their internal locus of control for self-motivation in tough times and start developing a strong internal locus of control.

Leaders are consistently faced with the challenge between organisational objectives versus the value of people. When faced with this double-edged sword, the research shows that the value of people should be most important, however not to the extreme detriment of the organisation. Ultimately, serving the people and being a servant leader is true leadership that leaders should consider and adopt.

7.4 Recommendation for organisations

Organisations play a crucial role in shaping the environment so that it is conducive for leading effective change and the breeding of leadership. The results of the research show that sacrificial leadership requires leaders to have strong emotional intelligence, which implies that organisations need to ensure that the development of leaders not only include functional training, but most importantly, emotional management training. Developing this emotional capacity in the organisation will ensure leaders have the ability to be self-aware, acknowledging their true strengths and weaknesses and understanding how to leverage others effectively. In an effort to grow young leaders, organisations should integrate personal self-discovery training into leaders' development plans. This will ultimately ensure that leaders know themselves first before leading others. This is the ability to understand self-emotions and how to manage them.

An important lesson highlighted by the research is that organisations should keep their leadership teams (from top tier to bottom tier) included and involved in the journey of change. This essentially helps the organisation to build a change capability at the start of the change, understanding the why, what and how. Organisations should take the line that managing change is not something that can be outsourced - rather it is the leadership's responsibility and is part of being a leader. Moving people's hearts and minds can only happen if they feel part of the process, therefore organisations should practice their values and live up to them. Values such as integrity and trust are non-negotiable and build humility in a leader character. This ultimately strengthens the leader/follow bond in helping lead authentic change.

Finally, organisations should take responsibility in weeding out destructive leadership that does not show care for its people. Being people centric is fundamentally the heartbeat of true leadership, which is why the organisation should embrace and cultivate the behaviour of servant leadership. Authentic leadership starts with a heart, and this will ultimately lock in people to serve the organisation authentically.

7.5 Recommendation for future research

Based on the research findings, further research in the following areas would assist in gaining a deeper understanding of self-sacrificial behaviour, leadership selflessness and the growing need for it.

I. Further research can be conducted on sacrificial behaviour on the other side of the coin, not just in leadership. Followers and their self-sacrifice for organisational change may impact the leader to reciprocate the action.

II. Further research can be conducted on self-sacrifice where nothing is to gain. This could include retrenchment or a negative remuneration impact.

III. Further research can be conducted on leaders that resign due to the potential for too great a personal sacrifice, e.g. the personal sacrifice could be the new vision/objectives of the organisation which are far removed from who the leader is fundamentally.

IV. Further research can be conducted on the similarities and/or differences between sacrificial behaviour of leaders between different industries.

7.6 Conclusion

Great leaders are crucial for the development of South Africa and play an essential role in leading people for success, however leaders in times of difficult organisational change may not be effective in leading the change for themselves and their people. Followers look to leaders for strength, courage and hope in times of organisational uncertainty. Emphasis is placed on the leader to navigate through the forest of uncertain change and to make decisions either in the interests of themselves or the organisation and others.

Figure 20 of Chapter 5 reflects the ranked order content analysis of key lessons learnt about leadership. Managing change and leading people were identified as the two most frequent categories.

"It's about how you can inspire people. It's about having humility" – Respondent 5
"Sometimes as a leader you have to put others above self" – Respondent 8
"It's about moving people – moving their hearts and minds from one place to the next" – Respondent 9
"It's all about the people unless you work in a business with no people"- Respondent 11

This shows that leaders need to dig deep into the true meaning of leadership when faced with an organisational change. Self-sacrificial leadership forgoes personal interest for a greater purpose – the organisation and its people. The research has provided a comprehensive review of self-sacrificial leadership: the factors that encourage a leader to self-sacrifice; the process in which the leader processing loss is leading change effectively to others; and the leadership personality that has the strength to sacrifice themselves. The intention of the research is that the findings from the study will bring about a crucial benefit to organisational sustainability by increasing the ability to lead change and shape leaders into 'Level 5' leadership.

"A leader is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realising that all along they are being directed from behind" - Nelson Mandela

As a result, leadership is about self-sacrifice, managing change and leading people.

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Appendix A: Interview Guideline

Introductory questions

Code	1	2	3	4
Age	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	>= 50
Gender	Male	Female		
Total years of experience as a leader in career	< 2 years	2 – 5 years	5 – 10 years	> 10 years
Level of highest qualification	Professional certification	Undergraduate degree	Honours degree	Masters degree and higher

Objective one: To investigate what encourages a leader to self-sacrifice their needs for the organisation.

Question 1

How would you value your contribution/worth to the organisation?

Code	1	2	3	4
	Totally dispensable	Somewhat dispensable	Somewhat indispensable	Totally indispensable

Question 2

What kept you engaged towards this kind of change?

Code	1	2	3	4
	Not important at all	Somewhat not important	Somewhat important	Critically important
Self-awareness				
Ability to work in the moment				
Ability to remain in tune with the overall purpose				
Openness				
Transcendence				
If other, list and rate				

Question 3

What led to you supporting the change?

Question 4

Why did you see this as a loss to you?

Question 5

What was to gain – explain your rationale/motive?

Objective two: To reveal the process which the individual (leader) goes through in processing loss to lead others on the journey of change.

Question 1

I found myself motivating myself

Code	1	2	3	4
	Not at all	Rarely	Seldom	Often

Question 2

What were the difficulties and how did you keep yourself balanced?

Question 3

Describe the emotion that you went through and what did that mean for you?

Question 4

Being involved in the process helped me internalise it better? Why?

Code	1	2	3	4
	Not at all	Somewhat no benefit	Somewhat benefit	Substantial benefit

Question 5

How long did this process take you before you started to lead the change onto others?

Code	1	2	3	4
	Under 1 week	Under 2 weeks	Under 4 weeks	More than 4 weeks

Objective three: To identify the personality traits of leaders who have the strength to lead change and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves.

Question 1

What would best describe your focus as a leader during the organisational change?

Code	1	2	3	4
Your affinity towards:	Not important at all	Somewhat not important	Somewhat important	Critically important
Organisational objectives				
The value of the people				

Question 2

Describe your personality traits (the nature of yourself)?

Question 3

What virtues did you keep consistent (before the change, during the change and after the change)?

Question 4

As a leader, are you perceived as?

Code	1	2	3	4
	Not at all	Rarely	Seldom	Often
Bold, outspoken, high visibility with a hard exterior				
Low profile acting, strong minded with a gentle exterior				

Question 5

What key lessons about leadership did you learn from the experience?