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Assessing the value add of leadership development programmes, from the line manager's perspective.

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A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to determine the value derived from leadership development programmes by line managers. This research was useful in that its findings would add value to organizations and learning institutions that offered leadership development programmes.

A qualitative research methodology was used. Convenience sampling technique was used as data gathering was based on the researchers personal contacts and their referrals. This technique is known to be the least reliable. But this was taken into account in interpreting the results. Content analysis was used to analyze data. Themes were identified in the literature review upfront and analyzed in the findings as per the priori content analysis technique. Four main themes were identified from the data. The first theme looked at the maturity level of organizations. Feedback on organizations behaviour during a recession was on of the factors used to determine their maturity level. The second theme focused on factors identified as contributing to the failure of leadership development efforts. The third theme discussed factors that result in the success of leadership development programmes. The last theme looked at the value derived by managers from leadership development programmes. Also considering how managers measured this value.

The outcomes of the research were largely aligned to the literature review, with few instances where findings did not reveal any evidence to support or dispute some points.

KEYWORDS

- **Value** – perceived benefit of leadership development programmes.

- **Strategic Alignment** – ensuring the organization's leadership development efforts support the organizations future objectives.

- **Integrated learning approach** – holistic view approach to leadership development. Seen as an ongoing process over a period of time.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfillment 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. The name and the original signature of the student and the date should follow the declaration.

Name: <u>Nomvula Omaruaye</u>

Signature: _____

Date: <u>08 November 2011</u>

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The last two years have been both challenging and rewarding. Determination and will were certainly not enough to get me through. It is my amazing support structures that have made this possible.

To my dear husband, Emmanuel, only you and I know how trying these two years have been. I am certain they were worth it. I love you and look forward to the next phase of our marriage.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 NEED FOR RESEARCH

I will be assessing the perceived value derived from leadership development programmes, from the line manager's perspective.

Leadership development programmes are likely to be found in most corporate organizations. The maturity level of the organization often determines the effectiveness of these Leadership development initiatives (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009). Bersin and Associates identified four stages in their Leadership development Maturity level model (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009). At the most basic (fourth) level Leadership development initiatives are inconsistent, the content is poor and there is minimal benefit for employees (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009). Of the organizations interviewed by Lamoureux and O'Leonard for the Bersin & Associates leadership handbook, 47% fell within this category (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009). At the third level, leadership training is more structured, core competencies are identified, and the curriculum is well defined with the focus being on developing employees. 27% of sampled organizations fell within this category (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009). At the second level, the focus is on leadership development, not necessarily training. The priority is on entrenching the learning culture into the organization (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009). Plans are focused on the future and not only on developing individuals but the organization as well. 16% of organizations fell within this category (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009). The strategic stage of the maturity model is the

ideal for organizations as it is at this stage that leadership development initiatives are aligned with the organization's overall talent management process (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009). At this stage the organizations' executives act as the champions for the learning organization and there is alignment with the strategic priorities of the organization. Only 11% of sampled organizations were within this category (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009).

Now more than ever it has become important for organizations to have a clear sense of expected returns before investing funds into leadership development programmes. The recession proved to be a powerful catalyst for organizations to review their learning & development (L & D) strategies in a drastically changing L & D landscape (Duke Corporate Education, 2009). There is now greater emphasis on developing the organizations' overall capability versus only focusing on individual competency development. The value of leadership development programmes must therefore be clearly demonstrated (Duke Corporate Education, 2009). Going forward L&D spend will be directed toward those elements of the employee population where a real return on investment or value as measured by a likely improvement in business results is possible and visible (Duke Corporate Education, 2009).

This research proposes that the question to be answered by corporate, most importantly by line managers is: To what extent is this leadership intervention assisting me and my employee to build on the organization's capability thereby ensuring that we meet our strategic objectives?

According to the Corporate Leadership Council's Learning and Development Spend benchmarks report, in 2007 organizations in the United States of America were spending an average of 7% of their revenues on learning and development initiatives (Corporate Leadership Council, 2008). In 2007 the average spend on Leadership development per employee in the United States of America was estimated to cost $7 000, compared to the average per employee spend of $1 000 for all other programmes (Czarnowsky, 2008). These figures could amount to millions for large organizations. Most organizations would not embark on any type of project unless there was a clear or estimated return on investment or even perceived value add (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). But we often find organizations continue to invest in development programmes without really seeing the value add (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). In today's economy, leadership development costs must meet certain standards of proof of impact (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). Demonstrating and quantifying the impact of leadership development investments is emerging as a priority for organizations committed to building leadership strength (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004).

Whilst there is growing acknowledgement that proof of impact is essential for any learning initiative, the focus has often been from the employees' perspective. Measuring the impact of these interventions will only be possible once we have a clear understanding of what it is exactly that line managers' find valuable from leadership development programmes. Their views should then be incorporated into developing impact measuring tools.

Steeves and Frein (2010) have identified two dimensions that they believe will influence line managers' support of a development intervention. These are the degree of strategic importance of the initiative and the degree of influence a line manager has in the organization (Steeves & Frein, 2010). The nature of support given by a line manager can range from resistance, disinterest to accountability and involvement (Steeves & Frein, 2010). The more positive levels of involvement occur when development programmes are viewed as being transformational or strategic in nature, and when the line manager has influence and authority in the organization (Steeves & Frein, 2010). In assessing the results of my research I will be aiming to see if Steeves and Frein's findings are manifesting in my research results.

1.2 CONTEXT OF RESEARCH

This topic is relevant for organizations in South Africa that offer leadership development programmes. There are several stakeholders who can benefit from the results of this research, namely: Human Resource Mangers, organizations' internal learning departments and external learning institutions that offer these programmes.

Human Resource Managers often facilitate the application of these programmes in their organizations. Once we have established line managers' views on these programmes, HR Managers will have a better understanding of what is valued by line managers and will therefore ensure that programmes chosen for organizations are meeting the needs of line managers as well as being aligned to

the overall organizations strategic priorities. It is important for HR Managers to realize that value for these programmes must be defined by key stakeholders.

Learning institutions will benefit from this research in that it will assist them to better align learning outcomes to the needs of both the organizations and line manager. Although the needs of managers and the overall organization should not be too different, it is important to try to cater to the needs of all stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Organizations operate in increasingly competitive, global environments. The recent world recession further compounded organizations' need to become more efficient, cost effective, and refine the quality of what they do (Green, 2004). Competition and the recession have pushed organizations to look for ways to maximize the return for every investment decision that is made (Green, 2004). These efforts create a need to evaluate what is done in an attempt to quantify the value of the investment and to direct the organization's strategic decisions (Green, 2004).

A recent poll of corporate human resource practitioners and leaders by SMU Cox Executive Education revealed that 98% of those surveyed planned on continuing with their current level of spend for learning and development, despite the recession (SMU Cox, 2011). Although there was consensus amongst the participants that the spending would have to be more focused, particularly on the organizations' high potential employees who would be the leaders of the future (SMU Cox, 2011). The following areas of learning and development were identified as being the key focus areas during the recession: leadership and executive development, management accountability, interpersonal and organizational skills, aligning leadership with business strategy. The findings from the SMU Cox survey are corroborated by the findings of the Corporate Learning Survey conducted by Henley Business School's Corporate Development team. This survey found that organizations were planning for the future by not making budget cuts today, which they would possibly regret tomorrow (Baker, 2010). Organizations were rather focusing on developing those high potential employees who would lead them into

the future (Baker, 2010). Development of middle management specifically was by far the most important as these managers were seen as next generation managers, tomorrow's leaders (Baker, 2010).

The learning and development budget is often the first one to be cut when organizations are trying to contain costs during these difficult times. Whilst HR professionals might be planning on keeping their budget the same or even increasing it slightly during these times, it is those who control the budget that need to be convinced of the value of continued spending during these times (Wilhelm, 2010). There are several arguments that can be made for continuing to invest in learning during a recession. Firstly, remaining competitive requires constant focus on learning and development, putting leadership development on hold for whatever reason results in a leadership team ill equipped for demands of the future, reducing the organizations competitiveness (Wilhelm, 2010). Cutting down on learning will also reduce the organization's ability to react to its constantly changing environment (Wilhelm, 2010). Constant development ensures that the organizations have a robust leadership pipeline, and future executive positions will be filled by internal appointments as opposed to recruiting externally due to the lack of internal capabilities (Wilhelm, 2010).

2.2 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The terms leadership development and leader development have often been used interchangeably, assuming they meant exactly the same thing. Dalakoura (2009) argues that there are distinctive differences between leader and leadership development.

Leader development focuses on the human capital of the organization, whilst leadership development focuses on the social capital of the organization (Dalakoura, 2009). Both leader and leadership development are important for organizations whose focus is developing leadership at all levels. Making leader and leadership development part of the organization's strategic objectives and integrating it into the organization's everyday practices is likely to lead to the desired result (Dalakoura, 2009). Leadership development is defined as expanding the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes (Muijs, et al, 2006).

2.2.1 DELIVERY APPROACHES

Amagoh (2004) identifies four popular approaches to delivering leadership development programmes. The first one is the integrated solution approach. This approach is strategic in nature in that it takes a long-term approach to development by developing a comprehensive strategy for development and implementing it effectively. This approach is of the view that Leadership development is an iterative process that needs constant attention, focus and resources (Amagoh, 2009). The second one is the experienced based approach. This approach knits together on –the- job experience, life experience, and specific skills development (Amagoh, 2009). The aim of this approach is to equip leaders with the necessary skills to fuse together the totality of their experiences and knowledge to become effective leaders (Amagoh, 2009). The third approach that could be used is the formal mentoring approach which is a development relationship between an experienced mentor and a less experienced protégé

(Amagoh, 2009). Mentoring is comprised of three functions: career support, psychological support and role modeling (Amagoh, 2009). This is a relationship that is beneficial to both the mentor and protégé (Amagoh, 2009). The fourth approach is the leadership life cycle approach. This is the process of identifying leadership needs; implementing training and assessing improvements whilst ensuring alignment with the organization's strategic priorities (Amagoh, 2009).

Outdoor leadership training is another delivery approach referring to the use of unfamiliar surroundings to liberate leaders from organizational norms and cultures (Watson & Vasilieva, 2007). Intense learning experiences conducted in teams in the outdoors, have become a very popular form of leadership development (Watson & Vasilieva, 2007).

According to Baker (2010) certain criteria were identified as important for organizations when selecting a business school to deliver on their development programme (Baker, 2010). The following were identified as being key: reputation of the institution, the use of up-to-date case studies, recent and original research, the use of experiential learning, a focus on soft skills; and shorter programmes of two or three days were considered optimal in this time-pressed world of work, although there is still space for longer programmes where the content demands it (Baker, 2010).

Elden and Durand (2010) investigated the ROI on a programme delivered for a global energy company. Their results found that a large percentage of the participants believed that the course had delivered a very high ROI for both

themselves and the organization. The researchers identified 5 main elements which they believed contributed to the success of the programme. These were mainly delivery related elements.

- The transformational basis of the course in which participants learned and practiced new ways of thinking

- Personal experiments in which each participant tested out course concepts in the work environment through action-learning projects

- The course involved a high-trust, peer learning atmosphere in which participants shared deep personal experiences and feelings

- Extensive in-depth coaching involving participants and their supervisors

- The limited size (no more than 20 participants at a time) and the course's combined intensive and extensive schedule (two to three solid days monthly over a six month period with personal inquiry assignments between sessions)

However, they are by no means stating that these are the only factors that influence ROI; they acknowledge that other factors such as content will have an impact (Elden & Durand, 2010).

2.3 RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Classical financial analysis of ROI is reported as a ratio and is a measure of an investment's performance (Contino, 2004). It's calculated by dividing the return—the money earned during the time period—by the average investment—the average amount invested over the time period (Contino, 2004). ROI measures how effectively a firm uses its capital to generate profit. The higher the ROI the better. This definition is too financial for the purposes of this study and does not take into account that at times it is not possible to financially quantify the impact of an

intervention.

A study was conducted by Elden & Durand (2010) to try and better understand ROI in leadership development (Elden & Durand, 2010). They were interested in three questions concerning the ROI impact of a particular course. First, did the graduates perceive the training an investment return to the company? Second, if so, what training results did they see manifested as ROI (Elden & Durand, 2010)? Third, given these results, what in the course or its design contributed to them (Elden & Durand, 2010)? As can be seen from these questions, their ROI focus is from the graduates' perspective. For the purposes of this study, ROI will be looked at from the line manager's perspective.

Several models exist within Human Resource Development (HRD) to evaluate the effectiveness of training initiatives. Amongst the most commonly used models are the Kirkpatrick – Phillips model and the Training for impact models. The Kirkpatrick – Phillips model has 5 levels to evaluate training interventions. They are Reaction, Learning, Behaviour, Results and Return on investment. (Green, 2004). The Training for Impact model is a 12-step approach designed to assist HRD professionals to understand how results from training programmes can be linked to business objectives (Green, 2004). Each step in this model helps the HRD professional work with line managers to develop and measure training initiatives (Green, 2004). Evaluation is about relating training to business performance. If training cannot be related to the performance of the organization, it is probably a waste of time and a waste of money (Green, 2004).

What is important to note from both models is the focus on value to the organization, and not necessarily value from the participants' perspective.

Kules (2008) has a 5-stage process to calculate expected ROI on a programme. The first stage is to identify key accountabilities for the position whose current incumbents are to be trained. This is done by getting input from subject matter experts (SMEs) who would then give a weighting to all accountabilities based on their importance (Kules, 2008). The second stage requires the line manager and employee to complete a skills assessment form; this is a five-point scale with the scales of beginner, novice, skilled, advanced and expert (Kules, 2008). The results from the manager and employee have equal weighting (Kules, 2008). The third stage calculates the cost of the skills gap in terms of lost performance (Kules, 2008). The final stage looks at the value of the skills gap compared to the cost of the proposed training programme (Kules, 2008). Only those programmes that show a positive ROI are considered (Kules, 2008).

2.4 VALUE

Phillips & Phillips (2007), state that a single number, a representation of a single point in time, no longer defines value. Value is rather defined from different periods and represents the value systems that are important to the stakeholder (Phillips & Phillips, 2007). The concept of determining the value of an investment decision is not a new one in business, but what is important to note is that the value should be as defined by the stakeholder (Phillips & Phillips, 2007). For the purposes of our research, this is the line manager.

The concept of a customer value proposition (VP) came from the work of Lanning and Michaels in 1988. They proposed two key activities, firstly developing a value

proposition and then creating a value delivery system (Frow & Payne, 2011). Whilst their work was mainly focusing on the marketing field it is relevant for this research report as the line managers, employees and organization as a whole are the customers referred to in this value proposition concept.

Lanning's and Michael's approach involved three processes: analyzing customer groups by the attributes that customers consider of value; assessing opportunities in each segment to deliver superior value; and, explicitly choosing the VP that optimizes these opportunities (Frow & Payne, 2011).

The above is appropriate and relevant to leadership development. It would be the responsibility of the service provider or rather the custodians of the development programmes to first identify the key development needs of employees and to then determine how development of these would benefit the organization. The second step would then be to assess various programmes that could meet the organization's and employee needs. The final stage would be to choose a programme or service provider that meets the needs of all stakeholders.

2.4.1 STATUS QUO ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The effectiveness of Leadership development programmes was already being questioned in the 1960s if not earlier. Edward Cook (1968) is quoted in Muijs, Harris, Lumby, Morrison & Sood (2006) as stating "The skepticism and even downright hostility that is expressed in some quarters towards the imprecise art of developing Leadership is richly deserved; and professional training people ought to face it" (Cook, 1968, pg 51 in (Muijs et al, 2006). Research reports conducted in the 1980's could not conclusively prove the relationship between formal

development programs and organizational performance (Muijs et al, 2006). A recent review of the literature concluded that there was insufficient evidence to link leadership development directly to improvements in organizational performance (Muijs et al, 2006). Cunningham (2010) concurs with Mujis et al,(2006) by stating that leadership development has not had much impact in organizations. He identifies two main reasons for this. Firstly, the individualistic approach to leadership, which originates from the US. This model is not transferable to other contexts although it is continually being taught in business schools even though it has not worked so well even in the US (Cunningham, 2010). Secondly, the need for formal education as a prerequisite to good leadership is overstated. As things stand most leaders are overly dependent on taught courses. This is not ideal, as ideally leaders must not only lead others but themselves as well (Cunningham, 2010). Even though the right questions were already being asked early on it does not seem as if definitive decisions were taken in terms of ensuring alignment between organizational goals and development programmes.

2.4.2 WHY HAVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS FAILED?

Ready and Conger (2003) have identified what they refer to as three main pathologies that most organizations suffer from which result in the failure of leadership development initiatives. The first pathology that organizations tend to suffer from is a mindset that ownership is power (Ready & Conger, 2003). Symptoms of this pathology are viewing leadership development as something that is owned or can be controlled by certain executives, be it HR executives or business unit heads. Business leadership should rather have shared ownership,

with line managers and HR creating the environment necessary for high potential employees to grow.

The second pathology is the productization of leadership development. This occurs when quick fix, commercial programmes which are not aligned to strategy are introduced in organizations. Leadership development programmes start losing their credibility with the executive leadership team when learning managers introduce programmes that clearly do not address the needs of the organization but are rather focused on proving quick answers to management. The last of Ready and Conger's identified pathologies which plaque organizations is the use of make believe metrics when measuring the success of leadership development programmes (Ready & Conger, 2003). It is important to always link metric measurement to the organization's strategy, for example measuring attendance rates for a particular course does not necessarily tell you if the learning outcomes are being applied back in the working environment, now this would be a more favorable measure (Ready & Conger, 2003). What we measure drives behavior, it is therefore essential to measure that which will stimulate more of the behaviour you want to see in an organization.

2.4.3 CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

Ownership and increased accountability for all stakeholders is essential for the successful implementation of the programmes. There must be visible buy-in from senior management, the leadership development agenda must be driven from the very top (Ready & Conger, 2003). It is also important to have consequences for non delivery. In IBM for example, managers who have not demonstrated an ability to

develop their high potential employees will themselves be overlooked for promotions as employee development is seen as a key competence for senior managers (Ready & Conger, 2003).

The success of leadership development programmes should only be measured by the extent to which they can be linked to the success of the organization (Ready & Conger, 2003). Metrics used to measure this success should have a more strategic focus and not so much focusing on measuring activities (Ready & Conger, 2003).

It is important to remain informed of changes and new developments in the sphere of leadership development. However, this does not necessarily mean that every new theory that comes out should result in a development programme for the organization (Ready & Conger, 2003). Organizations must construct clear leadership frameworks that will highlight the key needs for the organization. Before introducing new programmes they must be aligned with the organization's leadership framework (Ready & Conger, 2003).

Stephen Cohen (2011) recommends a four-step process that ensures that there is alignment between an organization's strategic objectives and the objectives of the leadership development programme. The first step requires that an organization be clear on the business imperatives driving the strategy, these could range from brand recognition, customer loyalty or competitive pricing. The second step is to have measurable business outcomes or indicators that the business strategy is being delivered on. In identifying the business outcomes, the organization would also have to identify capabilities necessary for performance. These capabilities are not only necessary for success but actually define the organization. What will then emerge from these capabilities are leader competencies, those competencies that

leaders must develop in order to achieve the organization's results (Cohen, 2011). Once the above is in place, only then should organizations start the conversation around how leadership development programmes can assist management to acquire the required organizational capabilities (Cohen, 2011).

Minton-Eversole (2009) suggest that HR professionals can step up the value and return on investment in leadership development in the following ways:

- Focus on programs that will have fast behavioral impact on cost and margins

- Introduce the concept of an ownership culture

- Implement programs to develop business acumen. Integrate business acumen approaches into talent management and succession-planning processes

- Emphasize the financial side of programs in internal public relations. Tilt the learning emphasis more toward the present, and help the organization generate ideas to better weather the economic crisis and surmount its current challenges.

- Introduce programs that support high-leverage innovation

- Emphasize approaches that address leadership agility and organizational learning

In addition, HR professionals need to be trained on business acumen so as to be positioned as business-focused innovators in their own areas (Minton - Eversole, 2009).

According to Ready (2004), organizations that are successful at building leaders use a more comprehensive approach. These organizations demonstrate three key characteristics. Firstly, leadership development must be articulated as a top-level strategic initiative (Ready, 2004). Secondly, high potential employees must be rewarded and supported accordingly (Ready, 2004). Finally, the organization must be supported by an outstanding and strong HR team that understands the business within which it operates (Ready, 2004).

According to Wilhelm (2010) involving line managers in delivering learning can also change the nature of the learning itself. Because line managers tend to focus on their immediate challenges, they will make the learning more pragmatic. Involving them will also increase shared commitment to the organization because employees at multiple levels interact in the learning (Wilhelm, 2010)

2.5 CONCLUSION

The literature review can be graphically summarized as follows:

Value derived from leadership development programmes is impacted by the success and failure factors.

Success factors
- Top level support of L & D
- Reward & support of HIPOs
- Consequences for not deliv
- Success of L& D contribute to overall org. strategy
- Clear leadership framework
- Ownership culture
- Line manager involvement

Failure factors
- Ownership is power
- Productization of LD
- Inappropriate metrics
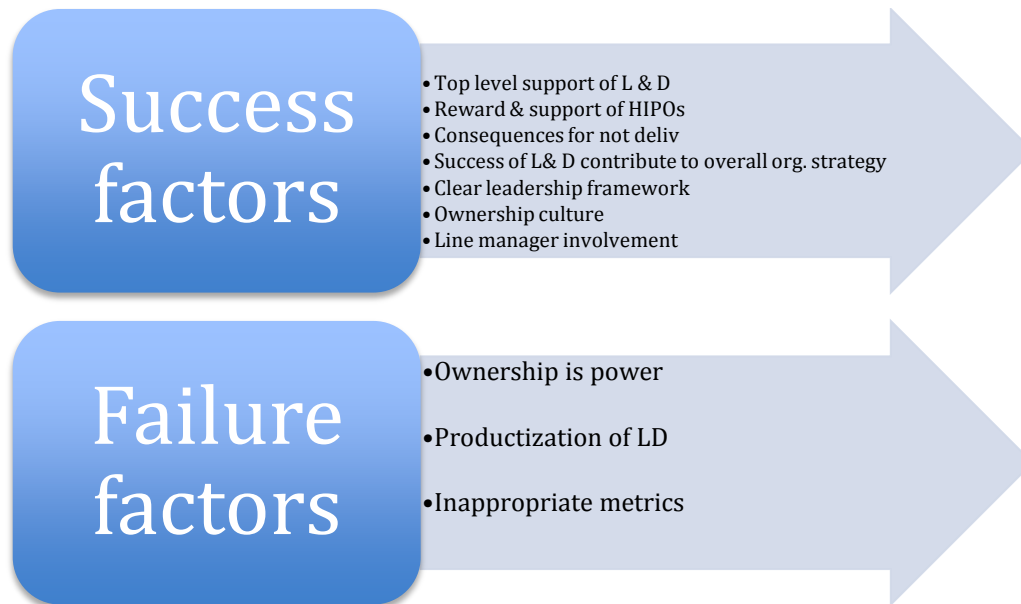
In conclusion, Siegfried Hoenle, the Chief Learning officer and head of the Credit Suisse Business School succinctly summarizes the role HR and Learning should be playing in organizations and the results they can expect to see

"To me, the key is to understand and run the learning function as a business. This means to be very close to the internal clients/ management and be an integral part of their value chain. This will ensure that you are never completely or unfairly cut down. We all need to accept that we are exposed to the same commercial demands as any other business, including running a lean and flexible operation. To be self-confident, commercial- and business-minded will lead to the right measures and avoid the defensiveness and complaining about the 'short-sightedness of management' that we hear sometimes in our circles"(Wilhelm, 2010, pg. 56).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Leadership development has been researched from different perspectives such as best practice at developing leaders, assessing delivery methods of leadership development programmes, measuring return on investment (ROI) from leadership development programmes. ROI has often been measured from the participants or organization's perspective (Elden & Durand, 2010).

Minimal research was found which focused primarily on the line managers' expectations from leadership development programmes and their perspective on their effectiveness. Hence I have identified a need for this research.

The existing literature gives the impression that benefits of leadership development efforts are still being questioned. Whilst some organizations clearly understand benefits that could be reaped if leadership development efforts form part of the organization's strategic objectives, most organizations still do not see the value add of leadership development.

This research paper hopes to answer two critical research questions:

Research Question 1:

What do managers perceive as the value of leadership development to the performance of the organization?

Research Question 2:

What factors must exist in organizations and leadership development programmes for line managers to consider leadership development programmes as valuable?

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The framework for this study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is concerned with the quality or nature of human experiences and what these experiences mean to individuals (Draper, 2004). The types of questions asked in qualitative research tend to start with 'what', 'how' and 'why' rather than starting with 'how much' or 'how many' (Draper, 2004). It is also concerned with examining these questions in the context of everyday life and each individual's meanings and explanations (Draper, 2004). Qualitative research can thus be broadly described as interpretative and naturalistic, in that it seeks to understand and explain beliefs and behaviours within the context that they occur (Draper, 2004) .

Malinowski, one of the founding fathers of qualitative research is quoted by Draper (2004) as stating that "the final goal, of which an Ethnographer should never lose sight . . . is, briefly, to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world"(Draper, 2004, pg. 644). Ethnography at its core is a method for learning about human cultures that originated in anthropology. For many years, it remained almost exclusively the field methodology of anthropology. By the mid-20th century, ethnography was picked up by other disciplines, notably sociology, and became synonymous with participant observation (Kelly & Gibbons, 2008). Polit and Beck (2010) confirm Malinowski's views by stating that the goal of most qualitative studies is to provide a rich, contextualized understanding of some aspect of human experience through the intensive study of particular cases.

This is precisely what I was aiming to do as my research solely focused on how line managers' experience leadership development programmes. It did not matter whether the manager's perspective was true or factual. The important thing was how the subjects viewed their world. Hence qualitative research was found to be the more suitable research methodology. The research is descriptive in nature because it is focused on determining 'what' managers think about these programmes (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008). We did not necessarily look at why they felt the way they did and the variables that could have lead to this, if that were the case then it would have been a causal study (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008, pg. 10).

A common criticism of qualitative research is that the findings are often too subjective in nature and therefore more a reflection of the researcher's opinions and biases (Draper, 2004). A second criticism of qualitative research is the fact that researchers are often unable to generalize their findings due to the small sample sizes or lack of statistical significance levels (Draper, 2004). When referring to generalizability of findings, it is important to differentiate amongst the different types of generalizations that are possible in research, namely: empirical or conceptual generalizability (Draper, 2004). Empirical generalizability is often used in quantitative research and focuses on a study's ability to draw inferences about the characteristics of a population based on the observations of its sample, assuming that the sample is representative of the population (Draper, 2004). Inferences from qualitative research tend to be more theoretical or conceptual in nature, and try to understand concepts or phenomena that are relevant to other groups (Draper, 2004).

4.2 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Defining the unit of analysis is one of the most important steps before one attempts to analyze data. The unit of analysis in this study is the line manager. Unit of analysis refers to the level at which the research is being performed (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008). If the focus was on the overall organization's view on leadership development programmes, then the unit of analysis would have been the organization even if line managers had been interviewed to gather the data.

4.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Several definitions of a population exist depending on the paradigm within which you operate. A population, defined from the statistical paradigm, is a collective from which we want to draw inference by sampling (Waples & Gaggiotti, 2006). It is also defined as the totality of individual observations about which inferences are to be made, existing within a specified sampling area limited in space and time (Waples & Gaggiotti, 2006).

The population in this study is line managers who have had their direct reports involved in development programmes. It is their perceived value add of these programmes that I am interested in.

Sampling theory is based on the premise that results from a certain sample size should be generalizable to the entire population (Krippendorff, 2004). If all individuals in a population were the same, then a sample size of one would be sufficient in order to infer the findings to the rest of the population (Krippendorff, 2004). But if each individual in a population was unique, then no sample size would ever be a good enough representation of the population. The researcher

would be required to get feedback from each member of the population, which is of course more often than not impossible (Krippendorff, 2004). Reality is a mix of the two situations mentioned above; research is therefore only required to be accurate within certain limits (Krippendorff, 2004).

Convenience sampling was used to gather the data. Convenience sampling refers to non-probability samples that are unrestricted (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008). In convenience sampling participants are selected based on accessibility. Although I was certain that this research topic would add value to most organizations, HR Managers and learning institutions, I didn't underestimate the resistance that I would encounter. Hence I chose to use convenience sampling as I was relying heavily on my personal contacts to allow me access to their organizations. I requested referrals from my MBA classmates in terms of specific contact people within their organizations. I also requested referrals from the learning institutions that provide leadership development courses. I was hoping that if I approached organizations by informing them that their service provider has referred me, it might make them more open to sharing information with me. This approach worked as I had anticipated.

This type of sampling is unfortunately the least reliable but the easiest (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008). Some of the potential disadvantages of using this type of sampling are defining the phenomena too narrowly if the sample is not broad enough. Or prematurely closing of sampling believing that saturation has been reached (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

In total, I had a sample size of 20 respondents. As mentioned above my sampling criteria was not based on extremely strict criteria, but primarily focused on organizations that I could have access to.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION

4.4.1 ORGANIZATIONAL SCREENING

Before a line manager was included in the research a simple two question screening process was conducted with the HR Manager. The questions were as follows:

- Does the organization have leadership development programmes?
- To what extent are line managers involved in these programmes?

The purpose of these screening questions was not necessarily to get HR managers view on the Leadership development programmes, but to rather establish whether or not the organizations have Leadership development programmes, and to what extent the line manager were involved in either selecting employees for the programme or evaluating improvements post the programme.

4.4.2 SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Face to face or telephonic, semi structured interviews were then conducted with the 20 line managers. Semi structured interviews usually start with rather specific questions but allow the respondent to follow his or her own thought later on (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008). Probing questions were asked where necessary to gather additional data from the respondents.

The interview guide used is attached, as Appendix 1. As seen on the attached guide, open-ended questions were used.

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

4.5.1 CONTENT ANALYSIS

Conventional content analysis was used to analyze the data. Content analysis is the basic method for recording social reality, on which other methods, in particular, observation & interview, rely heavily (Klaus & Ruhrmann, 1982). It analyses texts by reducing them to a unit by variable matrix, according to a set of variables that have already been isolated (Emerald Insights, 2011).

Content analysis is based on the assumption that words or phrases that occur frequently reflect the texts themes (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008). Content analysis is not only limited to decoding of texts, it can also be used to decode videos or even drawings, for example a child's drawings over a period of time (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008).

4.5.2 CONDUCTING CONTENT ANALYSIS

Krippendorf is quoted by Stemler (2001) as stating that there are, six key questions must be answered in every content analysis, they are:

1) Which data are analyzed?

2) How are they defined?

3) What is the population from which they are drawn?

4) What is the context relative to which the data are analyzed?

5) What are the boundaries of the analysis?

6) What is the target of the inferences (Stemler, 2001)?

Once these questions had been answered, I was able to proceed with the analysis of the data. The most common approach to content analysis is conducting a word frequency count. The assumption is that those words that appear the most will reflect the greatest concern (Stemler, 2001). The approach for this content analysis was not only word frequency based, it followed a slightly different approach. A priori procedure of analyzing content was used in this research as it has superior potential to reduce coding error as it permits modification of coding categories (Montgomery & Crittenden, 2001). The following process was conducted in analyzing the data. A detailed assessment of the literature review was conducted to determine the key themes that were emerging from the data (Krippendorff, 2004). Whilst I recognized that there was insufficient data regarding the line manager's perspective, the literature review was clearly providing insights into those factors that had been identified as contributing to the success or failure of leadership development interventions. It was from this literature and expected results from interviews that I was able to determine the main themes for the content analysis. The second step required that these themes be applied against a sample of responses, ideally resulting in the modification or deletion of some of the themes (Krippendorff, 2004). This process was not conducted in this research as the following pretest approach was deemed as sufficient in determining the appropriateness of the identified themes. The themes were pretested to ensure that they:

- Did not overlap

- Were clear and unambiguous

- Were mutually exclusive yet exhaustive of the range of possible responses

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Finally, once this process had confirmed that the themes were adequately refined and defined they were then confirmed as final (Krippendorff, 2004).

4.5.3 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

A researcher must be able to validate their content analysis. It is important to have data that can be validated so as to avoid researchers pursuing data that has no empirical validation, with results being backed purely by the authority of the researcher (Krippendorff, 2004).

A research study's ability to be replicated is largely informed by the data used. It is therefore very important that data used in content analysis be used in a form that is durable in nature (Stemler, 2001). Replicability is the most important form of reliability (Krippendorff, 2004).

4.6 LIMITATIONS

A potential limitation of this approach is not having a second researcher to verify the identified themes. It is possible that I might not have fully understood the data and therefore not captured all the major themes that occurred. As a result, findings may not fully represent the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). As a researcher I would have been able to overcome this limitation by having a second party analyze the data as well.

It is also important that a researcher be clear on the possible outcomes of the research as a result of the chosen methodology. In using content analysis as best a researcher can develop a concept or build a model (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Unlike using other similar research techniques such phenomenology or grounded

theory whose possible outcomes would include a developing a theory or a detailed

under- standing of the phenomena (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1. SAMPLE COMPOSITION

The sample consisted of 20 line managers from nine different organizations, in four different industries. The industries were Financial Services, Retail, Production and Beverages. Of the 20 line managers interviewed, 14 were executives, five of which were HR executives. The rest of the sample was comprised of four senior managers and one CEO.

I make special mention of the HR executives, as I was interested to see if their perspective differed vastly from the rest of the sample. Their feedback will at times be analyzed collectively versus the rest of the sample.

The sample was broken down as follows:

Organization	No. Interviewed	Respondent code (R1, R2 etc.)
Financial Services 1	1	R13 (CEO)
Financial Services 2	2	R11, R14 (HR)
Financial Services 3	3	R8 (Snr. Mgr.), R9 (Snr. Mgr.), R10 (Snr. Mgr.)
Financial Services 4	1	R12
Retail 1	4	R1, R6, R7, R15 (HR)
Retail 2	5	R2, R3, R5, R17 (HR), R20 (HR)
Retail 3	2	R4, R16 (HR)
Beverages	1	R19 (Snr. Mgr.)
Production	1	R18 (Snr. Mgr.)
Total	**20**	

The sample was collected from the broader population of line managers within South Africa who have had members of their team attend leadership development programmes.

As can be seen from the table above, the sample was largely dominated by the financial services and retail industries, making up 35% and 55% of the total

sample respectively. But as the research is neither industry nor company focused, this does not impact the outcomes of the research.

One of the conditions that granted me access to the various organizations was the anonymity of the organizations and the respondents. I will therefore not be disclosing the names of the organizations or individuals that participated.

5.2 PRIORI CONTENT ANALYSIS

As is the requirement for a Priori content analysis, discussed in Chapter four, the key themes for this research were identified upfront based on the need for the research in Chapter one and the literature review in Chapter two.

There were four main themes:

Theme 1: The maturity level of an organization will determine its approach to leadership development, including its behaviour during an economic downturn.

Theme 2: Factors that result in the failure of leadership development efforts

Theme 3: Factors that result in the success of leadership development efforts

Theme 4: The value derived by managers from leadership development programmes. How are managers defining this value?

5.3 THEME ANALYSIS

Below is a table summarizing quotations that best captured these themes:

Themes	Exemplary quotations
Theme 1: Maturity level of organization, impact of recession	• "Like all organizations we recognize that leadership development is one of your main arsenals in competition" (R1). • "We have recently had a new CEO…..there is now more focus on leadership development" (R2). • " My staff member was under so much pressure that he was saying this was way too much work for an internal course and would at least have been better if he were going through this for an MBA or something similar" (R3). • " We need more leaders in the future. So we are actively pursuing ways to develop our own people to become those" (R4). • "Leadership development is the organization's one differentiator, if you don't do this you will lag behind"(R6). • "…people follow the courses as they grow individually and within the organization" (R8). • "….having a programme tailored to the needs of my team alone would be better; I think this would offer more value extraction" (R13). • "We have not defined what we view as good leadership" (R14). • "… positioning ourselves for the future, we don't want to have a shortage of skills after the recession" (R15). • "There is a realization by management that allowing people to further their studies raises the level of how people operate internally. People come out of these interventions more rounded" (R19). • "….we continued to invest in people; this didn't stop as we knew that this would be our competitive advantage going forward" (R19).
Theme 2: Failure Factors	• "Yes, it leads to a high vacancy rate. There is a danger in carrying on as we do, we might as well register as a political party rather than a retailer"(R2). • "The consequences will be for the organization. We lose people, we fail as an organization. We promote people into senior positions with no tools, they

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	drown, get frustrated and get judged as incapable" (R3).
	• "Focus not on developing more on managing performance. Not done very well. No measurements" (R5)
	• " Although people development is included in manager's KPIs this has not been strictly enforced in the last 2 years as the focus was on the state of the economy and performance of the organization. No one has been penalized for not developing staff during this period"(R9).
	• "There was no conscious measurement of the outcomes. I guess you hope to see a change"(R10).
	• "Challenge is getting people to apply what they have learnt" (R11).
	• "Sending everyone to the same course is not really appropriate..."(R14).
Theme 3: Success Factors	• "....this programme was not trying to be a mini MBA"(R1)
	• "Yes, it is one of our strategic imperatives on which we are measured" (R4).
	• "....in relationships with colleagues, tolerance of others and their problems, approach to meetings and asking the right questions" (R7).
	• "A change in behaviour, improvement in how people carry themselves" (R9).
	• "People development was included in our KPIs, which impacts our bonuses and annual increases. Departmental performances on these dimensions are published for all to see. So naturally no department wants to be seen to not be developing their people" (R9).
	• " What is also important are Senior Management's views around leadership. For example a couple of years ago, it was evident that good leadership skills were valued and rewarded in the organization because of how Senior Management handled the issue. People are able to read the signs around what will get them ahead. If management thinks something's is important, then everyone does it. And now we can see that in bad times, we tolerate weaknesses on the softer issues as long as there is delivery on the harder issues"(R10).
	• "Yes, there are consequences, all the time, not just at performance review time. The Manco meets twice a month to give feedback on the overall performance including feedback on their teams. This is visible to all, we then discuss what the issues are and how to address them"(R13).

	• "Yes….this naturally impacts on the annual increases and bonuses" (R12). • "The CEO is the current sponsor for our leadership programmes" (R16). • "More reinforcement was required back at the workplace in order to keep the new skills front of mind" (R17).
Theme 4: Value derived from LD programmes	• "We should be developing leadership at all levels which is currently not the case. You can have the same modules but different outcomes or expectations"(R2). • "People go to these programmes with a specific frame of reference, outcomes of these courses should be to remove these specific sources of reference, giving them a broader view"(R6). • "Consider tearing the leadership development forum to the young managers to also attend a watered down version of the main LDF. These are the future leaders. It should not be exclusively for senior executives"(R7). • "Back on the job follow up sessions on a regular basis until set skills are entrenched as day to day behaviors"(R17). • "Leadership development has always been there and will always receive focus, provided there is value being added"(R18). • "…a broader, bird's eye view of the landscape within which they operated" (R19). • Programmes need to be tailored to the individuals needs. They need to be a lot more consultation between the delegate, line, facilitator or programme manager so that it is clear what everyone's expectation are. These things cannot be one size fits all"(R20).

5.3.1 Theme 1: **The maturity level of an organization will determine its approach to leadership development, including its behaviour during an economic downturn.**

A. Maturity level of sampled organizations

Bersin & Associates Leadership development maturity level model, discussed in detail in Chapter one, identified four levels of maturity, which determine the effectiveness of leadership development efforts in an organization (Lamourex & O'Leonard, 2009).

In assessing the maturity levels of the sampled organizations, I enquired about:

1) the organizations view on leadership development

2) The structure and content of the programmes used

3) The impact the recession had on the organization and its development efforts.

In some instances I received conflicting information from respondents from the same organization, I did however have sufficient information to determine where the organizations were placed on the maturity level matrix.

The table below illustrates where the organizations sampled for this research are placed on the matrix compared to the Bersin & Associates study.

Maturity Level	Research Sample
Level 4	11%
Level 3	67%
Level 2	11%
Level 1	11%
Total	**100**

The majority of respondents' organizations, at 78%, are concentrated at level three and level four, the least mature of the levels. Organizations are clearly still

struggling to transition to the more mature levels in terms of their view on leadership development.

B. Impact of Recession on Leadership Development

In very mature organizations, namely level one and two, the financial performance of the organization does not detract from leadership development efforts. The recent world financial crisis was the perfect catalyst as it allowed us to determine organizations' maturity depending on how the recession had impacted their leadership development efforts. "Like all organizations, we all recognize that leadership is one of your main arsenals in competition" (R1). The recent performance of R1's organization was affected by both the recession and internal organizational changes. But despite these changes and a decrease in profits the organizations still viewed development as an important differentiator in the market.

The majority of the respondents indicated that organizations understood the importance of leadership development. Respondent six, from the same organization, echoed these sentiments by stating, "Leadership development is the organization's one differentiator, if you don't do this you will lag behind" (R6). His business unit was struggling to maintain the 30% growth achieved the previous year, but this had not impacted on their development plans, with the leadership team setting a target of training and developing at least 80% of staff by the end of the financial year. A target I am lead to believe he was on track to achieve. Responded 19, a senior manager at a leading brewing multinational, indicated that management in her organization was fully supportive of development efforts, not just leadership development. She stated, "There is a realization by management

that allowing people to further their studies raises the level of how people operate internally. People come out of these interventions more rounded" (R19). Her organization struggled in the last two years, not only as a result of the recession but as competition increased with new international players entering the market. But "....we continued to invest in people; this didn't stop as we knew that this would be our competitive advantage going forward" (R19). Respondent nine stated that leadership development was indeed viewed as a strategic imperative by his organization Even though his organization had been impacted by the recession; the impact was minimal compared to international financial institutions. During these recessionary times time his organization had decided to prioritize development. All staff members were required to attend the appropriate intervention for their level. He however, decided to prioritize those members of his team he viewed as having the most potential to move up, ensuring that they attended first.

C. Programme Structure

The structure of development programmes was identified as also being a contributor to the organization's maturity level. For example, at the fourth level of maturity organizations' development programmes tended to have poor content, were inconsistent and had minimal benefit to employees (Lamourex & O'Leonard, 2009).

Responded five's organization had identified the need to develop leadership from the various levels so as to close the gap between where people actually were compared to where they were required to be in terms of leadership skills.

Structured and well-defined courses were then rolled out in the organization to address this need.

In other instances where Executives felt that their organizations had not given sufficient attention to leadership development efforts, they criticized the development programmes offered by their organizations. Respondent three, for example, commented on the time commitments required for one of these programmes, she said " My staff member was under so much pressure that he was saying this was way too much work for an internal course and would at least have been better if he were going through this for an MBA or something similar" (R3). Clearly indicating that very little value was placed on the internal programme. She also added that some of the modules covered in this particular programme were neither important nor necessary for her staff to attend.

Respondent eight from a leading financial services institution informed me that in their organization leadership development was viewed as an important part of career and talent management. The organization invested millions in developing a dedicated world-class leadership centre whose sole mandate was the delivery of leadership programmes to the organization These programmes were pitched at the various leadership levels thereby ensuring that "...people follow the courses as they grow individually and within the organization" (R8). Leadership development programmes were not reserved for the high performing employees only, as is often the case in most organizations but were available to all employees. These programmes were facilitated over two weeks, with one week at a time spent at the leadership centre. They covered a broad spectrum of modules ranging from Coaching, Sales and Business Principles. Respondent eight felt that the manner in

which the programme was delivered was not ideal it broke his employees' attention and focus from the programme. He would have preferred that they be out for the entire two weeks, and then come back to implement learnings. This issue was primarily focused on the structure of the programme contributing to the maturity level of the organization.

Respondent six described his organization as having a structured, internal programme, facilitated by external service providers, which delivered successful results. According to the respondent, the fact that the facilitators were external meant that the teaching methods were varied and not what the employees would have experienced on previous internally facilitated courses. He also placed significantly less importance on the internally focused, broader organizational interventions and was more focused on those externally facilitated interventions focusing primarily on his business unit as opposed to the entire organization.

The lack of post course support for the employee was also identified as impacting the overall effectiveness of the structure of the programme. Respondent six felt that there was a definite gap from the line managers in that employees came back from these interventions and were not provided with the environment to apply their learnings and bring about change. Recently he had tried a different approach with the most recent team member to attend a development intervention. He made it clear to him upfront on the type of feedback he was expecting from him on his return. Respondent 12 was strongly opposed to being vocal about your expectations to the employee, at the beginning of the intervention. He feared that this might limit their scope of learning, as they would only be focusing on their

checklist, when in fact he required the employee to become more flexible and broader in their thinking.

Respondent 17 felt that "More reinforcement was required back at the workplace in order to keep the new skills front of mind" (R17). Respondent six felt that results from the programmes could only lead to a change in behaviour if there were periodic reviews of the learnings. Respondent 17 shared these views by stating "Back on the job follow up sessions on a regular basis until set skills are entrenched as day to day behaviors" (R17). Respondent four seemingly agreed with this view as his recommendation was focused on the need to involve employee's managers in compiling a post program development plan to implement the tools taught during the programme. He did not believe that the development programme alone could be expected to be the savior for the development of the individual. Respondent 12 also felt that there must be a check back at least six months after completion of the programme. This should be a formal, structured part of the programme that includes line, HR and the participant. This session could also be used to compare results achieved vs. money spent.

Respondent 14's organization was now trying to answer the questions of, what to do with these employees once they had completed the development programmes? How to keep them engaged, post the training, and motivated whilst providing an environment that will allow them to implement their learnings? Respondents felt strongly that post course support had to be included in the overall structure of the programme.

D. HR's view on LD and impact of the recession

All five HR Executives believed that their respective organizations were very clear on the strategic importance of leadership development. Respondent 15 informed me that the Exco in his organization had recently experienced significant changes and now that the Exco had some stability, the focus going forward was on "...positioning ourselves for the future, we don't want to have a shortage of skills after the recession"(R15). Respondent 14, an HR Executive in the Financial Services industry, felt that whilst her organization was also very clear on the importance of leadership development, their biggest challenge was that they had not clearly defined their leadership framework. As a result they often found themselves focusing only on the technical competencies of an individual, as these were easier to measure. This was not to say there were no leadership development programmes offered by the organization, in fact there were several programmes pitched at the various management levels. But if there were no clear leadership framework, one would then wonder what criteria were these employees being evaluated against.

Respondent 17 and 20, a HR senior manager and HR executive for the same organization, indicated that leadership development was an important aspect of their organization's values model, to the extent that all levels of employees had a minimum 10% weighting on leadership and a further 10% weighting on talent management and development in their performance agreements. They were also of the view that the recession had minimal impact on the organization's focus on development. A view not necessarily shared by Respondents two, three and five who are executives in the same organization.

5.3.2 Theme 2: Factors that result in the failure of leadership development efforts

Ready and Conger (2003) identify three main causes of leadership development efforts failing:

1) Ownership of the programme being used as a tool to wield power,

2) Adopting quick fix commercial programmes not aligned to the strategy

3) Using inappropriate metrics to measure the success of leadership development programmes.

Very few line managers viewed their organization's leadership development efforts as complete failures. Many of them criticized certain elements of the process, such as the selection criteria. Very rarely was the entire framework and intervention viewed as a failure.

A. Ownership as a failure factor

The research did not reveal any evidence to support or dispute the use of ownership being used to wield power and therefore contributing to the failure of interventions.

B. Quick fix commercial programmes as a failure factor

Respondent eight and nine, who both work for the same financial services institution spoke of the selection method used for the development programmes as a one size fits all approach. Everyone on the same level is trained on exactly the same programme. Respondent nine was particularly vocal as to why these internal programmes had not met his expectations as a line manager. The generic approach

of everyone doing the same course was not appropriate as he felt some of the modules covered were not relevant to everyone. Given that the course was trying to be everything to everyone, it became too broad and somewhat overwhelming for some participants. He viewed this approach as a quick fix solution, which could not lead to the desired results.

Respondent 11 felt that the same development programmes should be used across the different business units. Applying the same leadership framework should mean that the same programmes should be applicable across business units. According to him any differences in terms of development programmes would be on those programmes focusing on technical competence, as these would naturally vary according to function.

C. ROI Measurement

One of the questions from the interview was around how managers measured success. The majority of Respondents did not have a structured return on investment calculation to measure the success of the leadership development efforts. They instead had very personal, subjective measures that were not necessarily aligned to the proposed outcomes of the intervention. Respondent five measured success by whether or not participants moved up the ranks in time, their contributions in meetings and an overall improvement in how their managed others. Respondent seven was very clear on his expectations, an improvement "….in relationships with colleagues, tolerance of others and their problems, approach to meetings and asking the right questions" (R7). Some managers had

rather vague measures of success. Respondent ten stated "There was no conscious measurement of the outcomes. I guess you hope to see a change"(R10). Whilst respondent nine would measure success by "a change in behaviour, improvement in how people carry themselves" (R9).

5.3.3Theme 3: Factors that result in the success of leadership development efforts

Line managers were asked for some insights as to why they thought some of the programmes were so effective or what conditions in their organizations created an environment for successful interventions. Several success factors were identified, namely: leadership development being driven from the top, participant selection criteria, delivery method and consequences for not developing staff.

A. Leadership development driven from the top

In Respondent one's organization the leadership development forum was a two to three day leadership conference facilitated by the CEO and the Strategy Director. This was a prestigious event to be invited to in the organization as the CEO facilitated it. There were limited seats and it was only held once a year. This programme was rated as being highly effective for a number of reasons, firstly, the fact that the CEO himself facilitated it. Secondly, "….this programme was not trying to be a mini MBA" (R1). R1 felt that most people had sufficient technical knowledge about their role; this programme was rather focused on motivating and encouraging employees. High potential employees got to spend time with the CEO being informed about the overall strategy of the organization and the role they could play in that future. In Respondent two's organization they had just

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experienced a change in the CEO of the organization, and with that came a drastic change in the organization's view on leadership development. Whereas before, there had been a limited focus on leadership development, the new CEO visibly made leadership development a priority and the rest of the leadership team was following his lead.

Of the 20 line managers that make up the sample, all of them indicated that the CEO, line manager or a combination of the two with HR's assistance, drove leadership development. This is one of the key conditions for successful leadership interventions, when the leadership development agenda is driven from the top and there is accountability and ownership of the process. None of the respondents saw driving leadership development as HRs role.

B. Participant Selection Criteria

Respondents indicated the need for line manager's to be involved in selecting participants from their teams. The method used for selecting programme participants was very detailed in Respondent four's organization. Competency gap assessments were used to identify the necessary interventions required to fill the gaps. Employees who were identified as successors for Executive positions were required to have completed a leadership development programme before being considered appointment. This, of course, was one of many other requirements that had to be fulfilled before being appointed. The participant selection criteria used in Respondent eight and nine's organization was ineffective in that line managers did not have a say on who should attend interventions. This took away line's sense of responsibility and accountability towards the employee's development needs.

C. Delivery Method

Respondent 12 gave credit to the external learning institute that facilitated their internal Middle Management programme. He felt that the delivery method of the programme was very effective in that it was sensitive to the demands of the employer on the employee and tried to strike a fine balance between the two.

D. Consequence for not developing staff

Another success factor is ensuring there are consequences for the non-development of staff. All participants were asked if there were any consequences for managers for not developing their staff. The overall view on the benefit of including people development in the line managers Key Performance Indicators (KPI) varied, with some definitely seeing this as a driver of the appropriate behaviour. Whilst others viewed it as merely a compliance issue, especially those in the financial services industry, which is highly regulated. Some organizations did not have this component in their KPIs and saw this as a possible gap. Respondent 19 informed me that, "People development was included in our KPIs, which impacts our bonuses and annual increases. Departmental performances on these dimensions are published for all to see. So naturally no department wants to be seen to not be developing their people" (R19). In respondent 13's organization, the MANCO team was constantly being reviewed on all their KPIs. This exercise did not just wait for performance review time. Bi-monthly meetings were held with the entire team; therefore non delivery on the people development element was visible to all and would also impact on ones future increase and bonus earnings. The small size of this organization also ensured that the driving and prioritizing of

leadership development was a line function as there was no HR to delegate it to, as is often the case in larger organizations. Respondent 13 stated that "Yes, there are consequences, all the time, not just at performance review time. The Manco meets twice a month to give feedback on the overall performance including feedback on their teams. This is visible to all, we then discuss what the issues are and how to address them"(R13). Respondent four's view was "Yes, it is one of our strategic imperatives on which we are measured" (R4).

Respondent three had a slightly different view when asked whether there were consequences for non development of staff, he felt that if managers were not held responsible then "….the consequences will be for the organization. We lose people, we fail as an organization. We promote people into senior positions with no tools, they drown, get frustrated and get judged as incapable" (R3). Respondent two, from the same organization stated that, "Yes, it leads to a high vacancy rate. There is a danger in carrying on as we do, we might as well register as a political party rather than a retailer"(R2).

Some respondents made it clear that whilst this might be a part of their KPIs, business profitability would always take priority. In some cases where organizations were going through tough trading times, the organizations focus was more on survival whilst leadership development took a back seat. Respondent ten summed up this view nicely when he said "What is also important is Senior Management's views around leadership. For example a couple of years ago, it was evident that good leadership skills were valued and rewarded in the organization because of how Senior Management handled the issue. People are able to read the

signs around what will get them ahead. If management thinks something's is important, then everyone does it. And now we can see that in bad times, we tolerate weaknesses on the softer issues as long as there is delivery on the harder issues"(R10). Respondent nine echoes these views by saying " Although people development is included in manager's KPIs this has not been strictly enforced in the last 2 years as the focus was on the state of the economy and performance of the organization. No one has been penalized for not developing staff during this period"(R9).

5.3.4 Theme 4: Value derived by managers from leadership development programmes. How is this value measured?

This theme was covered in the programme expectations and recommendations aspect of the interviews, and needless to say there were many recommendations about what was needed from these programmes to make them more effective, so that managers may derive the necessary value from them. The recommendations can be summarized into five main groups: individual tailoring, selection criteria, content relevance, level specific and the broadening of employee's scope.

Respondent eighteen, the only respondent from the Production industry, felt that leadership development had always received the necessary attention and would continue to do so "…provided there was value being added" (R8).

A. Individual Tailoring

The first reoccurring recommendation amongst the respondents was a need for programmes tailored to the needs of the individual. Most organizations were already at a point where they had either engaged learning institutions or the internal learning departments to develop leadership programmes specific to the needs of the organization. But they were now beginning to realize that what would add even more value would be further tailoring to meet the needs of the individual within the context of the organization. Respondent 20's view on this matter is as follows, "Programmes need to be tailored to the individuals needs. They need to be a lot more consultation between the delegate, line, facilitator or programme manager so that it is clear what everyone's expectation are. These things cannot be one size fits all"(R20). Respondent two advised that a modular based curriculum would make it easier to customize for the individual as one could focus only on the modules the individual needed as opposed to sending them through the entire programme.

Smaller organizations also recognized the importance of leadership development, with their focus being on training and development as a whole. But the one included in my sample had not yet identified a structured, well-defined curriculum developed specifically to meet their needs. Respondent 13, the CEO and founder of this smaller organization sampled, informed me that whilst leadership development programmes were available to his executive team, he felt that "….having a programme tailored to the needs of my team alone would be better, I think this would offer more value extraction" (R13).

B. Selection criteria

Respondent 15 felt that the selection criteria for the internal, CEO facilitated development programme needed to be more refined, especially bearing in mind that there was limited seating; one had to make sure that the correct participants were invited. Feedback from Respondent 13 also highlighted consistency of selection methods to the programmes. Although his focus was on the external programmes the Manco would be attending, he was concerned about consistency of the screening criteria used by the learning institutions. He thought it very important to maintain the standards as this process ensured that attendees were similar in aptitude and well matched in class.

C. Content Relevance

Relevance of the programme content was a consistent theme during the interviews; Respondent 15 highlighted the importance of ensuring that the content for the leadership development forum remained relevant. A view shared by respondent 16 whose only recommendation was the need to ensure that programmes were customized to current business needs. Respondent eight's recommendation was also along the lines of ensuring that programmes continue to remain relevant and up to date with current developments.

D. Level specific

Another key requirement identified by the respondents was the need to have programmes aimed at the various levels of leadership. Whilst this was available in certain organizations, it was not the norm for all. Respondent seven's recommendations was as follows, "Consider tearing the leadership development

forum to the young managers to also attend a watered down version of the main LDF. These are the future leaders. It should not be exclusively for executives"(R7). Respondent two concurred with this view when he recommended that development programmes need to have a two-step process, the first for the lower levels of management and the second for senior or executive management. He stated, "We should be developing leadership at all levels which is currently not the case. You can have the same modules but different outcomes or expectations"(R2).

E. Broadening of employee's scope

The majority of respondents did not have a structured, quantifiable method of assessing their return. But most of them were very clear on the results they were expecting to see. A reoccurring term from the managers was 'a broadening of scope'. Respondent 1 stated that currently his management team made decisions through a very narrow lens, and that his aim for sending them onto leadership development programmes was to give them multiple lenses through which to view their problems thereby making better decisions and achieving better outcomes. Respondent 19 was also hoping the interventions would give her team "…a broader, birds eye view of the landscape within which they operated"(R19).

The aim for most line managers was to equip their employees with different ways of thinking and managing. Respondent six is quoted as saying "People go to these programmes with a specific frame of reference, outcomes of these courses should be to remove these specific sources of reference, giving them a broader view"(R6).

Respondent 12's measure for success is the confidence gained by the participants which can be viewed in every day engagements with them, including how they approach things such as presentations. Surprisingly none of the managers sampled defined success of the intervention through Rands and cents. The focus truly was on the personal development of the individual, which would in turn lead to the successful performance of the department. Respondent three was hoping the programme would change the employee's perspective, develop their EQ, allowing them to have a better understanding of themself and others. Also providing them with tools on what they could do differently in order to get more cooperation from their teams. Respondent 13 was hoping his Manco would become more strategic, whilst also cementing the technical skills required for competence. He was hoping for a leadership team that would share in the responsibility of setting and driving strategy and that this role would not be viewed as his responsibility alone.

5. 4 CONCLUSION

The table below summarizes key findings discussed above:

Theme	Key Findings
Theme 1: The maturity level of an organization will determine its approach to leadership development, including its behaviour during an economic downturn	• Maturity level of organizations • Impact of recession • Programme structure • HR's view on leadership development
Theme 2: Factors that result in the failure of leadership development efforts	• Ownership as a failure factor • Quick fix commercial programmes • ROI
Theme 3: Factors that result in the success of leadership development efforts	• Leadership development driven from the top • Participant selection criteria • Delivery method • Consequences for not developing staff
Theme 4: Value derived by managers from leadership development programmes. How is this value measured?	• Individual tailoring • Selection criteria • Content relevance • Level specific • Broadening of employee's scope

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the detailed discussion of results in Chapter five will be compared to the literature review in Chapter two. Chapter five's findings will also be used to answer the research questions stated in Chapter three and provide evidence that these questions have indeed been answered.   In instances where some findings are not supported by the literature review, new literature will be introduced to support these findings.

6.2 LITERATURE REVIEW VS. CHAPTER FIVE FINDINGS

6.2.1 MATURITY LEVEL OF ORGANIZATIONS

Lamoureux and O'Leonard (2009), discussed in Chapter one, referred to the organizations maturity level and the impact it would have on how they approached leadership development. The four levels are briefly summarized as follows, from the least to the most mature:

- Level 4: Leadership development programmes are inconsistent, have poor content and do not address the needs of the organization.

- Level 3: The programmes are more structured and well defined.

- Level 2: The focus is now on leadership development and not training.

- Level 1: Leadership development is aligned to the organizations strategy and talent management process (Lamoureux & O'Leonard, 2009).

Below is a graphical representation of Bersin & Associates findings compared to our findings as discussed in chapter 5:
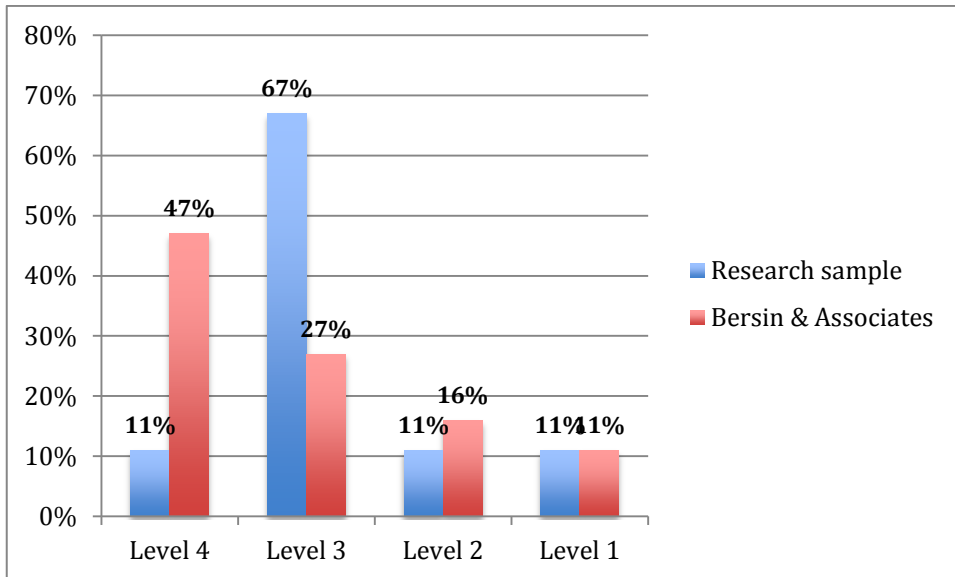
67% of respondents in this research are in the third level and indicated that their organizations had structured programmes in place, which were addressing the core leadership competencies. Although the focus was still on developing individual competence as opposed to overall organizational competence. This was in contrast to the findings by Duke Corporate Education (2009) whose results indicated that organizations were now placing greater emphasis on developing the organization's overall capability versus only focusing on individual competence. Given our findings it is clear that respondents' organizations were still struggling to make this transition from focusing on the individual to focusing on the organization's capability.

The downward trends between both studies are similar when comparing from level three to one as fewer and fewer organizations operate in the higher levels of maturity. In Bersin's research, a significantly high number of respondents, 47%, fell in the least mature level 4, whereas only 11% in our study fell into this category. In both studies, the combined results of the fourth and third level accounted for 74% and 78% respectively of the total population sampled. This

clearly highlights the fact that organizations are still grappling with the fact that development programmes need to be aligned to the organization's strategic objectives. These findings are corroborated by the results discussed later in this chapter, which examine the reasons for the failure of leadership development efforts or rather why organizations are unable to move up to more mature levels of operation.

If we compare the level three and level four results individually, we see the significant differences between the two studies. Several reasons could have resulted in these differences. Firstly, Lamoureux & O'Leonard did not provide details as to how their study was conducted. Therefore differences in research methodology might have impacted on the results. Secondly, the objectives of both studies were also different; the primary focus for this research was not to determine the maturity levels of the organization, whilst this was the main objective for Bersin & Associates. Finally, the fact that the population sample for this research was dominated by few industries also could have impacted the outcomes.

6.2.2 IMPACT OF RECESSION ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The recession and increased competition pushed organizations to look for ways to maximize the return for every investment decision that was made (Green, 2004). SMU Cox's study discussed in Chapter two found that those surveyed planned on continuing with their current levels of spend for learning and development, despite the recession (SMU Cox, 2011). This increased competition and the recessionary trading climate added a new dimension that had to be considered by

organizations in terms of investments made into leadership development. Organizations now had to ensure that their spend was more focused on their high potential employees (SMU Cox, 2011). This study's respondents' feedback was aligned to SMU Cox's (2011) findings, which determined that organizations would continue investing in leadership development. Several respondents indicated that continued investment would lead to a competitive edge, with some organizations actually prioritizing development during the recession. This view is corroborated by Baker (2010) whose survey found that organizations were planning for the future by not making budget cuts today, which they would possibly regret tomorrow (Baker, 2010). Some respondent's organizations found that their environments had changed drastically not only as a result of the recession, but increased competition as well. A case in point is Respondent 19's organization whose operating environment has changed considerably in the last two years as international players entered the local market. Continued investment in their people, amongst other business decisions, allowed them to be adaptable to this changing landscape.

Contrary to Cox's claim not all organizations focused their spending on high performing individuals. Organizations did not demonstrate a sudden change in how participants were chosen for the development programmes as a result of the recession. Organizations continued with the same approaches that were used prior to the recession. If high potential employees were the focus prior to the recession then they remained the focus during the recession. If all employees were the focus then this also remained unchanged. Overall participants' perceived their organizations to be impacted to varying degrees by the recession. Respondent organizations' approach to development was not dampened by the recession or

increased competition, they rather saw this as an opportunity to prepare for the upswing.

Wilhelm (2010) made a case for continued investment in leadership development during recessionary times and highlighted three main reasons for continued investment. Firstly, constant focus on leadership development will ensure that the organization remains competitive with a leadership well equipped to deal with these trying times. Secondly, continued spending will ensure that the organization is able to react to its changing environment. Finally constant development would ensure that the organization has a robust leadership pipeline. These three points were well understood by the research sample. They understood that continued leadership development would ensure they remained ahead of the pack and more competitive. Continued development raised the level of engagement in the organizations, with employees ideally coming back from these interventions better rounded and operating at the next level.

6.2.3 FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

Ready & Conger (2003) identified three pathologies that contribute to the failure of leadership development efforts. These were discussed in detail in Chapter two, but are briefly summarized as follows:

- Organizations tend to suffer from a mindset that ownership is power. A view that leadership development is something that is owned or can be controlled by certain executives, be it HR executives or business unit heads.
- Introducing quick fix commercial programmes not aligned to the organizations' strategy tends to turn leadership development into a

product. The programmes lose credibility with the same leadership team that is supposed to support the programmes the most.

- The use of inappropriate matrices to measure the success of the development programmes.

Analysis relating to Ready and Conger's pathologies is discussed under the following headings: Ownership, use of inappropriate matrices and quick fix programmes.

Amagoh (2004) had identified four popular delivery approaches discussed in Chapter two. Delivery approaches emerged as key contributors to the failure of initiatives and will therefore also be discussed.

These failure factors are represented graphically below before further analysis.
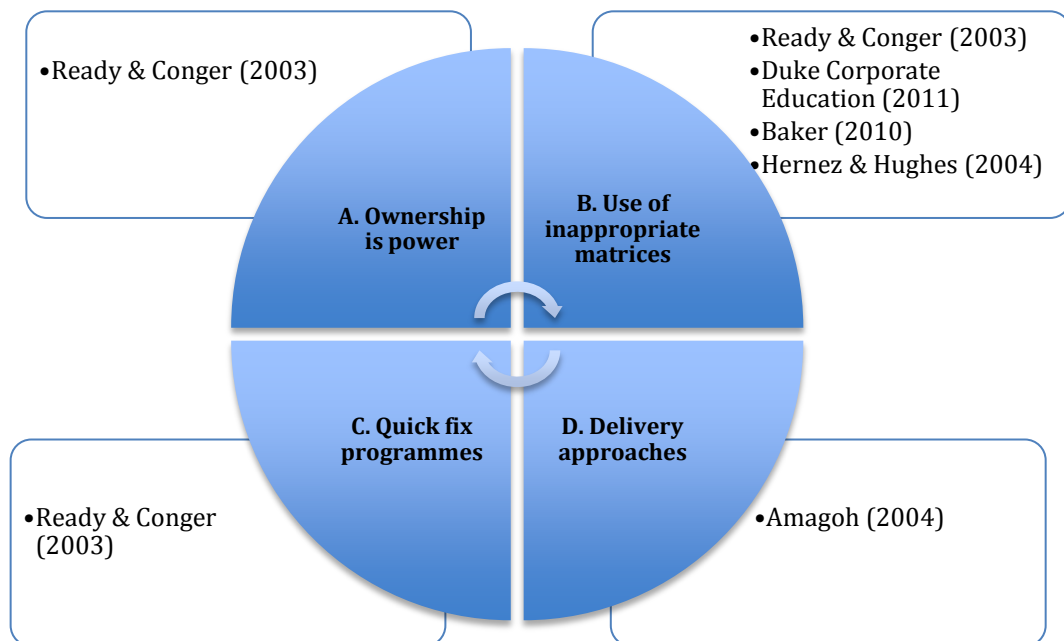
A. Ownership

Line managers that were sampled were of the view that leadership development was either the manager's sole responsibility or a shared responsibility with HR. HR was often looked at to facilitate the attendance of interventions or in some cases to identify interventions which were suitable for the organization. There was no evidence to support Ready and Conger's point on ownership being used to exert power or influence. Although it would have been interesting to get HR's view on this matter, it is not likely that managers would admit if they were indeed using the development programmes to play power games in their organizations.

B. Use of Inappropriate matrices

The use of inappropriate measures to determine the success of interventions was identified by Ready and Conger (2003) as one of the pathologies afflicting organizations.

Research done by Duke Corporate Education (2009) informed us that going forward organizations would be directing their leadership development spend towards those employees whose contribution to the organization's improved performance would be easily quantifiable (Duke Corporate Education, 2011). Structured models used to calculate return on investment, such as the Kules 5 stage process, Kirkpatrick-Phillips models and the Training for impact models were popular, particularly given the increased competition and recessionary environment organizations were now operating in (Green, 2004). In our research sample most of the line managers confirmed that employees were often selected to attend these programmes based on the potential they had demonstrated to move

up into senior leadership positions in the organization, i.e. they were high potential employees. Alternatively employees were selected based on their leadership gaps. Three managers from the same organization indicated that their development programmes were for all members of the organization. Seniority would determine which of the courses managers were required to attend. These managers were unable to quantify their expected results. This is understandable given that they had not identified the staff's development gap to begin with.

However, even those managers who could select which of their members could attend also did not have a structured manner of measuring success, although they were clear on the results they expected to see upon completion of the programme. Their main focus was often to develop the individual's overall leadership abilities..

None of the respondents referred to using the structured training effectiveness models discussed in Chapter two or any other models. Although, given the discussion in Chapter two these models are more likely to be used by HRD practitioners, with some input from the line managers. They are not likely to be the sole responsibility of the line managers.

Managers did identify the need to have post course reviews with the employees, possibly including HR to discuss learnings from the programme and determine if they had resulted in changes in behaviour. They believed this would allow them to assess the employee's contribution versus the organization's investment.

C. Quick fix programmes

The one size fits all approach adopted by one of the financial institutions sampled demonstrates element of the productization of leadership development efforts. Line managers from this organization questioned the effectiveness of the internal programmes as they were based on the premise that all employees on the same level had the same development needs.

D. Delivery approaches

Amagoh (2004) identified four popular delivery approaches as discussed in Chapter two, namely: integrated solution approach, experience based approach, formal mentoring and the leadership life cycle approach. Respondents had varying views on the appropriateness of delivery approaches used in their organizations with some stating that intermittent attendance of lectures or modules was not ideal. Whilst others felt that there was a good balance between the time spent attending the course and balancing the demands of the work environment. Respondents with the first view would have preferred that employees be out of the office for a set period of time to complete the intervention, using this time to focus their energies on the course. Whilst respondents with the latter view supported the intermittent attendance, as employees were not out of the office for extended periods of time and were able to balance the needs of the course with those of the organization.

One of the recurrent themes from respondents was the lack of post course support as a contributor to the failure of interventions. The integrated solution approach would ideally meet the line managers' needs of ensuring that completion of an

intervention is not seen as the end of ones leadership development. This approach views development as a long term, iterative process that requires constant attention, focus and resources (Amagoh, 2009).

The leadership life cycle approach seems to be the approach adopted by most organizations sampled in that the focus is on identifying leadership needs and implementing training. Organizations are however missing out on the crucial third stage of assessing improvements and ensuring alignment with the organization's strategic objectives.

6.2.5 SUCCESS OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

In Chapters one and two reference was made to several factors that must exist in organizations and the programme itself for the development efforts to be a success. Findings from chapter five will be explored further to identify the success factors identified by the respondents. Findings are graphically represented below and have been split according to those factors that are corroborated by the literature review and new findings. The theory-backed concepts will be discussed first, followed by the new findings.

Supported by theory	**New findings**
☐ A. Strategic Alignment: Cohen (2011)	☐ E. Meet the individual's needs
☐ B. Top level support: Ready (2004), Steeves & Frein (2010), Lamourex & O'Leonard (2009)	☐ F. Relevance of content
☐ C. Line manager involvement (Wilhelm 2010)	☐ G. Selection criteria
☐ D. Consequences for not developing staff Ready & Conger (2003)	

A. Strategic alignment

Cohen's (2011) four step strategic alignment process discussed in Chapter two is aimed at ensuring that there is alignment between an organization's strategic objectives and the objectives of the development programme, ensuring that organizations are at the first level of maturity.

This process would ideally be conducted at organizational level and not necessarily business unit level. Considering the seniority of the sample, there was no evidence to support the fact that Respondents engaged in this kind of deliberate decision making before adopting certain interventions. In organizations where HR provided the programme shortlist it can only be assumed that the HRD team, in consultation with the leadership team, conducted this process.   Should this process be completed successfully then measuring the success of the programme will be based on the extent to which it contributes to the success of the organization (Ready & Conger, 2003). The fact that respondents did not demonstrate the application of this process or similar processes also validates why they are unable to truly quantify expected outcomes in a manner that can translate

these outcomes to the benefit of the organization. Respondents had not made the link that identifying individual development needs had to be preceded by the clear understanding of the organizations strategic objectives. So that by the time employees were being recommended for development it was clear to the manager and employee how the intervention was going to assist the employee to contribute to the organizations overall strategy. There is an opportunity here for the HRD to facilitate these discussions and ensure that they are indeed happening prior to employees being sent to development programmes.

B. Top level support

In organizations where leadership development was driven at the highest level, buy in filtered down to the rest of the management levels. The leadership teams took full accountability of the role they were required to play in the development of their staff. These findings are aligned to Ready & Conger's (2003) findings that ownership and accountability is essential for the successful implementation of programmes. Where support of leadership development was no longer managements' primary focus, for whatever reason, this also filtered down to the rest of the management levels. It is therefore of utmost importance that the executive team communicates a consistent message in the organization despite changes that might be occurring internally. If an organization is at the first level of maturity the leadership philosophy should not be impacted by the organizations trading environment or other internal changes. This is not to say that everything should remain the same, it is important to keep abreast of changing leadership frameworks, ensuring that the selected one is still relevant for the organization.

But the level of focus and attention placed on the concept of leadership development should remain consistent.

Steeves and Frein (2010) have identified two dimensions that they believe will influence line managers' support of a development intervention. These are the degree of strategic importance of the initiative and the degree of influence a line manager has in the organization. There was no evidence to suggest that Respondents conditionally supported development programmes either based on the managers' influence in the organization or whether they deemed the programme to be of strategic importance or not. Respondents understood the importance of leadership development efforts even though they might not have supported the entire process adopted by their organizations. However, the fact that conditional support was not observed does not mean it did not exist. In most cases I interviewed Executives who headed up business units and would most definitely have had a say as to which programmes would be implemented in their units. Perhaps if these interviews were conducted whilst there were internal discussions in progress regarding which programmes the organization should adopt, then their views might have been different. Then they might have been more vocal on what they would or would not support for their business units.

Respondents who were not at the Executive level did not necessarily have a say in terms if which programmes were made available to employees, but chose from the short list provided.

C. Line manager involvement

Respondents wanted to have input into the modules covered by their direct reports and to ensure that there is a clear understanding, from both line manager and employee, of expected outputs.

Wilhelm's (2010) view on line manager involvement was that line managers should ideally be involved in delivering elements of the learning in order to make the learning more pragmatic. Respondents did not raise this type of involvement as an option as they were not aware that this was an option available to them for a different level of involvement. Programmes are often presented, as being so inflexible that managers' lack of knowledge is understandable. Managers must be given the option for additional involvement in the programmes.

D. Consequences for non-delivery

Development of staff was included in the KPIs of some of the line managers interviewed. Failure to develop your team would result in a lower performance score, which would in turn impact your annual increase and bonuses. However, having leadership development in the KPIs did not necessarily always drive the desired behaviour. It seemed that behaviour that was awarded or penalized depended on the challenges or environment the organization was trading in at the time. Recommendations on how this should be handled are discussed under the 'Top level support heading'. Profitability is still the key reasons why organizations are in business with leadership development as a secondary priority. This is very clear to any individual in the business world, if the business did not exist then there would be no need to even be discussing leadership development in

organizations. With that said, KPIs should be used to drive the ideal behaviour in organizations. Not delivering on elements of these KPIs should result in the same consequences provided your ability to deliver on them remained the same, i.e. you had the necessary resources and knowledge to deliver.

E. Meet the individual's needs

More and more line managers are realizing that their direct reports are at different stages in terms of their leadership development needs. Given their experiences with previous leadership development programmes line managers no longer see it as appropriate nor effective to send employees to exactly the same development programmes as more often than not their leadership gaps are different. The one size fits all approach is no longer appropriate.

In the event that organizations only offer a limited option of interventions, managers would like the option of selecting modules their employees should attend, as opposed to attending the entire programme but only benefit from a few modules.

F. Relevance of Content

The content of the development programmes must always be relevant and ideally customized to the needs of the organization. If organizations have predefined their leadership framework it will be easier for them to determine which programmes meet their needs (Ready & Conger, 2003). Customization in this context refers to being clear on the outcomes the organization wants to see from the programme and ensuring that the programme content is designed to meets those outcomes. One of the main outcomes managers are looking for are people who can manage

with a broader view of the world they operate in. Exceptional knowledge of your industry alone is no longer sufficient in this increasingly competitive and global environment. The entrance of global players in previously closed markets means that managers need to be aware of not only what is happening in their industries locally but also the impact international industry decisions have on one's area of responsibility.

G. Selection criteria

Managers must be able to determine, with little 'outside' intervention, who in their teams should attend development programmes. In cases where managers had identified staff members that needed to be developed they had more vested interest in seeing the employee truly grow and develop as a leader.

Identifying individuals with the same development needs and placing them onto the same programme should ideally result in more focused learning and also maintain the standard of the intervention. Particularly if the intervention is being offered by external institutions that often combine participants from different organizations.

Overall

Overall Ready (2004) surmises that organizations that are successful at building leaders use a more comprehensive approach which has three main characteristics, namely; leadership as a top level initiative, rewarding and supporting high potential employees accordingly and finally being supported by a strong HR team.

The first point has been discussed in great detail as a key requirement; it has not only been confirmed by theory discussed in Chapter one and two but by the findings in Chapter five as well.

Respondents have indicated that often the condition for selection into development programmes is based on leadership gaps identified for high potential employees. The interviews did not discuss reward methods used by organizations to retain their high potential employees. Ready's second characteristic therefore cannot be confirmed by the findings.

Respondents agreed that there was definitely a role to be played by HR in implementing the leadership development framework. Contrary to popular belief the respondents viewed HR as a partner who shared the responsibility of ensuring that development programmes were a success. It was only one respondent that had negative feedback regarding their HR team.

6.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS: HAVE THEY BEEN ANSWERED?

6.3.1: Research Question 1: What do managers perceive as the value of leadership development?

Competitive Advantage

Line managers believe that successful implementation of leadership development interventions will give organizations the competitive edge by ensuring that their leadership team is equipped with the necessary skills for their current trading environment and the future. The constant grooming and development of the leadership pipeline will ensure that organizations are better prepared for the future. Managers are aware that in an increasingly competitive environment your

people are your only differentiator as it is not always possible to compete on differentiated products or services.

6.2.2 Research Question 2: What factors must exist in <u>organizations</u> and in the <u>programmes</u> themselves in order for line managers to see leadership development programmes as valuable?

Line managers will view leadership development programmes as value adding if the failure factors are eliminated or rectified and the success factors are introduced into the programmes and the organizations. These factors will be restated again, starting with the programme specific factors followed by the organizations specific factors.

Programme Specific factors

1. Programme outcomes must be aligned to the organizations strategic objectives

2. Programmes must be tailored to the individual's needs. One-size fits all approach when employees have different leadership gaps is not appropriate. Nor is quick fix programmes not aligned to the organizations strategic objectives.

3. Programme content must be customized and relevant to the organization's needs and always be updated

4. The integrated solution approach and leadership life cycle approach were identified as being the most appropriate development programme approaches for the sample.

5. Ensuring that part of the programme delivery included an element of post course support was identified as being essential to entrenching learnings post the programme.

Organization specific factors

1. Top level support is important in getting buy in and ownership from the rest of the leadership team

2. Line managers should be involved in the delivery of certain modules in the programmes where possible. Their involvement would make the learning more pragmatic as they would be relating to the more practical aspect of the job.

3. There must be consistency in how participants are selected for development programmes. Particularly if participants are attending external courses where they would be interacting with employees from other organizations. If programmes are pitched at a certain level of operating then to maintain the standard of the programme participants must meet those requirements upfront.

4. There must be consequences to managers for not developing their staff. This does not necessarily mean that the most effect way is through KPIs, but whatever method the organization select, they must make sure that it is consistently applied.

5. Line managers and HR should share the responsibility of ensuring the success of development interventions. This is a responsibility that cannot be abdicated to HR. A strong HR team is necessary to play a supportive role to the business.

6. Appropriate matrices that clearly link results achieved on the programme with the organizations objectives must be used to measure the success of interventions

6.4 SAMPLE CONCERNS AND IMPACT ON FINDINGS

The data gathering approach has been discussed in detail in Chapter four. There are no concerns regarding how the sample was identified, this methodology has been discussed in detail. The manner in which the data collection was conducted does pose some limitations for the research. Interviews were conducted either face to face or telephonically depending on the participants or researcher's availability. None of the interviews were recorded; they were all captured manually by the researcher and then transcribed. The first limitation presented by this approach in gathering the data is the fact that facilitating an interview and documenting the responses at the same time is too much multi tasking for the researcher. This could have resulted in the researcher missing out on key insights whilst trying to capture responses. All participants were available post the interview allowing the researcher to get clarity on those points that were not well captured during the interviews. At times it was difficult to try and recapture these when the researcher went back to the Respondents to seek clarity.

The second limitation arises as a result of researcher single handedly coding and interpreting the results. Ideally there should have been a second, objective researcher to validate findings, so that the findings are not based on an individual's possibly subjective view.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 WHAT WE KNEW PRIOR TO STARTING THE RESEARCH

Prior to embarking on this research to determine the value organizations were deriving from leadership development programmes, as seen from the line managers perspective, certain elements around this topic were clear.

Lamoureux and O'Leonard (2009) had concluded that an organizations maturity level would determine the effectiveness of their leadership development initiatives. This information was used to determine the maturity levels of the sampled line manager's organizations. Findings and their meaning were discussed in detail in Chapter five and six.

Existing literature was indicating that now more than ever it had become important for organizations to have a clear sense of expected returns before investing funds into leadership development programmes. The recession had proved to be a powerful catalyst for organizations to review their learning & development strategies in a drastically changing landscape (Duke Corporate Education, 2009). Greater emphasis was being placed on developing the organizations' overall capability versus only focusing on individual competence development. The value of leadership development programmes therefore had to be clearly demonstrated (Duke Corporate Education, 2009). Going forward learning and development spend was expected to be directed toward those elements of the employee population where a real return on investment or value as measured by a likely improvement in business results was possible and visible (Duke Corporate Education, 2009). Most organizations would not embark on any

type of project unless there was a clear or estimated return on investment or even perceived value add (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). But organizations were often still continuing to invest in development programmes without really seeing the value add (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004).

In today's economy, leadership development costs had to meet certain standards of proof of impact (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004). Demonstrating and quantifying the impact of leadership development investments had emerged as a priority for organizations committed to building leadership strength (Hernez-Broome & Hughes, 2004).

Whilst there was growing acknowledgement that proof of impact was essential for any learning initiative, the focus had often been from the employees' perspective. We were hoping to understand what exactly line managers' found valuable from leadership development programmes. Their views would then be used to assist those interested in developing programme impact measuring tools.

Steeves and Frein (2010) had identified two dimensions that they believed would influence line managers' support of a development intervention. These were the degree of strategic importance of the initiative and the degree of influence a line manager has in the organization (Steeves & Frein, 2010). The nature of support given by a line manager could range from resistance, disinterest to accountability and involvement (Steeves & Frein, 2010). The more positive levels of involvement occurred when development programmes were viewed as being transformational or strategic in nature, and when the line manager had influence and authority in the organization (Steeves & Frein, 2010).

This research hoped to determine if line managers were asking themselves the following question before recommending employees for leadership development programmes: To what extent is this leadership intervention assisting me and my employee to build on the organization's capability thereby ensuring that we meet our strategic objectives?

7.2 KEY FINDINGS

Line managers understand that successfully implementing leadership development initiatives benefits the individual and provides a competitive advantage for the organization. Line managers clearly stated elements, that if included or eliminated from programmes and/ or organizations, would result in them deriving value and benefit from the leadership development programmes. The majority of the line managers did not always define this value in relation to the organization's specific strategic objectives, but more often as a development of an individual's leadership competence and the organization's overall competitiveness.

Factors necessary for line managers to value leadership development programmes may be described as either being programme or organization specific.

With regards to the programme specific factors it was essential that any development intervention that was introduced to an organization be aligned to its strategic objectives. Once this had been done the integrated solution approach and the leadership life cycle approaches were identified as being the most appropriate delivery approaches for development programmes. Particularly the integrated

solution approach as it ensured that development programmes had an element of post course support. Programmes had to be structured in such a way that they met the individual's specific development needs as opposed to having overly structured programmes aimed at developing individuals with different development gaps using the same programme.

The first organization specific factor is the importance of top-level support in ensuring there is ownership from the rest of the leadership team. Ownership should be shared between line managers and HR, without one party or the other monopolizing control over leadership development. A strong HR team is important in playing a supportive role within the organization.

Line managers have to be held responsible if they fail to develop their staff. But if this is to be measured as a performance output it has to be done consistently, regardless of the organizations trading environment. In the event that managers wanted to be more involved they could possibly deliver some of the programme's modules. Their involvement was likely to make the learning more pragmatic for the participants.

The success of interventions is currently not being measured in a manner that clearly links success to contributing to the organization's strategic objectives. Several models exist which could be used by line manager to measure the success of interventions.

Finally, high performing employees who were often the recipient of these development programmes had to be supported and rewarded accordingly. Although the support and reward tools used were not covered in this research paper.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

This topic is relevant to organizations in South Africa that offer leadership development programmes. The key stakeholders who can benefit from the results of this research are Human Resource Mangers, internal learning departments and learning institutions that offer leadership development programmes.

These findings have helped us to identify what factors line managers consider as being key with regards to leadership development programmes. Knowledge of this should help the identified stakeholders to engage more meaningfully with line managers when discussing leadership development.

HR

HR often has an overview of how various departments operate within an organization. They are in a position to ensure there is consistency in how participants are selected. The knowledge of the various business units can assist them in advising line managers on how best to tailor the programmes to the individual's needs.

HR is often the first point of contact between the organization and learning institutions. Prior to engaging with institutions they must ensure that the leadership framework and how it relates to the organization's strategic objectives have already been defined.

Learning Institutions

There are several important questions learning institutions should be asking organizations before facilitating any specific development programmes on their behalf. Given the above findings if institutions want to have credibility with management they need to have gotten answers on the following questions:

- Has the organization identified its leadership framework?
- How is the proposed programme aligned to the organization's strategic objectives and the leadership framework?

Ensuring that these questions are answered prior to engagement is likely to result in long-term credibility with the internal stakeholders.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There is an opportunity to develop a programme proof of impact tool for line managers that incorporates these identified success factors. This does not necessarily have to be as structured as those tools discussed in Chapter two. Line managers would use a tool that would quickly allow them to assess how an intervention was aligned to the organization's strategic objectives and how they could possibly quantify expected return on their investment.

7.5 CONCLUSION

This research has allowed us to determine those factors that must exist in organizations and development programmes in order for line managers to derive value from them.

Line managers are clear on the benefit of having leadership development programmes in their organizations although they do not always measure a successful programme against the organization specific strategic objectives. Theirs is a very broad view that leadership development impacts the organization's overall competitiveness. Whilst this is true, it would be beneficial to identify those features that are unique to the organization's competitiveness and then to focus on these. These will ultimately lead to the same but more focused results of improved competitiveness.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted on behalf of the Gordon Institute of Business Science. This research forms part of my studies towards a master's in business administration.

Please read the following and decide whether you are interested in participating in the study. You will be included in this study only if you are willing to participate voluntarily.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this study is to investigate line manager's views on value derived by organizations from leadership development programmes.

This research is important because historically research has focused on leadership development from the participants' perspective or the overall organization. Very little research has been done focusing specifically on the views of line manager's and determining whether they see any benefit to leadership development programmes.

CONFIDENTIALITY
No information that could result in participants being easily identifiable will be requested.

Kindly note that you will not be required to sign this declaration. A signed copy is not required, as this may identify you, and this research is done in such a way that you cannot be identified after participating in this study.

PROCEDURES
Should you volunteer to participate in this study, we would like you to answer 13 questions on leadership development. The duration of the interview is approximately 30 minutes. Your participation will involve the completion of the interview and nothing more. You are free to refuse to answer any questions or to withdraw from the process at any stage.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
There are no foreseeable physical or psychological risks involved in participation. You will be mildly inconvenienced by the time it takes to complete the interview (30 minutes). If you would like to discuss the research and your reactions to the interview, you are welcome to do so after the session.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY
You will not benefit directly from your participation in the research. The research

results may improve the quality of leadership development programmes by aligning objectives to the expectations of all stakeholders, namely: the organization as a whole, participants, line manager's, HR, leadership development programmes service providers and learning department in organizations.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION
You will receive no payment for your participation.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
You can choose whether or not you wish to be a participant in this study. Should you volunteer to be a participant in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any repercussions whatsoever.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS
If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Researcher: Nomvula Omaruaye, 082 497 8250, Nomvula.omaruaye@gmail.com

Supervisor: Dr. Lucy Voss Price, 011 771 4345, VossPriceL@gibs.co.za

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS
You may withdraw your consent at any time and cease participating without any penalty. You are not giving up any legal rights because of your participation in this research study.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study
Kindly note that you will not be required to sign this declaration, but that you will be indicating your consent by completing the interview. (A signed copy is not required, as this may identify you, and this research is done in such a way that you cannot be identified after participating in this study.)

Discussion guide for identifying key themes	
No.	**Questions**
1	How has your organization fared through the recent economic crisis?
2	What are the organization's strategic objectives?
3	What is the organization's view on leadership development?

4	Who drives learning and development in the organization?
5	Are there consequences for management for non-development of staff?
6	How many members of your team have completed a Leadership development programme?
7	What criteria did you use to select these employees? (What were the gaps in their development)
8	What were your expectations from the leadership development programme?
9	What was the delivery method for the programme? What were your thoughts on this method?
10	Tell me about the programme itself. Who runs it (internal vs. externally managed), what modules are covered? How often do employees attend etc.
11	How did you measure success?
12	Were your expectations met, post the training? If yes/no how?
13	What are your recommendations for the programme going forward?