

**The Changing Nature of the Employment Relationship:
mapping a subjective terrain of the psychological contract**

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for
the Degree of Doctor of Business Administration**

by

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August 1998

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To my father
C.F.C. Parkinson MD, 'Parky'
(1910 - 1973)
whose sense of values, caring
and contribution continues to inspire me

'This above all - to thine own self be true'

Abstract Of Thesis Submitted For Degree Of Doctor Of Business Administration

The Changing Nature of the Employment Relationship: mapping a subjective terrain of the psychological contract

This thesis builds on existing theory and literature to provide a multi-disciplinary, qualitative approach to viewing the employment relationship through the psychological contract. It aims at providing a perspective unavailable in previous published empirical work in what is a relatively new, but burgeoning field.

The conceptual framework that the research inquiry draws on initially has its roots in organisational commitment and the psychological contract, although later this is supplemented by a career perspective as other factors emerge. Taking a constructivist viewpoint, the thesis explores the methodological considerations that this entails, and is followed by exploration of empirical evidence. A pilot study in 18 companies tested both the relevance of the research questions and the implications of the methods to be employed, and then the main study in one of the pilot organisations focusses on the experiences of ten managers and a further six professionals using Schein's career anchor interview method.

Following the analysis using inductive, intuitive methods and computer aided analysis such as cluster and correspondence analysis, a typology emerges based on the dimensions of the level of formality the individual sought in their employment relationship and how active they were in managing their career. From this analysis, vignettes of five emergent characters are developed to illustrate the different perspectives of their employment relationship that this particular group of individuals appeared to have. Influenced by values, attitudes and beliefs, a major contributor to determining their view seems to be that of the relationship individuals have with their line manager, who represents the organisation to them. Other significant factors would appear to be locus of control, self image, social identity, and the life or career stage that they have entered.

Finally the thesis suggests a number of implications for organisations and individuals, as well as suggestions for further research.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Originally inspired by A.S Byatt's researchers in 'Possession', I little realised how soon I was to encounter the question that would set me off on my own research expedition represented by this thesis. In embarking on trying to understand what was behind people's relationship with their organisations, I am grateful to my then manager, Peter Archer, in initially encouraging me to research why people chose to leave or stay when offered voluntary redundancy, and then in supporting my decision to pursue my research outside that same formal organisation environment.

My supervisors during this period, Professor Pat Joynt based at Henley and Dr Philip Cox based in Bristol, have been my mainstays in ensuring that I reached my destination and deserve special thanks in getting me there. Both knowing me too well, they have provided ideal complementary skills. Pat's particular specialty has been to provoke action especially through setting demanding deadlines and prestigious visitors to listen to presentations, as well as his willingness to respond to last minute submissions with the aim of encouraging writing. Phil has helped me sustain my enthusiasm for this expedition with his own interest in the subject area, providing encouragement through listening, critiquing and helping me to develop and crystallise my ideas backed up by his sound advice, and providing openings to build on my research through working together on writing and similar projects.

Special thanks must go to Louise Child, Veronica Clarke, Jackie Coleman, and Alison Llewellyn in the research office who have provided cheery, invaluable support and help whatever the problem or need. This thesis could also not have been written without the support of Gail Thomas and her staff in the Henley library. I have also been fortunate in support from friends in other institutions, Dr Diana Winstanley at Imperial College, Dr Susan Vinnicombe and John Bank at Cranfield, who have all been instrumental in my research and have provided opportunities to consolidate my thoughts through lecturing.

One of the delights of this experience has been the fellow travellers and friends with whom I could explore the new found world and language of research. I am particularly grateful to the other Henley doctoral researchers for their encouragement, discussion, debate and ideas, especially those that started with me, Pierre Chenet, Martine Benhaim, Aud Pettersen; those who had been before, Helen Lydka, Liz Houldsworth, Steve Downing, John Symon; and particularly those at a similar stage as we neared the end of our respective journeys, Peter Nuttall who not only provided invaluable encouragement and support, but also the more tangible help with providing the other researcher role, along with my 'tabula rasa', Cristina Russ, from Bucharest, who as a natural scientist had never expected to be involved in management research. Most of all I am indebted to Helene Coxhead in sharing many of the more difficult stages of this expedition, having as many doubts as myself, but luckily not at the same time, and providing the beacon to enable me to almost keep up with her progress.

I also want to thank those who made this research inquiry possible: the Future Work Forum and members who provided the pilot opportunity through Dr Lawrence Lyons, Professor David Birchall and Peter Thompson; and more particularly the participants in my main research organisation who willingly gave their time to make the research an enriching experience, as well as Alan Freeland and Alison Lees who sponsored and organised it.

Finally to close friends and family, who have suffered several years of extreme neglect, I am thankful for their tolerance and particularly to my husband, Geoff Coombs, who has taken the major brunt of this enterprise with unflinching forbearance.

Chapter One - An Introduction

*“We shall not cease from exploration
And at the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And to know the place for the first time”*

T.S. Eliot

On July 31st 1992, 20,000 people voluntarily left the UK's largest private employer. Every wine bar in the City of London was full of groups of people coping with conflicting emotions, saying good bye to friends, the past and reflecting on what the future held for them. Why? what was it that shaped their decisions, what was it that determined whether they wanted to leave or stay? This was the question that initially inspired this inquiry, and this thesis is the chronicle of the voyage of discovery that was eventually to provide insights into those decisions.

Some years later, in an organisation from a related industry, a group of employees provided those insights, in giving me their perspectives of what the employment relationship meant to them. The stories that Sam, Kim, Jo, Alex and Gerry illustrate, may be similar or very different to the experiences of that other group and other individuals in organisational life. What the stories seek to do here, is to engage the reader in viewing the employment relationship from their perspective, to provide impressions and in so doing to uncover some of the essential meaning that belonging to a particular organisation brings to people's lives.

Introduction

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to provide the context within which this inquiry is set and to provide an itinerary of the expedition that reaching these impressions of contemporary organisational life has entailed. As *‘the construction of any work always bears the mark of the person who created it’*, I will, like Riessman (1993, p.v) before formally starting the research expedition, explore the

general environment and the perspectives that this researcher brings to the inquiry in the first section of this chapter, in order to locate the inquiry. Just as this inquiry relies on the stories created by my research participants to *'impose order on the flow of experience to make sense of events and actions in their lives'*, (ibid., p2), the thesis will also provide the chronicle of the research process that evoked and interpreted their narratives.

The second section of the chapter will set out the pre-understanding, building on the context setting to provide an overview of the philosophical and ontological considerations that underpin the methodology of this inquiry. This will be followed by a second overview through existing literature and theory. Having set the scene, the third section will outline the significance of this thesis in several areas ranging from the theoretical aspects to the implications for organisations and individuals. Finally the last section will briefly summarise the chapters to provide a road map through the thesis. Figure 1.1 below provides an overall map of the inquiry process leading to this thesis.

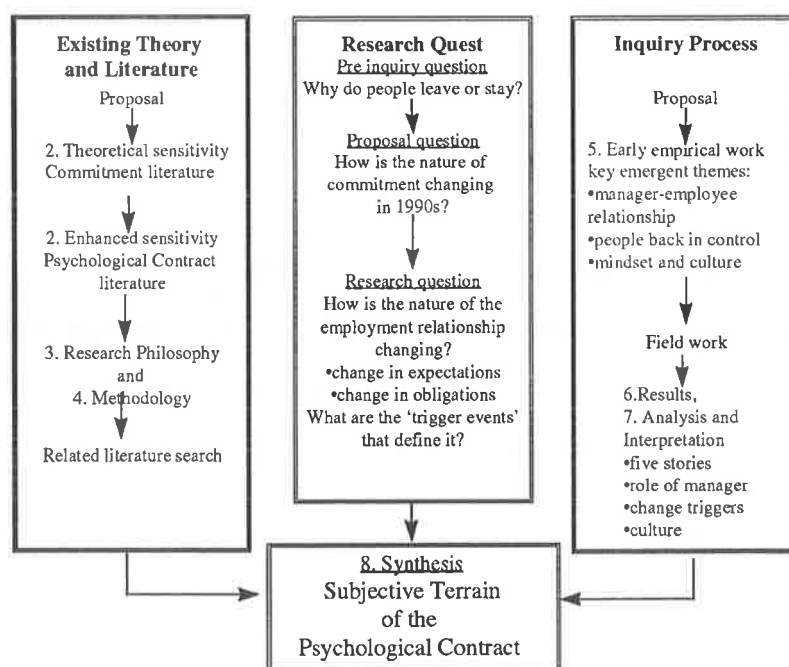


Figure 1.1 : Map of this inquiry process and this thesis.

Setting the Context

The Environment

The 1990s have seen many dramatic changes in organisations and their structures driven by various competitive, economic, technological and social pressures. The 1980s in the UK, politically dominated by the market economy, individualism, and the dismantling of the welfare state was contrasted by the concentration on excellence, quality and culture in organisations as they searched for competitive advantage (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Ouchi, 1981; Deal and Kennedy; 1982). The combination of these potentially opposing forces meant the demise of collectivism in the UK, either through wilful destruction as epitomised in the 1984 miners strike or through employing sophisticated human relations techniques that deemed the need for collective representation unnecessary (Legge, 1995).

Global competition and privatisation have not only forced restructuring and downsizing but they have diminished the opportunities for full time jobs replacing them with part time, low paid work, which has left organisations with their skills and knowledge base depleted, and having threatened their long term relationship with their employees (Handy, 1996; Cox and Parkinson, 1998). Technology has further exacerbated the situation creating virtual organisations which allows many jobs to be undertaken overseas to take advantage of time shifts. However it has also enabled individuals to be based from home, using digital technology and telecommunications, which has allowed organisations to make savings on accommodation costs, and individuals to pursue a more balanced working life.

This increased application of flexible working practices has changed the way not only how people work but the way they need to be managed, only 40 per cent of the UK working population is now employed full time and even less work the 'traditional' nine to five day (Hutton, 1996; Brewster *et al*, 1993). This move has been further supported by the deregulation of the employment market and lifting of many employee protection measures (Marullo, 1995; Beatson, 1995).

These trends have left many reconsidering the nature of the employment relationship. With downsizing and restructuring, in the early 1990s many employers no longer felt a responsibility beyond their contractual commitment to employees, leaving many individuals caught unawares and unprepared in the shift from employment and 'job for life' to employability, which for those left in organisations was expressed by lower levels of loyalty, commitment and feeling uncertain of their future (Baillie, 1996). However there is evidence now that individuals are now beginning to feel more secure as the recession has bottomed out, and that the importance of the psychological contract, or the *'unwritten set of expectations operating at all times between every member of an organization and the various managers and others in that organization'* (Schein, 1988, p22), has been seen as the key variable in explaining contemporary employment relations (Guest and Conway, 1997).

The social environment has influenced the basis by which individuals now regard their future in organisations, the changes in work patterns and social thinking have stimulated questions about the value and meaning of work (Handy, 1994). A better educated workforce than their parents has led to higher aspirations, but career concepts having to change to deal with the greater uncertainty and wanting to balance satisfaction in work with life style issues, this has resulted in increasingly diverse views of the employment relationship required (Schein, 1996; IPD, 1998).

The Researcher

It was against this background of restructuring and redundancy programmes that I became interested in what were the factors that influenced an individual's decision to leave or stay in an organisation when faced with a generous package or an uncertain organisational future. The organisation had taken a leap in the dark as it was one of the largest downsizing programmes ever undertaken, in the event the redundancy scheme was 100% oversubscribed. The request for eight per cent to volunteer, provoked an initial fifty per cent interested. How was it that the organisation failed to predict the response? As the personnel strategy manager at the time, I was able to undertake research that involved surveying some 4000 'leavers' and interviewing another 200 people, leavers and stayers, nearly 20% of them personally.

It was on the basis of that experience that I set out on this research expedition. Non-academic research in a large organisation, based on painting an overall picture for the Board, did not give the luxury of understanding the theoretical underpinnings and exploring the issues in depth. However it did lead me to the concept of commitment and thus to an area of research that would sustain the 'personal and passionate involvement' (Moustakas, 1994, p105) necessary to complete this journey.

From the literature, initially, of commitment and latterly, the psychological contract, building on that early experience and my early empirical work, I was able to derive the research questions that were to sustain me in my expedition, which were:

1. *How is the nature of the relationship between organisations and their employees changing?*
 - *change in expectations*
 - *change in obligations*
2. *What are the 'trigger events' that define it?*
and coupled to these questions:
3. How much is the line manager the determinant of the quality of the relationship?

The thesis that follows provides the background to determining the questions, how they have informed the process of research, the extent to which it has been possible to answer them through the research route taken, and finally the implications of the findings.

One of the challenges in undertaking research in this area, has come from having a practitioner rather than an academic background, which would be steeped in the literature of the chosen discipline. I have taken a multi-disciplinary approach to an area that, from the literature I first became acquainted with, traditionally took a psychological perspective. However I quickly found, like career theory, as the

employment relationship is at the interface of organisations and individuals and therefore the point at which psychology and sociology meet, that it has also been possible to also draw from sociological, anthropological and related disciplines. This has been particularly apparent once I got beyond the initial stages of considering the field of interest and begun to understand the implications of taking a constructivist and naturalistic inquiry approach to this research.

Overview of Philosophy and Methodology

The philosophical and the related methodological approaches to research taken throughout this inquiry are underpinned by an interpretive paradigm, which abandons '*the concept of the aloof researcher*' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p11) in order to make sense of individuals' experience, rather than seeks to analyse and measure causal links between variables, (to be explained later in chapter three). The development of the use of such paradigms in the human sciences can be seen to be inextricably linked to the history of recent organisation theory. The last twenty to thirty years have been turbulent in the theoretical world, as the old universal truths of positivism, functionalism and the objective nature of truth have been questioned by the rise of such alternative paradigms (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

This has been paralleled in practice with much of the development of organisation theory epitomised by the relationship between the organisation and its employees. As Pfeffer (1982) points out: the early large scale enterprises had systems of internal contracting which were gradually replaced by hierarchical control systems as management became established along with early 'functionalist' theories; the recognition of 'self-actualising' man at work brought a move for the relationship to become one of 'commitment' (Argyris, 1960; Walton, 1985); and the concept of the 'psychological contract' may provide an insight into how that relationship has changed and whether theory needs to be reviewed as a consequence.

Existing models and research on issues such as commitment have been conducted within the 'old' paradigm of stable organisations, and from a 'functionalist' school of organisation theory with a focus on more goal directed and rational theories

based on an individual level of analysis. The advent of the 'psychological' contract could also be seen as: either an attempt to address the inadequacies of commitment as a concept, in potentially addressing the 'essence' of the relationship; but it could equally be seen as missing the point, as much of the empirical work so far seems also to come from a functionalist viewpoint.

Implications of a Constructivist or Naturalistic Inquiry

The rational, functional, mechanistic approach traditionally taken to research into people at work has seemed inadequate to capture the 'essence' that underlines the nature of human relationships. The constructivist paradigm, developed by Guba and Lincoln, is seen by them to replace the scientific, traditional approach, by the researcher working jointly with the participants to build understanding of their world (Schwandt, 1994). It is similar to the approach to managing people as outlined above, which '*tends to limit rather than mobilize the development of human capacities, molding human beings to fit the requirements of mechanical organization rather than building the organization around their strengths and potentials*' (Morgan, 1997, p30). It is from this alternative interpretive approach, based on the philosophy of phenomenology and related hermeneutics, that this inquiry has constructed meaning (Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

The naturalistic or constructivist, as it was later called, paradigm comes out of the criticism of the positivist paradigm, particularly in the study of socio-behavioural phenomena, and is based on the tenets of socially constructed reality, interactivity between the knower and the known, building an idiographic body of knowledge; the impossibility of distinguishing cause and effect, and that the inquirer's values will have an influence (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Its inductive, more intuitive approach appeared to sit well with my own holistic style and in my earlier empirical work, I was able to gauge the extent to which it would support me to follow my research objectives.

Using the principles of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990), which in a traditional paradigm would seem to be working backwards, rather than finding ways to measure aspects of the phenomenon of the

psychological contract, I have worked with narratives to interpret them in the light of existing models, theories and literature. My participants' experiences, in their organisational world are not necessarily similar to other people's in other organisations, however the themes that arise are recognised in the literature and may have resonance with other groups to provide insights into what may be happening in their worlds.

Overview of Literature and Theory

The 'human instrument', the researcher, is a key element in a naturalistic inquiry or constructivist framework, where the researcher and participants construct meaning jointly. This section provides the initial literature and theory search that formed my 'theoretical sensitivity' therefore, helps provide the reader with the background to my own understanding before setting out on this research expedition.

Organisational Commitment

The original body of literature that this inquiry has drawn from, was that which provided the initial insights into why people remained in organisations. The concept of commitment had its roots mainly in the 1970s and 1980s, although definitions go back to 1960 with Becker's '*commitment comes into being when a person, by making a side bet, links extraneous interests with a consistent line of activity*' (in Meyer and Allen, 1997, p12). It is seen as a multi-dimensional concept by most commitment theorists (Reichers, 1985; Porter *et al*, 1974; Meyer and Allen, *ibid.*) with figure 1.2 below demonstrating the many facets that have been attributed to the concept.

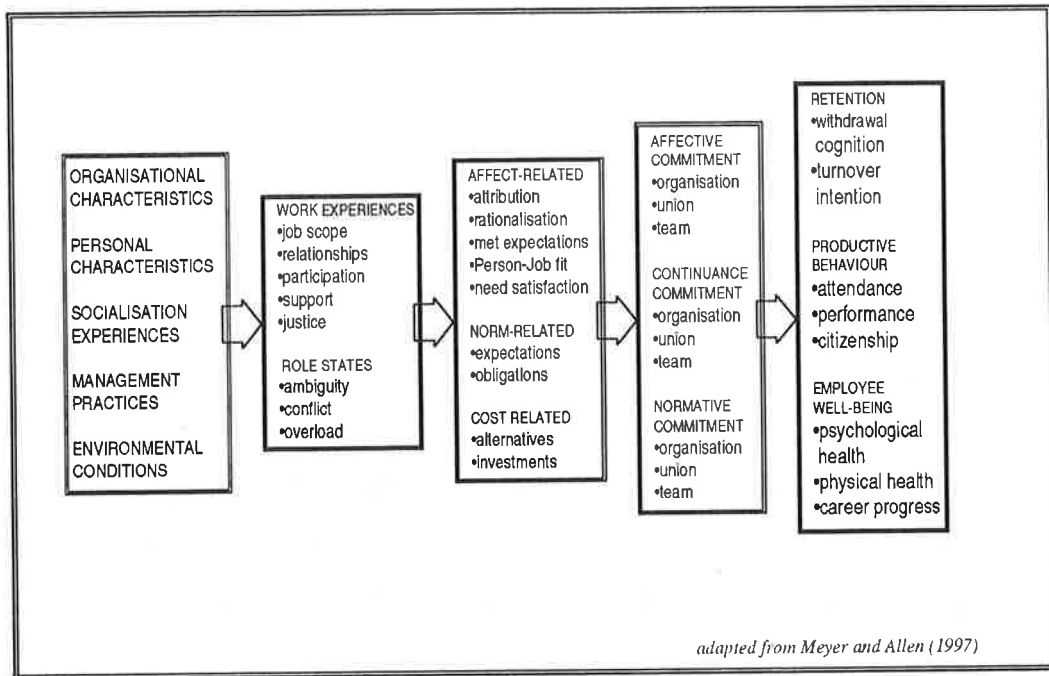


Figure 1.2 : A multidimensional model of organisational commitment

The major elements of commitment comprise attitudinal or affective commitment which is the extent to which the individual identifies with the organisation (Buchanan, 1974; Steers, 1977; Mowday *et al.*, 1982) and behavioural or continuance commitment which is concerned with the individual's intention to stay in the organisation (Meyer and Allen, *ibid.*, Lydka, 1992). The questioning of the relevance of commitment, in the light of the conditions of the early 1990s, especially the aspect of behavioural commitment, and the opportunity for some early empirical work in the form of a pilot, widened my thinking to the newer concept of the psychological contract, as a more appropriate means to employ in understanding the employment relationship.

Psychological Contract

The psychological contract as a concept was also first used in 1960, and further developed in the mid 1970s by Schein, *"the actual terms remain implicit; they are not written down anywhere. But the mutual expectations formed between the employee and the employer function like a contract in that if either party fails to meet the expectations, serious consequences will follow - demotivation, turnover, lack of advancement, or termination"* (Schein, 1978, p112). It came to the fore

in the late 1980s with the work of Rousseau and her team of researchers. Their research focus in this period following corporate restructuring and downsizing, was on what they termed the violation of the psychological contract (Robinson, and Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1995, Rousseau and Parks, 1995).

Schein (1978) and Herriot and Pemberton (1996) developed the concept as a matching process between the organisation's needs and offers and those of the individual, leaving the feel of an essence to be captured. The work of Rousseau and the 'US School' saw the psychological contract more of an entity, "*individual beliefs, shaped by the organisation, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organisation.*" (Rousseau, 1995 p9), concentrating on the results of the broken contract.

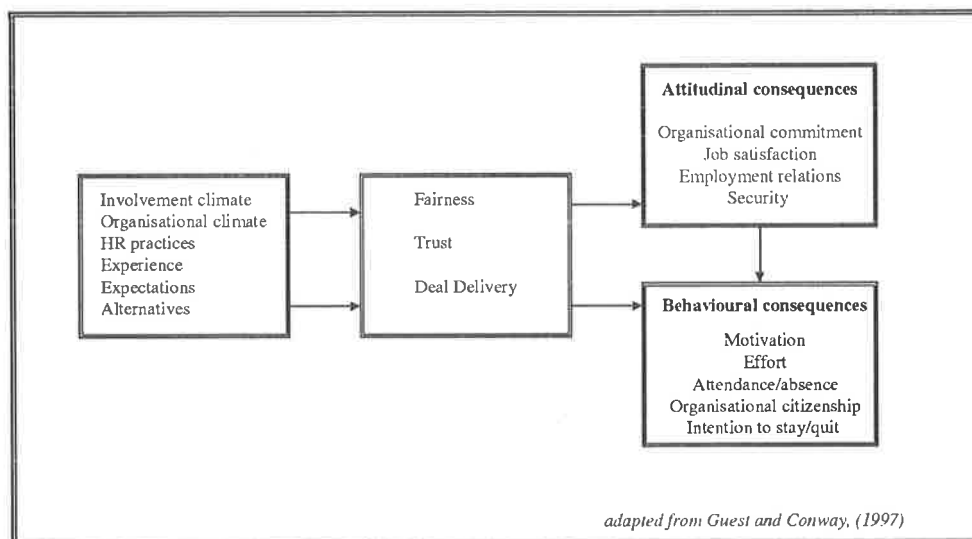


Figure 1.3 : A model of the psychological contract

As yet most of the literature has been of a theoretical nature with little empirical research published and to some extent it has yet to distinguish itself from that of organisational commitment, as shown by figure 1.3 above, especially when viewed with figure 1.2. In the US, the empirical work has been mostly of a quantitative nature and focussed on college alumni (Robinson, 1996; Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994; Robinson and Morrison; 1995). In the UK the work is also mainly quantitative with Sparrow (1996), in the banking sector, Guest and

Conway (1997) as a part of a general survey on attitudes, with the work of Herriot *et al* (1997), the nearest to a qualitative approach through critical incident technique. It is to reflect Guzzo and Noonan's (1994, p491) request : "*we need to better map the subjective terrain of the psychological contract as a prelude to an improved appreciation of it*", that the shape of this thesis has been developed.

Related Areas of Theory

As the research inquiry has progressed, it has drawn on other bodies of literature from different fields and disciplines as it was not necessarily clear the extent to which they would play a part at the beginning. This is also perhaps due to the paucity of existing published research in this area at the time. The other fields have included the closely related area of career with which the psychological contract shares several authors, (Herriot and Pemberton, Schein, Rousseau), again as it is an area where the individual and the organisation interface across the psychology and sociology divide. It is also inextricably linked to the psychological contract as an area that provides the frame of reference by which an individual can gauge progress and changes over time. The inquiry also draws on the literature of Rotter's locus of control (Hingley and Cooper, 1986; Leong, Furnham and Cooper, 1996), social identity, (Ashforth and Mael, 1989), image (Lee and Mitchell, 1994), culture (Schein, 1996a; Morgan, 1997), and leader member exchange (Gertstner and Day, 1997).

The Organisation

The naturalistic setting in which this inquiry was carried out, was a business unit of an organisation that had been through the restructuring and downsizing that is described earlier. The UK office was managed as a part of a holistic European operation. As a multi-national, in the information technology sector, the organisation can be seen to be in the forefront of new ways of working and has been experimenting with different organisational forms to meet the challenges of the 1990s. As well as short term contractors, part timers and agency staff, it has also been developing strategic partnerships with its natural competitors, which has taken it well beyond the core peripheral organisation models of the 1980s (Atkinson, 1985, Handy 1985).

The business unit in which the study took place had been established in the early 1990s in a completely new field, which had required the organisation to recruit experienced employees from outside the company, an unusual practice in an organisation used to growing its own skills. The company, traditionally been known for its strong company culture, had been an attractive and active employer of graduates, used to being able to attract the best in the field. The result was by the time the inquiry took place there was a mixture of managers from the 'old company' alongside 'experienced hires' from a variety of backgrounds, while most of the recently hired young professionals were on fixed term contracts.

The inquiry was instigated as part of the process that the organisation was undertaking in reviewing the whole area of the relationship it had with its employees, using career management as tool, both to understand and manage expectations. The organisation had recognised that in the old culture people had sat back and let the company manage their career for them, the period following restructuring had thrown people on their own resources unprepared, now they wanted to achieve a balance somewhere between the two. As an employer of highly marketable 'knowledge workers', they also wanted to retain their specialist skill base. It was therefore an environment where individuals had become aware of some of the personal issues around their careers, that formed the setting for this inquiry.

Significance of Thesis

In a burgeoning area, with little published empirical work, this qualitative thesis makes a contribution by extending the concept of the psychological contract as a way of viewing the employment relationship, by presenting a subjective view of the lived experience of the actors in a particular employment relationship. It not only is supported by existing literature and research in other areas, but it also provides some different perspectives on the psychological contract by bringing together knowledge from related disciplines and literature.

In viewing the psychological contract as the 'essence' of the employment relationship, the terms 'psychological contract' and 'employment relationship' will be used synonymously throughout the thesis.

Significance for Theory Of Psychological Contracts

Previous literature and research has looked at the psychological contract either as a process, with the reciprocity of matching social and emotional aspects of both the organisation and its employees, marking the concept's emergence from the study of careers (Schein, 1978, Herriot and Pemberton, 1995). More recently the focus has changed to '*what is in the minds of employees*' (Sparrow, 1996, p77) with more quantitative studies. This work draws together these aspects by: considering the dynamic aspects of how the contract changes to redress the reciprocation; a qualitative study of 'the minds of employees'; as well as using the predominance of managers in the inquiry to understand their role in the contract.

The thesis offers a 'map of the subjective terrain of the psychological contract' through presenting a typology representing four potential types of individual psychological contract, that were operating in the research site at the time of the inquiry, and the fifth representing the managers' view of the contract they are managing. It also provides five vignettes, to illustrate how the players may see their world. It suggests that the determining dimensions of the types depended on the focus and depth of the relationship sought by the individual of the organisation, and the extent of the 'directedness', based on locus of control, of the participants, as seen as by how active they were in their career, shown in figure 1.4 below. It also suggests that the reciprocation desired of the organisation is also driven by their perceptions of the employment relationship.

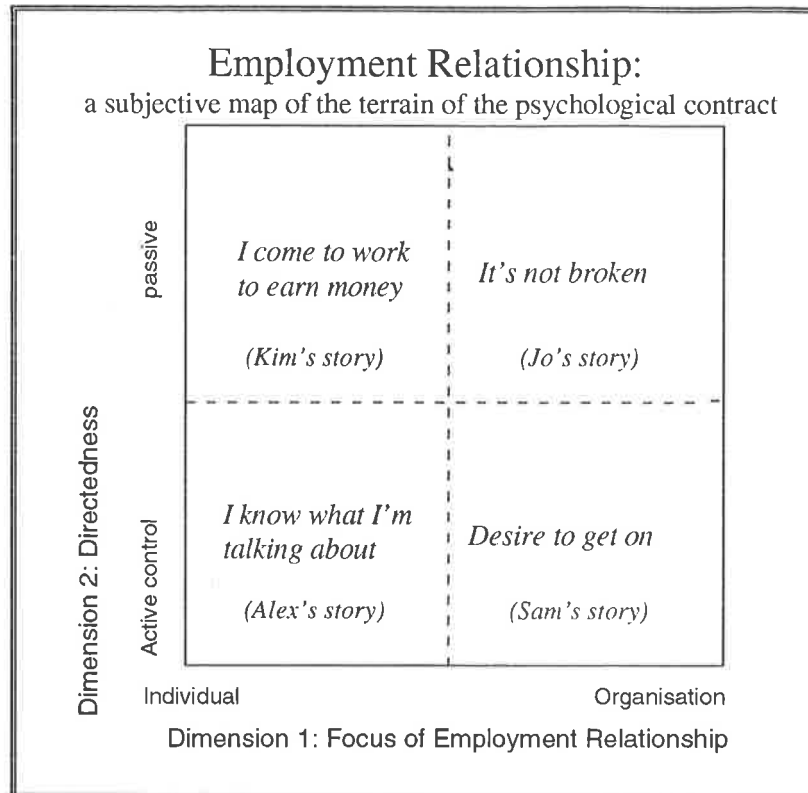


Figure 1.4 : A model of the Employment Relationship

Locus of control, in the form of directedness, provides a different perspective with which to view the employment relationship and perhaps provides the key to how the relationship changes. The thesis builds on the work of Guzzo and Noonan (1994), Lee and Mitchell (1994), and Herriot and Pemberton (1996) by suggesting a simple process model for how individuals renegotiate their psychological contract following a major change trigger. Much of the previous literature has provided an emphasis on the violation of the psychological contract usually following a major event or violation, however this inquiry also includes those who have not knowingly experienced such a phenomenon.

It also offers a model of the employment relationship which underlines the key role of the line manager in the relationship, in terms of how the relationship is interpreted both between the organisation and the manager, and then the manager and the employee. The line manager is now the key representative of the organisation to the employee following delegation of traditional HR practices to the line. There is also evidence both from the inquiry and the literature of the

extent to which the quality of the relationship influences the psychological contract on both dimensions of the model.

Significance for the Role of the Manager

This thesis highlights the role of the manager in the employment relationship, which seems to be the factor which binds the dimensions of the psychological contract together. For most employees the organisation is represented by their manager, the inquiry suggests that the line manager has taken over the role of HR in managing the psychological contract, through being the deliverer of human resource practices to them (Mumford, 1995; Legge, 1995). HR retain the role of formally representing the organisation by managing the legal contract comprising the legal terms and conditions, and administering the common elements such as pensions and sick pay.

The related literature confirms the pivotal role of the manager in the constructs that are suggested as ingredients of the individual's view of the contract in this inquiry (Kinicki and Vecchio, 1994; Duarte *et al*, 1994; Bauer and Green, 1996), however they only receive a passing mention in the psychological contract literature. The quality of the relationship with the line manager does not appear to be a factor that has been included specifically in the psychological contract studies to date.

With the manager at the heart of the perception of the psychological contract, they have a key role to play in negotiating and renegotiating the contract with the individual. When the individual for any reason reassesses their relationship with the organisation, either following a major 'trigger event' such as restructuring, or the more gradual changes such as seeking a development move, it is the manager that they will be negotiating with. The quality of the relationship will have a major impact on the decision of the individual and any outcomes, with the 'internal' career of an individual dependent on this relationship (Bauer and Green, *ibid.*).

The manager also plays a key role in how the individual assesses whether the organisation fits his or her value set and provides the interface between the organisation's culture and the individual's values (Lee and Mitchell, 1994; Ashforth and Mael, 1989). This would further reinforce the success of the employment relationship as being contingent on the relationship between the individual and their manager.

Significance for Commitment Theory

My thesis started out on the premise that the concept required to understand my original question was that of organisational commitment, as my study progressed I judged that the psychological contract perhaps provided a better perspective, as organisation commitment seemed to apply only from the direction of the employee, I wanted understand the reciprocation from the organisation. Oliver, (1990, p30), provides an insight into the links between the two concepts by suggesting that '*the concept should be pruned back to its essence, namely an "engagement which restricts freedom of action" (Oxford English Dictionary, 1969)*'. This definition is very similar to Rousseau's view of the psychological contract, '*when a person voluntarily agrees to be bound to a contract, he or she gives up some measure of freedom*' (1995, p.xiii), therefore I would see commitment bound up in the concept of the psychological contract. This suggests that the findings would provide insights for those looking for understanding from the *emic* or subjective perspective, rather than those looking for the causal links that a positivist perspective implies (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Significance for Career Theory

Careers, like the employment relationship or psychological contract, are at the heart of the interface between the individual and the organisation and therefore benefit from insights from a multidisciplinary approach (Arthur *et al*, 1989). Through the directedness dimension of my employment relationship model, this thesis demonstrates the possible links between an individual's view of their psychological contract and the level of activity in thinking about their careers, or how much responsibility they are likely to take in shaping it.

The focus on 'knowledge workers' also provides a different perspective on career drivers for this group. This uncovers some minor contradictions in Driver's career concepts and his Protean career (Brousseau, Driver et al, 1996; Driver, 1979), and Rousseau's transactional relationship (Rousseau, 1995), where 'experts' in transactional contracts may have a stronger sense of security through the reliance on their own expertise. The central role of the quality of the line manager/employee relationship also has significance for career theory, in recognising the influence it may have in career management.

The thesis also suggests that individuals may have different views of their psychological contract depending on the career stage they have reached (Schein, 1978; Dalton, 1989; Cytrynbaum and Crites, 1989). It makes suggestions on the influences that shape the transition between contracts and by implication, views of the career. By mapping the decision process following a major event, it also suggests the impact that such events have in triggering change to the psychological contract, may also be a point where individuals re-assess their careers, as well as renegotiate their contracts (Herriot, 1995).

Career Anchors

Career anchors (Schein, 1990) have been central to this inquiry, both in providing an inquiry method and in providing explanations for findings. The social construction that individuals put on such concepts, has led to some minor discrepancies of anchors across different types, but with significant commonality in particular clusters such as the technical functional anchor. The thesis also offers a wider perspective on lifestyle, which accounts for its appearance as an element of both dimensions of the employment relationship model and as a factor in several of the types: depending on the view of the psychological contract, individuals see lifestyle decisions in different ways and take career decisions accordingly ranging from: putting their career on hold; concentration on extrinsic factors to provide for family; to working to achieve a balance in work and home life space (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994; Sekaren and Hall, 1989).

This thesis has also found a preponderance of technical functional and challenge anchors predominating in particular areas of the employment relationship model, suggesting some additional empirical support for career anchors in a UK, knowledge worker environment. The emergence of two subcultures, which could be tied into 'engineers' and 'operators' through career anchors, was also supported by Schein's (1996a) three culture model.

Significance for Organisations

This inquiry has provided a typology model that suggests to organisations that their employees have many different views of their employment relationship which is contingent on a number of factors, the key one would appear to be their line manager. It has also suggested a model to explain the process that major decisions would trigger in employees if they were triggered into reassessing their psychological contracts. Recognising the essential differences in the psychological contract typology will enable organisations to develop an understanding of the possible impact of major decisions on their workforce.

The impact of culture

This formed a major theme that came through the inquiry, recognising the existence of the different subcultures in the organisation that had an impact on how individuals viewed their psychological contracts. The subcultures identified had resonance with two of Schein's (1996a) three cultures that are found in organisations, suggesting these cultures would have alternative value sets and language codes to add further aspects to the individual view of the employment relationship. That the organisation could be seen as its culture, further reinforces the pivotal role of the manager as representing the organisation to the individual.

For management practices and management development

The pivotal role of the manager in representing the organisation reinforces the need to ensure that all managers have a consistent view and interpretation of the HR practices, such as appraisal, that impact on the employment relationship. Managers need to be aware of the opportunities and constraints that will arise

from the future direction of the organisation, if they are going to be able to negotiate and re-negotiate realistic psychological contracts with individuals.

The implications for management development are potentially extensive, if in the words of Sparrow, (1996, p90) '*line managers will need deep psychological insights into the minds and contracts of their employees*'. It would seem that managers will need more development in interpersonal skills to enable a relationship to flourish especially if professionals are managed by a manager from a different discipline or culture. They will also need understanding of the principles behind the HR practices that they are called on to implement.

Significance for Individuals

The contribution of this thesis for individuals is in the area of self awareness. By understanding the implications of how they view their employment relationship, individuals can assess their future needs to develop realistic plans for self and career development to make better use of the appraisal process and any development opportunities. Understanding their type of psychological contract can also enable them to realise how it may be their perceptions that shape what they gain from the employment relationship.

The significance of the quality of their relationship with their manager in how their psychological contract develops, and from that career opportunities, is also of vital importance not only to them but to the organisation. By understanding the process they undertake when assessing how well their contract is being met after a significant change, or in recognising changing needs and expectations, they will be enabled to build on a good relationship to discuss any potential breach, and resolve it in the best way for both parties.

Significance for Human Resource Professionals

Within the organisation, the contribution of this thesis may be to promote awareness of the need in the area of developing line management to be able to undertake those HR practices that have been delegated to them over the last few years. It also contributes to the possible role of HR professionals, as advisors, in

advising the organisation in how to use findings such as these of the multiplicity of contracts that may be operating in the organisation to develop a common understanding of the differing needs that individuals may have. It also suggests that there may be a requirement to reappraise HR practices to take account of differing needs.

The thesis also contributes in the area of resourcing and retention. In an industry that utilises scarce skills of knowledge workers, the understanding of how they see their employment relationship is vital in ensuring the best possible match for the business strategy the organisation wishes to employ.

HR will also play a role in advising the organisation of the human consequences of any planned changes in the light of understanding differing reactions to such changes and trigger events. The contribution on cultural aspects should signal that the role of the HR advisor includes ensuring that messages from managers and various management practices are consistent with those that the organisation wants to send.

Another area highlighted in this inquiry is the rising requirement that individuals have to balance home and work life, signalling a need for organisations to provide more flexible ways of working so that these needs can be accommodated in the best format for their requirements, which may all be different. These concerns also signal a possible change in values that HR professionals will need to consider when looking at the organisation's possible offers to individuals.

Sparrow (1996, p90) suggests that viewing the psychological contract as a number of types *'will require a fundamental rethink of HRM policies, the end to many unitary assumptions, a re-education process for line managers and employees alike, a call for leadership and not just facilitation from HR professionals, and therefore uncomfortable trade-offs between centralised control and what could be seen as an abdication of responsibility of the profession.'*

Significance for Research Methodology and Methods

The ontological and philosophical underpinnings of this inquiry have their roots in phenomenology and the social construction of reality (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Berger and Luckman, 1967) to provide an holistic view of the world of human sciences that cannot be divided into knowable facts. The language of management and of organisations traditionally comes from the opposite positivist paradigm, which mainly still dominates practice in research in the field of the psychological contract.

The psychological contract, as an abstract concept, can be described as a social construction and therefore it is appropriate to use an interpretive paradigm to further understand it. This thesis demonstrates the effectiveness of the naturalistic, or constructivist, paradigm in developing the constructions which have given a rich perspective on the understanding of the psychological contract. That the results have resonance with other studies in the field of psychological contract, and the literature from other related disciplines, confirms the credibility of the results from these methods.

The importance of retaining congruency and coherent between the ontology, methodology and methods, both in undertaking the field work and in the analysis and interpretation of the results, have been emphasised by the problems encountered when they are out of kilter. This also emphasises that using such a paradigm requires a researcher who is naturally empathetic to the research style, adaptable, intuitive, tolerant of ambiguity and loose ends, with self awareness and self-motivation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Gummesson, 1991).

The thesis also demonstrates the role that narrative has in such a study both from the analytic perspective in the use of plot analysis, but also in its use in a more literary sense. Firstly, narrative played a key role in developing the results through the use of thick description, that then led to the ability to perform other types of analysis and secondly, in writing up the fictional, composite cases to illustrate the typology that forms the core of the thesis.

Much care has been taken in this inquiry to ensure its trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Erlandson *et al*, 1993). This typology gives a basic view of the understanding of the employment relationship for this group of knowledge workers, and the transferability of the findings will rest on the similarity of the contextual factors to another situation. However throughout the study, an audit trail has been established, and the results and findings have been subjected to triangulation by a number of analysis methods and other researchers' review. The other area of credibility for my findings has been established through the literature, which, although disappointing in that it concedes that I have not discovered anything that was not known before, enables me to suggest that what 'the subjective terrain' here demonstrates is the different perspective on the employment relationship revealed by taking a holistic, constructivist approach.

Summary of Chapters

Preparation (chapters 2 and 3)

The first two chapters are focussed on setting the context and the pre-understanding for the inquiry, with chapter two providing the 'theoretical sensitivity' and conceptual framework for the study through the existing theory and literature, and chapter three outlining the philosophy behind the research paradigm used here.

The existing literature in chapter two is focussed on the main areas that were informing the design of the inquiry and the formulation of the research questions. It is in this chapter the literature on commitment is outlined, which mostly has its roots in the more stable or boom period of the 1980s and within the more functionalist, rationalist, paradigm as demonstrated by the quantitative nature of the empirical work in the field. It also contains a review of the newer field of literature that comprises the psychological contract, which at this stage is more a theoretical review with only a few publications based on research. The other areas of theory and literature that turned out to be relevant are discussed at the relevant place in the inquiry.

Chapter three outlines the philosophy underlying the constructivist paradigm that this inquiry uses. In providing an overview of phenomenology, the chapter also touches on the world of the opposing paradigm. It then takes the reader down the path that leads from philosophy to ontology, and on to naturalistic inquiry or constructivism, as it is now known, finishing with the implications this has for the research inquiry itself.

Expedition (chapters 4-7)

The choice of a naturalistic inquiry, or 'constructivist' paradigm has determined the design and analysis stages that form the setting out on the actual expedition into the field, gathering information and then back again to determine what has been found. On the way, the pilot forms a way of testing out the design decisions.

Chapter four provides the bridge between the conceptual framework and the practical issues of designing and undertaking the inquiry, which include Lincoln and Guba's (1985) twelve characteristics. The issues of trustworthiness, akin to the positivist criteria for validity, are also to be found here, as is the discussion on narrative analysis that has a key role to play in this thesis.

The fifth chapter outlines my early empirical work which tested both the appropriateness of my research paradigm and the methods for data collection and analysis that I would later be using. The pilot also raised some of the issues that were to form the themes for my main research inquiry and has pointed me in the direction of the psychological contract.

In chapter six can be seen the results of the interviewing process in the form of 'thick description', that takes the reader through the spoken thoughts of my research participants. In recording their narrative in this way, I was able to start the interpretation process by organising their impressions into major themes.

Chapter seven draws on the thick description for the analysis stage, which using both inductive and computer aided methods, in the form of correspondence and cluster analysis, has lead to maps of the 'subjective terrain', as well as providing the support for one form of analysis by the other. In order to illustrate the types that emerged, the chapter also contains five 'vignettes' or short stories.

Chapter eight is the chapter that pulls the threads of the research together. Drawing out the findings and synthesising them with existing literature and theory, provides the credibility and transferability as well as enhancing the level of theory building. The chapter also contains the implications and what this research has added to theory, finally it closes with the tentative applications.

Review

The final chapter reviews this research inquiry process as a whole, before summarising the findings and discussion. It also reviews how well the research strategy worked by looking at what went well and the limitations of the inquiry. Finally the chapter contains ideas for future research that would extend this inquiry and closes with some observations on the personal learning derived from this process.

Chapter Two - Theoretical Sensitivity - A Review Of Literature

‘the psychological contract involves an exchange of extrinsic rewards (economic or social ones) ... This by definition, creates a *moral* rather than a calculative involvement, and thus releases a greater potential for commitment to organizational goals’

Schein, (1988, p69)

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the existing research and literature in the field of the changing relationship between organisations and their employees in order to gain a measure of ‘theoretical sensitivity’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) to, or pre-understanding (Gummerson, 1991) of the phenomenon of the employment relationship, consistent with taking a ‘grounded theory approach’ within a naturalistic inquiry framework. Unlike the traditional positivist research framework where an extensive review of the existing literature enables gaps to be identified and hypotheses to be developed, the purpose of this literature review was threefold: firstly to stimulate the research question areas and inquiry design; secondly to provide awareness of existing models or tacit knowledge (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) that might provide frameworks for analysis and interpretation; and thirdly, to provide a base from which to understand the directions in which theory may be extended as a result of the inquiry. Finally I was aware that existing theory and literature would provide an important basis for validation of the eventual findings (Strauss and Corbin, *ibid.*; Eisenhardt, 1989), but that they may not come from my potentially naïve assumptions of which was the relevant body of literature. The literature review for this inquiry, therefore, can be found in two places, that which makes up basis for theoretical sensitivity and the conceptual framework for the inquiry (Miles and Huberman, 1994), contained here, and that which seems directly relevant to explain or make credible the findings of the inquiry at the discussion stage, which is included in chapter eight.

Organisational commitment was much talked about and researched predominantly in the 1980s as the means to understand the relationship (Walton, 1985; Allen and Meyer, 1990; Angle and Perry, 1983), and will provide the first part of the chapter. However the viewpoint from the 1990s raised the question of the continuing relevance of the concept and commitment which has been rivalled by the emerging notion of the psychological contract, although with early origins (Argyris, 1960; Schein, 1978). The volume of literature would reflect this view with the commitment literature appearing to diminish, while that of the psychological contract expands. The next section of the chapter will explore whether the psychological contract is a way of looking at the questions that are left unanswered by commitment, *'although we still have much to learn about the nature and development of psychological contracts, they appear to hold considerable promise in enhancing our understanding of employment relationships'* (Meyer and Allen, 1997,p64).

The final section of this chapter provides the prelude to the research inquiry itself, highlighting from the literature, the relevant theories that underpin and inform both the design and the analysis stages of this inquiry culminating in the research questions.

The Emergence of the Concept of Commitment

There are at least three factors that could be seen to contribute to the emergence of the concept of commitment as an important area to the success of organisations during the 1980s. The first of these three factors came from emerging competition (Armstrong, 1989; Legge, 1995, Martin and Nicholls, 1987), Western companies had begun to experience the threat of competition from the Pacific Rim and in particular the Japanese, and had started to examine the Japanese style of management to understand their success factors (Ouchi, 1981; Crosby; 1984; Alston, 1986; Collard, 1992). Much evidence was drawn from Japanese industry where high quality and productivity per employee plus successful product/process improvement were seen to be underpinned by

employee commitment to company goals and willingness to participate in quality improvement (Collard, 1992; Wilkinson and Oliver, 1991):

“The Japanese has one outstanding characteristic: total commitment. Work comes before any other activity. The company comes before any other organisation. Japanese-made goods monopolise his shopping list. Tradition, culture, religion, education, social history - all combine to urge the Japanese to be conscientious, loyal, single-minded and hardworking”
(National Quality Campaign, 1984)

Allied to this, the second influence on the study of commitment came out of the 'excellence' literature of the period. Ouchi's (1981) "Theory Z", Peters and Waterman's (1982) "In Search of Excellence", and Deal and Kennedy's (1982) "Corporate Cultures", set the agenda for commitment as they became standard reading for many managers. They put the "soft" factors, that had previously been the domain of the psychologists and OD departments, on the corporate agenda and made them discussible. This period was also accompanied by companies experimenting with different workforce strategies and apparently demonstrating how great and productive the contribution of a committed workforce can be. But, as Ouchi (ibid.) and Hampden Turner (1990) point out, long term relationships, stress on participation, teamwork and consensus decision-making that often characterise the Japanese style, are against the conventional management practices in the West.

Commitment and Human Resources Management

The third factor that contributed to the interest in commitment was the development of the Human Resources Management School (Beer *et al*, 1985). The previous model of control, based in Taylorism, was beginning to suffer growing disillusionment due to the changing expectations and educational levels of the workforce on the one hand, and intensified competition on the other. These would seem to have made the Scientific Management Model obsolete with organisational success deemed to depend on superior level of performance in the marketplace, which in turn required the commitment of the workforce

(Armstrong, *op.cit.*; Morgan, 1997; Wilkinson and Oliver, *ibid.*). One of the common factors between Human Resource Management, the success of Japanese companies, and the "excellence" literature appeared to be the idea of gaining employee commitment through emphasis on mutuality of employer/employee objectives (Peters, 1988; Walton, 1985, Armstrong, 1989). The Harvard Business School developed a new core course used not only on the MBA programme, but also on the Senior Executive programmes which was based on the model (illustrated below) reflecting the changing understanding of the role of personnel or human resource policies in an organisation (Beer *et al*, *op. cit.*).

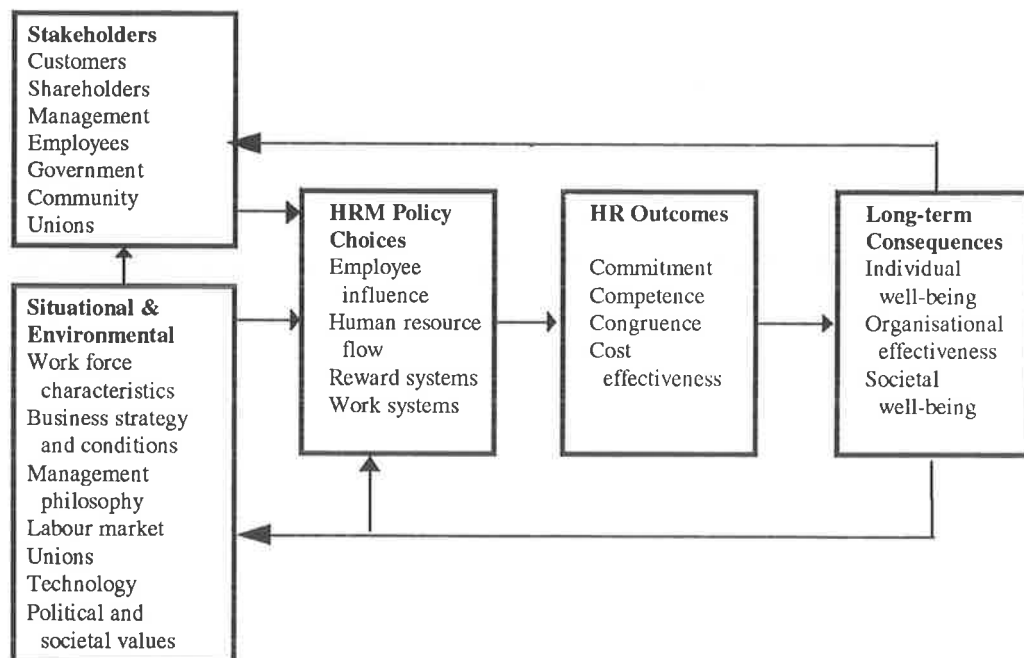


Figure 2.1 : Map of the HRM Territory (adapted from Beer et al, 1984)

The role of the traditional personnel function has been changing which has reflected the gradual evolution of approaches to management during this century, which were based on contemporary understanding of motivation (Schein, 1988, Legge, 1995). The beginning of the century was characterised by the Scientific Management model, based on the work of Taylor where workers were viewed as lazy, aimless, and mercenary, and they would therefore tolerate the routinised, specialised jobs of the factory for a price (Morgan, 1997). This view is related to

the Theory X of McGregor's later model. The 1930's onwards saw the development of the Human Relations model after the Hawthorne studies lead to the realisation that it is necessary to consider the "whole person" at work. Lack of job satisfaction would lead workers to seek satisfaction elsewhere and therefore it is necessary to make workers feel wanted (Martin and Nicholls, 1987; Schein, 1988). This approach developed, particularly with further research into motivation in the 1960's, into the Human Resources model, which has given rise to a new approach to personnel management. With many departments renaming themselves Human Resources, they took a more strategic role as a support function that enables business strategy rather than the more reactive and detached function that had grown out of employee welfare services (Armstrong, 1989; Legge, *op. cit.*; Guest, 1989).

The Human Resources school recognised that people are motivated by a complex set of factors that are all interrelated including money, need for affiliation or achievement, the desire for meaningful work (Beer *et al.*, 1985, Schein, *op. cit.*). Employees should be therefore be looked on as reservoirs of potential talent and that it is management's responsibility to learn how best to tap such resources. The assumptions that come from the research of this period reflect much of what is seen in the West as the Japanese management style: people want to contribute, the more they become involved, the more meaningful work can become; work does not have to be distasteful - hence job enrichment and job design; employees are quite capable of making significant and rational decisions affecting their work; increased control and direction on the job and completion of meaningful tasks can determine the level of job satisfaction (Peters, 1988, Armstrong, *op.cit.*; Beer *et al.*, *op. cit.*; Argyris, 1960). This philosophy implies a greater degree of participation in decision making and increased autonomy over task accomplishment (Beer *et al.*, *op. cit.*; Martin and Nicholls, *op. cit.*; Beer *et al.*, *op.cit.*).

Results of Commitment

The advantages of gaining employee commitment have been perceived to be: lower labour turnover; better product quality; greater capacity to innovate; employee flexibility; and therefore leading to the enhanced capability of the firm to achieve competitive advantage, and in this the work group is seen as the critical unit (Walton, 1985). It is the extent to which the above can be definitely linked to commitment and whether they are still appropriate in the organisations of the 1990s will form the core of the discussion in this paper.

Definition of Commitment

There is agreement that commitment is a multi-dimensional concept (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Meyer, Irving and Allen, 1998; Reichers, 1985; Oliver, 1990) with a definition of organisational commitment frequently used, that will form the basis for discussion in this paper as:

“the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation. Conceptually, it can be characterised by at least three factors: (1) a strong belief in, and acceptance of the organisation's goals and values, (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation, and (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organisation” (Porter et al, 1974, p604).

A variety of personal experiences and wider thinking has led to some questioning of how these themes fit with current management practice in organisations, and to what extent have the current economic realities of the 1990s brought the issues of commitment and motivation into sharper focus. Organisational commitment is a well researched area from the psychological perspective of the individual's commitment to the organisation, but there would initially seem to be little research into whether organisations see commitment as a relevant concept, and whether it is a reciprocal process.

Commitment theory and research

Over the last twenty years there have been meta-analyses (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Riechers, 1985; Cohen, 1992) and many studies into commitment (Angle and Perry, 1981; DeCotiis and Sims, 1987; Mottaz, 1988, Oliver, 1990) with few conclusive results, although many common themes. It is frequently seen as multi-dimensional and has mostly been looked at in the two aspects described by Mowday *et al.*, (1982), attitudinal and behavioural commitment. Oliver (1990, p19 and 20) suggests that these two types indicate separate approaches with the former described as “*an attitude which reflects the nature and quality of the linkage between an employee and an organisation*” and the latter as looking “*at the process by which individuals come to develop a sense or commitment not to an organisation, but to their actions*”.

Attitudinal Commitment

Attitudinal commitment is represented by the work of Buchanan (1974), Steers (1977) and Mowday *et al.* (1982) It is often suggested that it can be explained by exchange theory with identification and involvement being exchanged for acceptable organisational rewards and incentives (Oliver, 1990; Lydka, 1992). Studies in this area have focused on levels of attitudinal commitment as measured by an instrument based on Porter's Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed during the 1970s, and its relationship with work and organisational characteristics or personal characteristics (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Blau, 1985; Huselid and Day, 1991; Johnson *et al.*, 1990 ; Morris *et al.*, 1993; Mottaz, 1988; Krackhardt and Porter, 1985). Attitudinal commitment could be described as focusing on the positive reasons for remaining in an organisation, and if viewed with exchange and expectancy theory, is related to the anticipation of organisational rewards, both intrinsic and extrinsic. It has also been seen as 'organisation based' (Angle and Perry, 1983) suggesting that the commitment of an individual can be influenced by the organisation as a result of positive work experiences.

Behavioural Commitment

There has been less research into the area of behavioural commitment (Farrell and Rusbult, 1981; Mowday *et al*, 1982), what exists has mostly looked at individual's tenure intentions or whether they intend to stay in the organisation and the determinants of this. Two major theories dominate this area: Becker's 'side bets' and Salancik's 'cognitive consistency' theories and these are both seen to be influenced by the individual and their past actions and behaviours (Oliver, *op. cit.*, Lydka, *op. cit.*).

Salancik's theory of behavioural commitment is related to Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance, in order to remain psychologically consistent he suggests that individuals develop attitudes that are consistent with their past actions. Having achieved a sense of psychological ownership of one's actions, there is therefore a commitment to follow them through and when viewed with the rationalisation process that follows a choice of job, it is possible to see how the intention to stay in an organisation will be linked to high commitment. As Oliver (*op. cit.*, p21) explains

“the more explicit an action, the more difficult it is to reverse, and the more publicly and voluntarily it is made, the more committing it will be due to one's greater psychological investment in it.”

In Becker's (1960, in Oliver, *op. cit.*; Lydka, *op. cit.*; Allen and Meyer, 1990) "side bet" theory, individuals are seen to be committed to an organisation by the result of what they have invested over time, both in and outside the organisation, which might include pension contributions, expended effort, status, training as well as their investments outside the company such as social ties, buying a house in the area. and what they would lose if they left. This theory is based on the perceived costs associated with leaving and helps explain why people stay with an organisation when the exchange relationship would seem to be unbalanced.

These approaches lead to the same outcomes but explain them in different ways, both attitudinal and behavioural commitment are calculative, based on the

exchange of tangible benefits. Behavioural commitment focuses on the negative reasons to stay in an organisation and what might be lost by leaving, whereas attitudinal commitment is based on the rewards to be gained by staying. Several authors, while discussing the inconsistency and inclusive nature of research into commitment so far have suggested that concentration should be put on either developing a framework that envelops both approaches or to accept that they are completely different (Angle and Perry 1983; Oliver 1990).

Towards a Single Framework

The work of Angle and Perry (1983, p144) follows the first approach drawing on the behavioural theories of Becker and Salancik, seeing commitment in terms of exchange and accrual, so that a person's commitment is a function of anticipated rewards and past investment, and introduces the notion of reciprocity, "*organisational commitment is largely a matter of reciprocation between individual and organisation*". Allen and Meyer (1990) have also taken this approach by trying to develop a framework showing three different dimensions of commitment, which reflect both the attitudinal and behavioural theories, although they describe them as all aspects of attitudinal commitment: affective; continuance; and normative. Affective commitment is closest to attitudinal and is similar to Kanter's (1968, p507) 'cohesion commitment', which she describes as "*the attachment of an individual's fund of affectivity and emotion to the group and wanting to remain for positive work experiences*". It could also be described as "*the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation*" (Mowday et al, 1979, p 226), as measured by the OCQ.

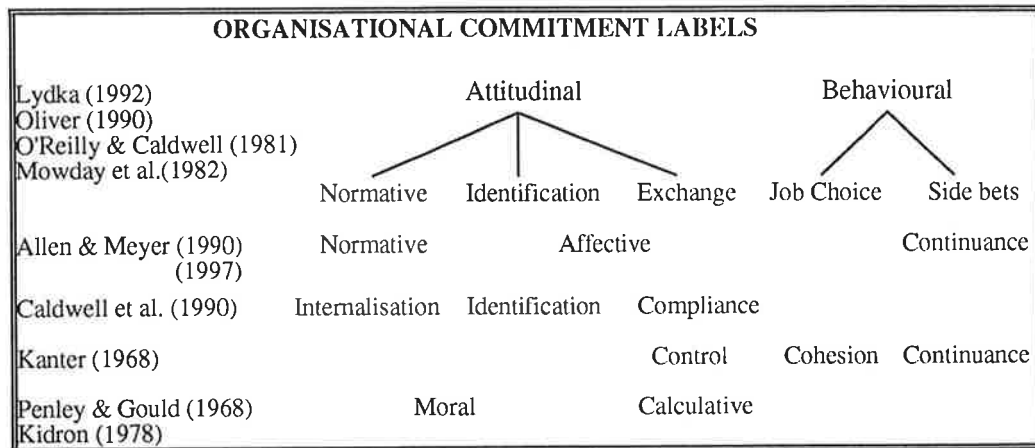
Continuance commitment suggests the individual's need to remain in an organisation because of accumulated investments or lack of alternatives. It is linked to Becker's side bet theory, but included in attitudinal commitment as recognition of the costs associated with leaving an organisation can be viewed as a psychological state. In Kanter's (1968, p504) terms this is 'cognitive-continuance commitment' which she defines "*a profit associated with continued participation and a 'cost' associated with leaving*", it is usually measured by intention to leave,

although Allen and Meyer (1990) are rather sceptical whether this measures cost-based commitment as the high scores obtained in their study reflect unwillingness to leave, despite attractiveness of inducements so it may also measure affective attachment as well. Allen and Meyer's (ibid., p13) research suggests that the *“strength of employee's need to remain with an organisation is related to their perceptions regarding the availability of alternatives and the magnitude of particular investments they have made.”*

Oliver, (1990), also tried to develop a model which reflects the above two elements by looking at rewards, investments and alternatives which he partly based on previous research that had found positive correlation between age, length of service and commitment which could be explained as improving rewards due to length of tenure in an organisation; increasing investments; or as the lack of alternatives.

The last area, normative commitment, is the least researched. Allen and Meyer, (1990; 1997), describe it as the feeling that one ought to remain with organisation because of personal norms and values or beliefs about one's responsibility to the organisation, but they were unable to contribute any conclusive evidence that this element is valid from their research.

Many of the above dimensions of commitment theory have been usefully summarised by Lydka (1992) in the following diagram at Figure 2.2:



(Adapted from Lydka, 1992)

Figure 2.2 : Organisation Commitment Labels

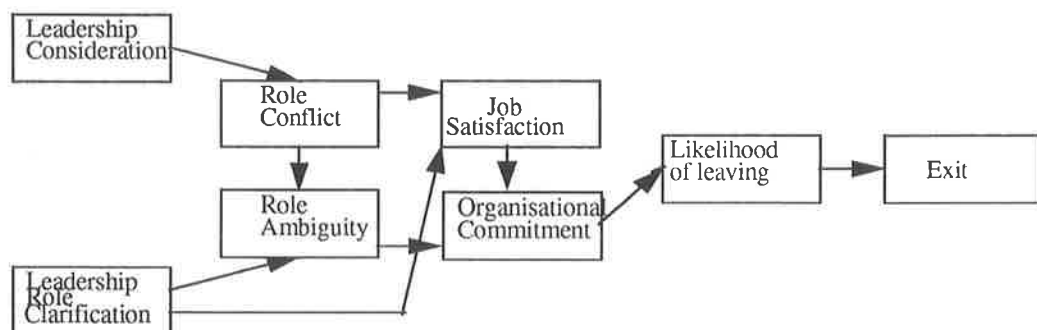
In summary, it would seem from the models examined so far, that two elements of what is described as commitment continually emerge allied to the dimensions previously described as attitudinal and behavioural commitment. As suggested earlier attitudinal commitment could be described as focusing on the positive reasons for joining and remaining in an organisation, while behavioural commitment describes the more negative reasons to remain.

Definitions of commitment revisited

The later interest in research into commitment has been based on many assumptions, and, as Oliver, (1990) has asserted, there has been a tendency for researchers to define commitment in terms of its assumed consequences rather than in terms of what it really is. It is thought to be: a better measure of the individual's response to their working situation (Mowday *et al*, 1982); a predictor of behaviour; that it may have consequences for job performance, absenteeism and turnover; and therefore potentially affects organisational performance (Mottaz, 1988). Despite the plethora of studies, many assumptions have yet to be proven, including being able to positively link commitment to organisational performance, there have been very few consistent findings and the picture is still confused (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Reichers, 1985; Becker *et al*, 1996). Part of this confusion has been attributed to the conceptual ambiguity that surrounds commitment: there are competing conceptions and definitions of commitment; which, in turn, are reflected in the measures of commitment; and the lack of

consistency with the variables used, thus not allowing one study to be directly comparable with another (Oliver, 1990; Mottaz, 1988; Lydka, 1992). As early as 1977, Angle and Perry report that Hall thought that the term commitment should be dropped in favour of dealing with a set of concepts (Angle and Perry, 1981).

Research so far seems to have been focused on either the outcomes of commitment, which are in the main turnover and absenteeism, (Angle & Perry, 1981; Porter *et al*, 1974; Lydka, 1992), or they have researched the antecedents often categorised under personal, job, structural/ organisation characteristics and work experience (Reichers, 1985; Allen&Meyer, 1990; Lydka, 1992; Mottaz, 1988). For instance, Allen and Meyer (*ibid.*) propose that the antecedents of organisational commitment include job challenge; role and goal clarity; management receptiveness and peer group cohesion; organisational dependability; equity and fairness; feedback and participation; skills and education; and availability of alternatives. Another such model demonstrating these links, has been developed by Johnson *et al.* (1990), and is illustrated below:



(adapted from: Johnson *et al.* (1990))

Figure 2. 3 : Antecedents and Consequences of Organisational Commitment

In order to better understand where the difficulties lie, it is perhaps necessary to re-examine the definitions of commitment currently in use. The most quoted definition is that used in the introduction of this paper from Porter *et al* (1974) which describes it as both as the strength of an individual's identification and involvement with an organisation and the factors that underlie it: belief in goals

and values; willingness to exert extra effort; and wanting to remain. Other definitions of commitment include:

“the process through which individual interests become attached to the carrying out of socially organised patterns of behaviour which are seen as fulfilling those interests, as expressing the nature and needs of the person”
(Kanter, 1968, p500);

or

“a psychological state that binds the individual to the organisation” (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p14)

The problem would seem to lie in the confusion in how commitment is viewed, it could perhaps be said that researchers in this field, in their search for a comprehensive model, have tried to fit too much within the one concept (Oliver, 1990). Is commitment the outcome of someone or thing being committed or the process of achieving the outcome, or indeed a psychological state? In order to be useful it is necessary to establish that the outcome or state is still relevant to organisations. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines commitment as *‘involvement restricting freedom of action’* (1997), and that to commit involves pledging and binding oneself to a course of action. This would suggest that the psychological state, or attitude, approach may hold the key to unravelling the confusion and thus to determining, if commitment is still relevant in the 1990s, what the practical aspects would be for organisations.

Relevance to Organisations

The human resources perspective views commitment as an outcome of successful human resource policies that will eventually lead not only to organisational effectiveness but also to both individual and societal well-being. This perspective also suggests that all company decisions and policies impact on human resources and need to be seen in that light.

“Such decisions have a fundamental and pervasive effect on the nature of the organisation-employee relationship and the extent to which that relationship

is based on an individual calculation of personal gains or on identification with the firm's tasks and goals.” (Beer et al, 1984, p10)

As yet there has been little to research evidence to link commitment to organisational performance, (Mathieu and Zajac, op. cit.; Reichers, op. cit.) if commitment is seen as a key outcome of organisational policies and is to be of practical use, it is important to understand it better to be able to determine it's continuing relevance. The first part of Porter's (op. cit.) definition can also be seen as taking the outcome approach “*relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization*”, but it could be argued that only the first part that refers to having a strong belief in the organisation's and values is attitudinal or, in Allen and Meyer's (1990) terms, affective commitment, and the other two aspects, willing to expend additional effort and wanting to remain, are results or behaviours. It is therefore useful to decompose the concept of commitment and to still examine both aspects, but to look at behavioural commitment as a measure of the outcome of attitudinal or affective commitment.

The other factor that needs to be taken into account, when viewing the definitions used for commitment, is that most of the research so far has taken place during the boom time of the 1980's (Caldwell *et al*, 1990; Morris *et al*, 1993; Johnson *et al*, 1990; Allen and Meyer, 1990) or earlier (Porter *et al*, 1974; Farrell and Rusbult, 1981), when there were major concerns about demographics and retention of employees. If commitment was seen as a process, then it was certainly necessary to understand both the outcomes of this process, in this case turnover and absenteeism, and also the antecedents that would help predict them.

The 'committed' individual

Using the results of research studies so far, it is possible to draw a pen picture of the committed individual, suggested by Allen and Meyer (1990), as someone who has been with the organisation for some time; who believes in the organisation's goals and values and feels that they are congruent with their own to the extent

that they own shares, and is prepared to exert extra effort for it. They are unlikely to be a professional, but have a rewarding job that uses their skills and abilities, that is also challenging, significant and autonomous; they work with a supportive supervisor and co-workers; they want to stay in the organisation but in many cases feel that they have to stay as it would cost them too much to leave, especially if there are very few job alternatives; this group also expects to have good pay and career prospects with the organisation. They are also more likely to have a lower educational level and be Protestant. (Reichers, 1985; Morris *et al*, 1992; Mottaz, 1988; Oliver, 1990; Caldwell *et al*, 1990; Buchko, 1992; Cohen, 1992).

Current concerns of organisations

Much of the portrait above is based on the research into individuals performed in the 1980s, when 'turnover intentions' were a measure of dissatisfaction with the job or organisation and alternative employment was usually readily available. Research studies at this time also indicate what human resource policies should contribute to the 'committed person' such as job enrichment, career development, improving salary and conditions (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Morris *et al*, 1993; Mottaz, 1988). In practice, most organisations in working through a recession are concentrating their human resource policies in a different direction. If the concerns of the practising personnel manager can be measured by the contents of a practitioners magazine, an analysis of the main articles in *Personnel Management* in the 1990s, reveals that articles on restructuring and redundancy are increasing and appear more often than those on salary and conditions.

There would seem to be a move away from the workforce strategies suggested by Walton and Beer *et al*. in order to move from a control environment to a commitment one: with employees once again seen as a variable cost that can be easily shed; with individual performance related pay working against teamwork; and quality systems and process management, used negatively, can be in danger of reproducing rules and procedures as well as statically defining jobs (Walton, 1985; Beer *et al*, 1984). Walton also suggests that many organisations will

experience difficulties in implementing policies based on commitment rather than control, and that part of the problem may be that the costs of using commitment strategies, include the need for managers to change by developing new skills and relationships, having to cope with more ambiguity and uncertainty and therefore experiencing discomfort as their attitudes and habits change.

The role of organisations in commitment

Senior managers in most organisations would say that commitment is 'a good thing', but what do organisations see as their role in commitment? Beer *et al.* (1984, p11) make the point that organisations need to recognise the employee as an important stakeholder in the enterprise and as such human resources policy has to consider "*how to develop a process of mutual influence between two sets of stakeholders - management and employees*".

Campbell and Tawadey (1990), take this on further, and suggest that having "*a sense of mission*" which they define as that which inspires the greater commitment and loyalty, is a two way process which is illustrated in the words of a Marks and Spencer director "*In exchange for adhering to M&S's way of doing things, you know that the company will look after you and support you*". They go on to describe how true mission statements "*reflect the values and philosophy of the organisation and are consistent with its business strategy and other policies, rather than the trite slogans of recent years that do not have a 'strategic fit'*". For instance if the strategy is cost driven then the values system should emphasis frugality. It could perhaps be said that the true mission statement is the organisation's commitment to its major stakeholders, including employees. "*The best mission statements make these commitments clear so that each stakeholder knows what to expect from its relationship with the company*" (Campbell & Tawadey, 1990, p317).

In order to look at what an organisation's commitment to employees might include, it may be relevant to examine the three factors from Porter *et al's* (1974) definition from the opposite perspective, and pose the following questions.

Firstly, if organisational success has in some part been attributed to shared values (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Ouchi, 1981; Campbell & Tawadey, 1990), do organisations know what their employee's goals and values are in order ensure some alignment, does this feature in their selection policy and are they the same for different groups? Do organisations know what their own goals and values are and do they have a strategic fit with the business strategy? This can prove problematic when one considers who and what makes up an organisation. Commitment research has rightly been criticised in the past for viewing the organisation as a single entity and not recognising that is made up of a coalition of interests, or taking account the large body of literature in this area (Coopey & Hartley, 1990; Reichers, 1985; Oliver, 1990).

The second factor in the definition is the willingness to exert considerable effort and there is a question whether organisations expect it from their employees but are not prepared to reciprocate. Reciprocation might include supportive management, empowerment and job security assurances as demonstrated by Delta airlines in the last recession when they warned shareholders that earnings may be down and dividends cut in order to ensure that people were not laid off (Campbell & Tawadey, 1990). However many organisations are restructuring either in response to recession, competitive pressures or following investments in new technology and systems and therefore have no desire to retain the membership of many of their employees.

“Employees cannot be expected to be actively committed to an organisation if the organisation does not show its commitment to them. The institutional commitment must be rooted in the sincerity and durability of the values of top management: managers who adopt expedient solutions at the expense of employees cannot expect employee commitment in return” (Beer et al., 1984, p190)

From the employees viewpoint, many of the recognised antecedents to commitment no longer exist: job security has disappeared; career prospects and advancement will be hampered by the volume of "baby boomers" in management positions; a larger proportion of pay has been put at risk with performance related

pay, which becomes a source of dissatisfaction and endangers commitment, especially if the systems are seen as unsatisfactory (Mobley, 1982; Rhodes, 1989; Schwartz, 1991).

Is the concept still valid?

The factors above would suggest that not all the aspects of commitment as traditionally defined and researched are seen as relevant to organisations in the 1990s, particularly in terms of retention of employees (Brockner *et al*, 1994; Cameron, 1994; Herriot, Manning and Kidd, 1997). The aspect of willingness to exert considerable effort could also be seen as exploitative unless some form of reciprocation can be demonstrated (Schein, 1997). It may be by concentrating on, what Oliver (1990) terms as, pruning the concept of commitment back to its essence, that the reciprocation would be revealed. As Kanter (1989) has warned expecting the extra effort leads to a danger of work overload, not only are fewer people doing the same work but many feel the exhilaration of 'living on the edge' which ultimately leads to an unhealthy organisation. She describes the three situations that lead to long hours: workaholics; greedy organisations; and those who put in 'facework', leaving a good impression but often using time unproductively or in non work-related activities. There is also the aspect that reduced job security leads to career anxiety and a need to demonstrate irreplaceability. These are the negative aspects of exerting effort, on the other hand there are organisations that have to force people to take time off and lock the doors of buildings during holidays, but these are also the organisations where people are so enthusiastic about what they do that they are constantly producing innovative ideas and producing an exciting environment in which to work (Kanter, 1989; Peters, 1988).

Although commitment, *per se*, may no longer be seen as relevant, the issue of retention of particular people and skills and the impact of multiple turnover is. Where the current research would therefore seem to be relevant to organisations is in both the affective and continuance areas (Meyer and Allen, 1997). In the first, affective, area it is necessary to understand the 'essence' of commitment, not only in order to avoid disaffection through implementing inappropriate policies,

but also in informing selection or retention decisions. In a time of restructuring many organisations are facing the need to make termination decisions but would want to ensure that they do not lose the very people that they would need to hire again when circumstances change for the better. It is in this arena that the behavioural or continuance aspects might be relevant especially when examining the relationship to employee turnover.

Who leaves, who stays?

The deficiencies in the current multidimensional definitions are exposed when considering these questions of whether the appropriate people stay or leave organisations. If an employee is behaviourally committed and stays in an organisation due to investments, such as a good pension scheme, it does not follow that they are either attitudinally committed or will exert any effort on the organisation's behalf.

“However, a strong desire to remain a member of one's organisation does not automatically imply that there is also an intention to be a dependable and hardworking employee.” (Angle and Perry, 1981).

It also does not follow that someone taking voluntary redundancy and leaving an organisation, is not attitudinally committed to that organisation or without skills that the organisation might need in the future. Lydka's research has shown that there is no significant difference in attitudinal commitment between those who stayed in organisations and those who moved, and even that those who subsequently left had a higher level of commitment to their organisation at one point in time (Lydka, 1992). Her research also backed up previous research that suggests that work experiences and job satisfaction exert significant influence on both attitudinal and behavioural commitment. (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mottaz, 1988; Reichers, 1985).

One of the areas of future research proposed by Allen & Meyer (1990, p15) suggests going beyond commitment as a negative indicator of turnover, as what employees do on the job is at least as important as whether they remain, to develop 'commitment profiles' to:

“differentiate employees who are likely to remain with the organisation and to contribute positively to its effectiveness from those who are likely to remain but contribute little. If so, it should be possible for organisations to use the results of research examining antecedents to better manage the experiences of their employees so as to foster the development of the desired profile.”

The practical relevance of understanding profiles will become increasingly important to organisations, which having survived recession and other adverse conditions, may be left with a workforce and management only appropriate to recessionary times. Anecdotal evidence, backed up by observations by Kanter (1989), would suggest that current survivors in organisations, fearful to retain their jobs, will be slavishly doing what is asked of them, following procedures without question, a contemporary version of 'working to rule'. This 'behavioural' commitment is neither healthy for the organisation or its workforce, nor will it lay the foundation for future recovery. Given the potential dangers outlined above of retaining a behaviourally committed workforce, and Allen and Meyer's (1990) idea of developing commitment profiles, it would seem that research into better understanding of expectations of those who stay and those who leave organisations may hold the key.

The conclusions on commitment have been ambiguous with contradictory findings across studies (Reichers, 1985; Angle and Perry, 1993, Oliver, 1990). There has been no conclusive evidence to show that commitment has any impact on organisational performance and yet commitment remains a key goal of human resource policies. It therefore seems appropriate to question whether commitment, as traditionally viewed, is still relevant to organisations that are rapidly downsizing and outsourcing, especially as new forms of working become more common in the organisation of the future, or whether a new model of commitment needs to be developed to reflect these changes. It is with these questions in mind that other related areas of theory are explored.

Image Theory

An environment of downsizing and restructuring would lead to opportunities to research the concept of 'stayers' and 'leavers' as companies offer voluntary redundancy to large numbers of people. Such an event constitutes the 'shock' that Lee and Mitchell refer to in their unfolding model of voluntary employee turnover, (Lee & Mitchell, 1994, p60) and define as “*a shock to the system can be theorised to be a very distinguishable event that jars employees toward deliberate judgements about their jobs and, perhaps, to voluntarily quit their job*”.

In their model, Lee and Mitchell (ibid.) suggest that when a shock occurs, be it personal or organisational, if people have had a similar previous experience and if they judged their reaction appropriate, they will probably pursue the same course of action. However if the employee has not been faced with making a decision in the light of a similar shock, they will make judgements about their basic attachment or commitment to the organisation, how well they can integrate their personal values with the shock and also take into account the likelihood of their achieving any personal goals.

The decision process that Lee and Mitchell suggest people go through has its foundation in 'image theory' and is allied to the suggestion that compatibility is a key process in making important job choices as seen in the Person - Environment fit literature (Cooper, 1979; Hingley and Cooper, 1986). Image theory suggests that people constantly screen information to determine whether it could potentially lead to changes in behaviour, and it is assessed against three image areas: the individual's set of values and principles; their set of goals that direct their behaviour; and the strategies they believe to be effective in obtaining those goals. Individuals either then accept or reject the information or option, although they may sometimes change their image, it is more likely to be in the strategic area than the other two areas.

Image theory and the 'unfolding model' may provide an opportunity to examine commitment from another angle especially that of belief in goals and values, especially given the suggestions of the importance of shared values (Campbell & Tawadey, 1990; Ouchi, 1981; Peters and Waterman, 1982). With many people forced into re-examining why they work for a particular organisation by the number of voluntary redundancy schemes that companies are undertaking, career anchors may also add another dimension. They would seem appropriate both with image theory as Schein defines them as "*that set of needs, values, and talents which the person is least willing to give up if forced make a choice*", and with factors such as 'security' allied to continuance and 'service to a cause' allied to the affective aspect of commitment (Schein, 1988, p84). There may also be more pragmatic reasons why people make their decisions based in the more formal motivation theories, that may include that in adverse times people may be more concerned with, what Alderfer describes as, their existence needs, than any higher, growth needs (Kakabadse et al, 1988).

Originating Questions

The research undertaken before setting out on this expedition, whilst still in my previous career, bears out aspects of both image theory and the previously discussed theories of commitment. The main reasons that people cited for leaving fell into Allen & Meyer's (1990) affective dimension, but also suggested the matching of personal values and goals process; with the 'not happy with the way the company treats its people' as the principal reason cited for leaving, which also confirms Shore *et al.*'s research tying turnover intention to organisational attitudes (Shore *et al*, 1990), these were followed by feelings of 'uncertain future / no security'; work influences formed another important reason which included factors such as unreasonably high workload, dissatisfaction with the type of work, and the changes in its nature and location; and for the managers in the sample, a quarter saw the redundancy offer as an opportunity for a change in career and/or lifestyle.

The behavioural dimension could be said to have influenced those who chose to remain in the company. The main reasons for staying were given as: salary, the

most important factor; followed by the extent of people's personal financial circumstances and commitments; their career aspirations and potential development and training opportunities along with a perceived lack of alternatives. These reasons reflect both Oliver's (1990) original model of reward, investment, no alternatives and Allen and Meyer's (1990) continuance dimension. For those who chose to leave, although the redundancy package was not cited as the major reason, it formed the enabler to leave, by taking away the continuance dimension.

This initial analysis would suggest that the nature of commitment in that particular workforce, has changed to focus more on the continuance dimension, losing the affective one. It may also be that the redundancy exercise self-selected those individuals who had similar 'images' to those of the organisation or were prepared to change their previous ones to fit the new situation by either adjusting their career goals or the strategies for achieving them (Lee and Mitchell, 1990).

The Psychological Contract

Origins

The concept of the 'psychological contract' has been around since the 1960s, it has not become a key issue until the 1990s with its rapid downsizing of organisations and their re-structuring (Hiltrop, 1995). The psychological contract was first described by Argyris (1960) with the idea of mutual adaptation - the organisation modifying the individual, who 'create formal activities' that result in modifying the organisation (formalised by Schein in 1978). More recently there has been a newer body of literature coming from writers such as Rousseau and Robinson; Guzzo and Noonan; and Herriot and Pemberton.

The psychological contract can be seen as an extension of the "social contract" of political philosophy which can be seen in the writings of Hobbes, Locke, and Jean Jacques Rousseau. They would see the social contract as '*an unwritten set of rights and obligations that determine the nature of the relationship between the state and its subjects or citizens*'. They also see this contract as having "natural"

limitations (Makin, Cooper and Cox, 1996, p4). In the same way the psychological contract can be seen as the unwritten set of rights and obligations that determine the nature of the relationship between the organisation and its employees. Locke goes one stage further by introducing the notion of "tacit consent" suggesting that if one remains in a civil society, this is in effect saying that one has consented tacitly to its government (Hamlyn, 1987). As will be seen later, this tacit consent can be seen as a parallel to Schein's notion of the willingness to accept constraints as the way individuals accept the organisation, it also has similarities to Salancik's theory of behavioural commitment.

At the centre of the relationship between organisations and their employees is the creation of the conditions which will allow employees to meet their needs and expectations whilst providing a high level of performance for the organisation. This notion has come to be known as the 'psychological contract' with its implication that there is always an unwritten set of expectations operating between the actors of an organisation (Schein, 1978).

"the actual terms remain implicit; they are not written down anywhere. But the mutual expectations formed between the employee and the employer function like a contract in that if either party fails to meet the expectations, serious consequences will follow -demotivation, turnover, lack of advancement, or termination (Schein, 1978 p112)."

This relationship is interactive and the extent to which it works is governed by two conditions: the extent to which the individual's expectations of what the organisation will provide and is owed matches the expectations of the organisation and what it will give in return; and the nature of what is to be exchanged such as money for time at work or high productivity, creative, quality effort in exchange for opportunities for self-actualisation. For Schein the psychological contract is the major variable when looking at whether people and organisations work effectively, generating commitment, loyalty and enthusiasm and gaining satisfaction from their work (Schein 1988). He defines the psychological contract as mutual acceptance of the relationship between the organisation and the employee which is implicit and resting "on assumptions

about the future, the degree of credibility of what is overtly said, and the actual events which transpire as the career unfolds” (Schein, 1978, p120).

The ways that the organisation demonstrates acceptance of the psychological contract include: salary increase; positive performance appraisal; new job assignments; sharing of organisational secrets; and promotion. This is in exchange for deciding to remain, a high level of commitment and willingness to accept various kinds of constraints on the part of the employee (Schein, 1978). This exchange implies that much of the organisational commitment research until this point has concentrated on one side of the exchange.

This renewed interest in the ‘psychological contract’ can perhaps be explained by Lee and Mitchell’s (1994) ‘shocks to the system’ and Guzzo and Noonan’s (1994) concept of ‘triggering events’, which range along a continuum from changes to personal circumstances for individual employees, management changes, to the highly visible events that affect the whole organisation or the economy (Parks and Kidder, 1994). They suggest that normally individuals would continually absorb the signals that come from the organisation’s everyday HR practices without consciously interpreting them and assessing their impact. However should a ‘triggering event’ or ‘shock’ occur, such as the dramatic restructuring of many organisations in the early part of the decade, then individuals review the status of their ‘psychological contract’. These changes to so many organisations, affecting large numbers of employees, have ‘triggered’ the reassessment at a macro level of the extent to which the ‘psychological contract’ has changed since the relative stability of the 1970s, and stimulated the marked interest in this area currently.

There are two separate ways of examining the psychological contract emerging from the literature. The first group of writers see it as a process (Schein, 1978; Herriot and Pemberton, 1995; Shore and Tetrick, 1994) and write about how the contract is formed, whereas the second group view the psychological contract more as a specific entity imbuing it with various properties and viewing it from the aspect of it’s content and terms (Rousseau, 1995; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994;

Hiltrop, 1995). All types of contract from the formal employment contract to this more psychological one can be seen to have their roots in exchange theory, where individuals invest or make contributions in return for a particular reward or outcome, in the same way as the concept of organisational commitment (Lydka, 1992), the psychological contract is also influenced by equity theory, especially where the contract has broken down.

Psychological Contract theory and recent research

Psychological Contract as a Process

Schein's perspective on career development focuses on the interactions of individuals and organisations over time which in turn defines the psychological contract.

“Ultimately the relationship between the individual and the organisation is interactive, unfolding through mutual influence and mutual bargaining to establish an re-establish a workable psychological contract” (Schein, 1988, p99)

He uses the diagram below (Figure 2.4) to show how the issues that arise during an individual's career map to HR practices and therefore the points at which the psychological contract is developed.

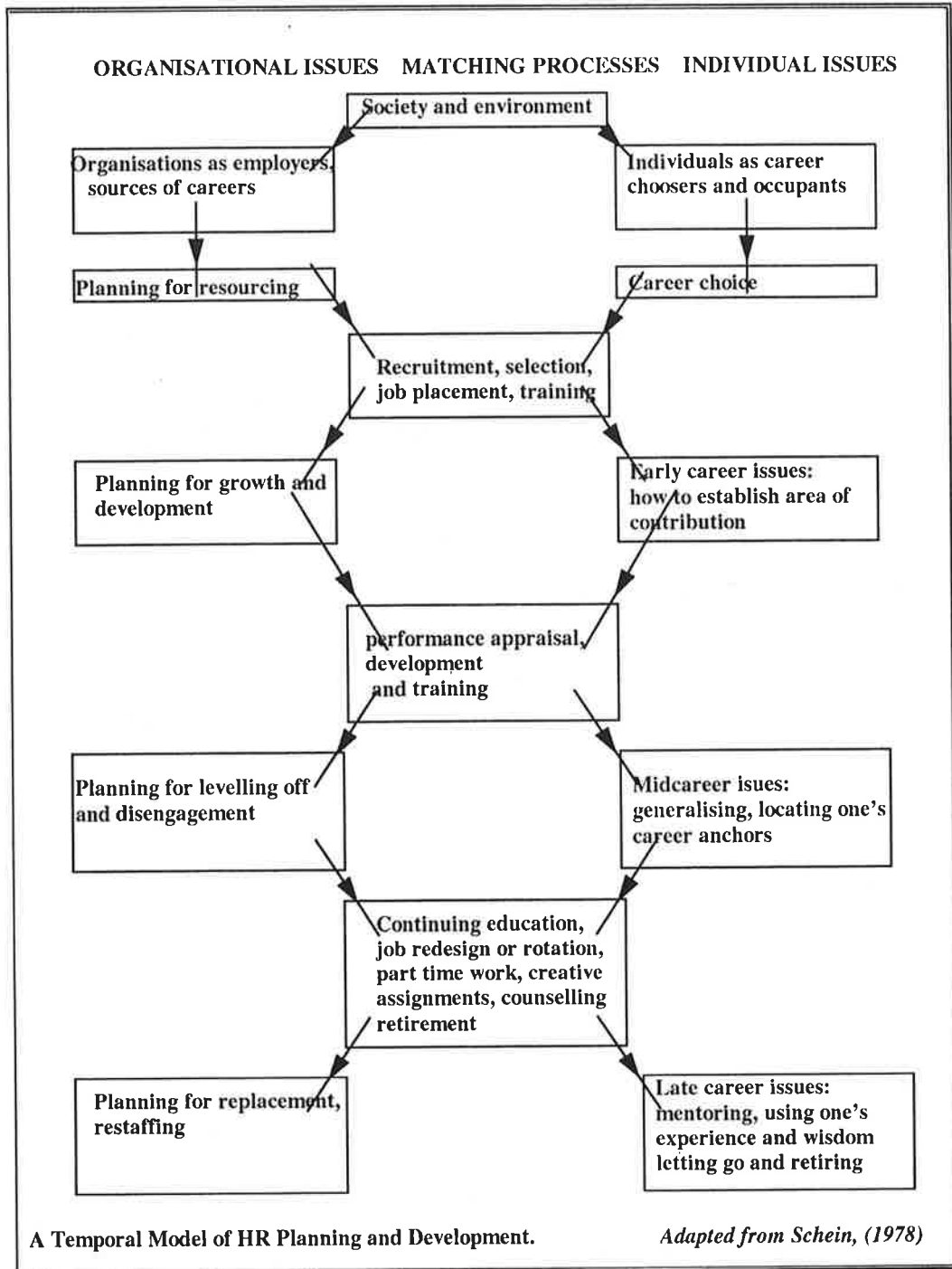


Figure 2.4 : Matching Process for HR Planning

Herriot's (1995) view of the psychological contract draws on the thoughts of Schein and Argyris and is focussed on the social process of contracting and is also supported by Shore and Tetrick (1994, p102) who describe the psychological contract as *'based on an interactive process by which the employee takes steps to fulfil their part of the contract and looks to the organization to fulfil their*

obligations within the terms of the contract'. Herriot (ibid.) suggests that it is this aspect that has the most theoretical and practical value as it is only the process that may be similar wherever contracts are made, all the other aspects are likely to differ as they are made up of the perceptions of individuals. His model of the stages of psychological contracting (below at Figure 2.5) draws on Schein's matching processes and temporal model (Figure 2.4). The idea of the 'matching process' can be seen to have its roots in the turn of the century with Parson's suggestion of 'goodness of fit' between the characteristics of the individual and that of the job and its environment in 1909 (Betz et al, 1989).

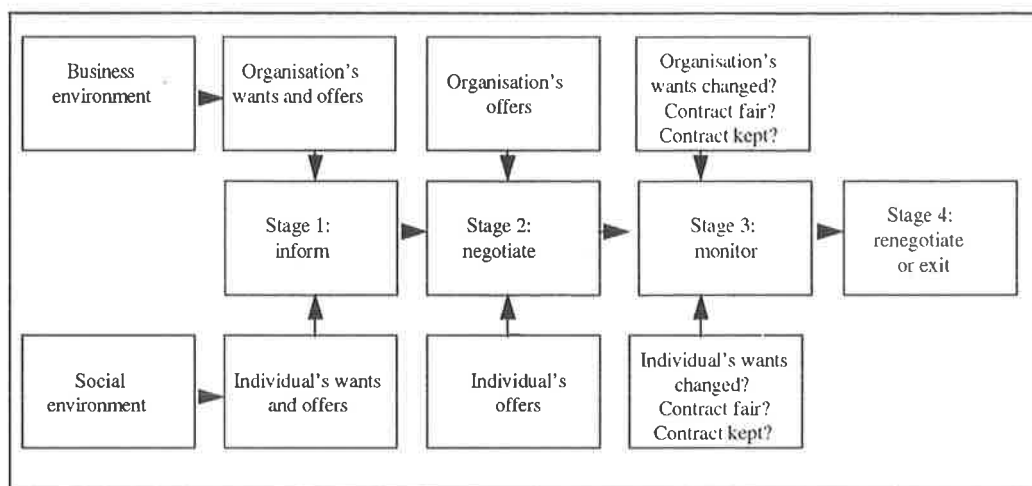


Figure 2.5 :The four stages of psychological contracting - Herriot and Pemberton (1996)

Organisation-Employee Relationship And The Psychological Contract

Classical organisation theory with its functionalist view would traditionally see the organisation's relationship with its employees as a 'parent - child' relationship with the employee dependent on the organisation, where there was a lack of congruency of organisational tasks and management style with that of 'self actualising' people (Argyris, 1960; Pascale, 1995). However this relationship recognised a mutuality of interest and was characterised by collective bargaining.

Much of the achievement in developing organisations that took account of a 'self actualising' workforce has been diverted by recession and restructuring.

Collective bargaining is frequently being replaced by personal contracts, thrusting

employees into an 'adult to adult' relationship where there is evidence that not everyone has acquired the appropriate skills to successfully manage such a relationship (Pascale, 1995; Argyris, 1960). Organisations, one party to the employment contract have been accused of only being interested in one side of the 'Deal' (Pascale, 1995; Doherty and Horsted, 1995). Following recent restructuring organisations have developed 'a fear of commitment' and a 'no guarantees' attitude has become prevalent on both sides. Rousseau suggests that by creating contracts that can be easily understood and kept, in the future it should be possible for the 'shamrock' organisation to have both flexibility and commitment (Rousseau, 1995).

Other Research on Psychological Contracts

Like Schein and Herriot, the alternative, but complementary, school of thought in this area that see psychological contracts as entities, recognising that they change over time, often without any formal acknowledgement of the 'process' theories (Rousseau, 1995; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994; Robinson and Rousseau, 1994). The change itself modifies the contract, affecting relationships and building and reinforcing a new set of expectations (Morrison, 1994).

The Psychological Contract As An Entity

Rousseau (op. cit.) starts from the premise that contracts "are a product of free societies" and that they are underpinned by choice, they arise when people believe themselves to have choice in their dealings with others. She makes the point that having a choice can engender commitment to carry out promises and takes the line of developing a behavioural theory of contracts. Her definition of the psychological contract:

"is individual beliefs, shaped by the organisation, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organisation." (Rousseau, 1995 p9).

She emphasises that the individual voluntarily assents to make and accept certain promises as he or she understands them as a key feature of a psychological contract and involves giving up some measure of freedom. This has resonance

with Schein's signal of acceptance of the contract through '*willingness to accept various kinds of constraints, delays or undesirable work*' (Schein, 1978, p120), although she warns that:

“Contracts are made when we surrender some of our freedom from restrictions in exchange for a similar surrender by another. But by giving up something voluntarily, each gets much more than might be possible otherwise” (Rousseau, 1995).

This view has interesting parallels with Jean Jacques Rousseau who saw the function of the social contract to enable individuals to give up their freedom so that they became freer than before, (Hamlyn, 1987).

The focus that Robinson and Rousseau (1994, p246) add to the psychological contract in much of their research, is the notion of obligation which they see as stronger than and distinct from expectations, 'the psychological contract ... refers to the perceived *mutual obligations* that characterize the employee's relationship with his/her employer'. This, therefore, results in a much stronger reaction when obligations and promises are broken than when expectations are not met. Their research into violation of psychological contracts demonstrated that the violation of obligations had a greater impact on satisfaction, intentions to leave and actual turnover, than unmet expectations.

Hiltrop (1995, p287) also takes the same approach as Rousseau, suggesting that psychological contracts are the "*understandings people have regarding the commitments made between themselves and their organisation*" by defining the employment relationship and managing mutual expectations. He also emphasises the voluntary and subjective nature of such contracts which is echoed by Guzzo and Noonan (1994) by their suggestion that they are highly subjective and therefore specific to individual employees depending on various properties: specific terms and contents; how much the total employment contract takes up of the individual's 'life space'; and the ratio of transactional and relational elements. How employees assess the current status of their contract is equally individual and subjective based on 'attitude-relevant' judgements, which Guzzo and Noonan

(ibid.) suggest are informed by the organisation's HR practices. The psychological contract goes beyond other types of contract, not just in being unwritten and implicit, but in that it may contain thousands of items, even though the parties to it are not aware of many of them, and often only become aware when the contract has been violated in some way (Sims, 1994).

Violation of the Psychological Contract

Much of the literature has been drawn from studies that examine what happens when the psychological contract has been violated (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994; Brockner et al, 1992, Parks and Kidder, 1994), as Morrison (1994) explains "*the issues covered by the contract are emotionally laden, thus, when psychological contracts are not working smoothly, strong feelings are provoked.*" As the psychological contract contains many unconscious expectations, of which many are at the heart of an individual's perception of self, any violation strikes at more than disappointed expectations, causing individuals to question beliefs about respect, codes of conduct and the integrity of the organisation. The repercussions from broken promises are significant, producing anger and eroding trust between the parties to the employment relationship (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994; Schein, 1978).

The recent focus on downsizing and restructuring has meant that contracts have been changed, a formal written contract has to have consent, but with the more intangible 'psychological contract', conditions, not of their choosing, have been imposed on some employees. The extent to which the flexible workforce have had a voice in the change of their contracts will also be informed by Rousseau's (op. cit.) continuum between the traditional transactional contract 'a fair day's work for a fair day's pay', and the relational contract characterised by open ended relationships and investment from both sides.

The increase in organisations restructuring has led to the situation described by Brockner et al (1992), and mirrored by Krackhardt and Porter (1985), where layoffs are made and the perception of the fairness in deciding who was to leave and the reasons for leaving, affected the commitment of those employees

remaining. Depending on their perception of the equity and fairness of decisions to leave, using Guzzo and Noonan's notion of the 'trigger event', would cause them to reassess their psychological contract. Robinson and Rousseau (1994) found companies tended to retain those recruits who felt fairly treated. This finding is also mirrored in other studies: the perception of fairness and equity as antecedents to behavioural commitment (Lydka, 1992; Allen & Meyer, 1990); the affect on the attitudes of stayers when co-workers left an organisation and the potential for them to be more discouraged and less satisfied should they identify with the decision to leave (Krackhardt and Porter, 1985). Brockner *et al.* (ibid.) suggest that the explanation may lie in the likelihood that highly committed employees develop feelings of entitlement over time as they feel that they are fulfilling their contract to the organisation and if they see unfairness they feel that the psychological contract has been broken.

Relational And Transactional Aspects Of Psychological Contracts

Rousseau looks at contracts from the aspects of their transactional or relational qualities (Rousseau, 1995; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). The transactional contract is closest to the traditional economic exchange, where the terms are tangible such as money, hours and specific tasks, usually within a specified timescale. The relational contract, on the other hand, is more abstract and concerned with the relationship between the individual and the employing organisation. Parks and Kidder (1994) add their view that transactional contracts presume on pure self interest whereas the relational contract acknowledges the value of the relationship itself. In their discussion on where the balance of power lies in the contracts, they cite the migrant worker and the exploitative land owner as an example of power asymmetry in the transactional contract. They would see more than economics involved in the relational contract, such as loyalty and affiliation, which imposes a normative constraint not to abuse power.

Guzzo and Noonan (1994) argue that psychological contract has elements of both the transactional and relational ends of the continuum, they also explore the extent to which they are interdependent. Experiences in the realm of one aspect will influence how the individual interprets the other aspect. Parks and Kidder

(1994) report that research has found that contracts become more transactional following violation, possibly to distance the employee psychologically from the source of the violation. This also reflects Shore and Tetrick's (1994) view that the violation of a long standing relational contract represents violation of a relationship built on trust, whereas violation of short duration transactional contracts may be less intense and able to be revised more amicably.

Rousseau (*op. cit.*) uses the notion of a continuum between the traditional transactional contract's 'a fair day's work for a fair day's pay', and the relational contract characterised by open ended relationships and investment from both sides. The nature of the contract also depends on elements such as employment status and the length of the contract, (Rousseau and Parks, 1993). This continuum is taken a stage further as shown below by including the impact of a time frame and performance requirements, to describe 'balanced' contracts blending the best of both, and the 'transitional' contract which is potentially rife in organisations in the midst of change without a strategy or direction (Rousseau, 1995).

<i>Duration</i>	<i>Performance</i>	<i>Terms</i>
	Specified	Not Specified
Short Term	Transactional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low ambiguity • Easy exit/high turnover • Low member commitment • Freedom to enter new contracts • Little learning • Weak integration/identification 	Transitional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambiguity/uncertainty • High turnover/termination • Instability
Long Term	Balanced <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High member commitment • High integration / identification • Ongoing development • Mutual support • Dynamic 	Relational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High member commitment • High affective commitment • High integration / identification • Stability

Table 2.1 : - Types of Psychological Contracts - Rousseau (1995)

Transactional contracts	limited duration with well-specified performance terms.
Transitional or 'no guarantees'	a breakdown in contract, absence of commitments little explicit performance demands following downsizing, merger, acquisition.
Relational	open ended membership but with ambiguous performance requirements attached to continued membership
Balanced	open ended relationship oriented employment with well specified performance terms subject to change over time.

Other writers taking a similar perspective have looked at the way the terms of the psychological contract have changed over a generation, using this comparison to understand the content and terms (Sims, 1994; Hiltrop, 1995).

Triggers To Assess/ Reassess The Psychological Contract

Much of the literature on the psychological contract has its roots in the concept of organisational commitment and uses it to explore how human resources practices influence commitment (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994; Hiltrop, 1995). However some

of the literature at this stage takes the form of advice to Human Resources departments rather than the results of research undertaken in these areas.

Schein (1978) identifies a number of events that symbolise the mutual acceptance of the psychological contract which are similar in concept to Guzzo and Noonan's triggers. Most of these are related to everyday HR practices and are times when the employee and the organisation, usually represented by the line manager, have an exchange which can be seen as a negotiation or renegotiation as represented by Herriot and Pemberton's (1995) contracting process. The outcome of these interactions will have an impact on how each side interpret the psychological contract at that time (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). Most of the initiative for mutual acceptance lies with the organisation and is manifested through their HR practices. It is particularly important for new recruits who do not have the power to "*accept himself or herself into the organisation.*" They must wait for evidence that their feelings about themselves are shared by the organisation and need early reassurance that they are acceptable (Schein, 1978). The section below outlines these events in more detail, as symbols of organisational acceptance, they were traditionally seen as the remit of personnel as the agent of the organisation, with the shift of emphasis in the role of HR from operational to advisory has become increasingly evident in the 1990's, (Legge, 1995; Guest, 1989), these matters have increasingly been delegated to line management.

Recruitment and Early Career

The importance of the recruitment process in the initial establishment of the psychological contract is emphasised by Beer, Spector et al (1984), this is where prospective employees first receive the signals about what the organisation expects. However expectations set by the recruitment process, which are subsequently unmet, often trigger the first conscious analysis of the status of the psychological contract in employees in the early stages of their career (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). They advocate, along with others (Hiltrop, 1995; Sims, 1994) the "realistic job preview" which has been shown to avoid the consequences of unmet expectations, leading to a negative view of the contract from the start of

employment, Sims suggests that it also aids self selection, commitment to the job decision, and the coping abilities of new recruits.

Schein (1978) also emphasises that it is in the recruitment and early career stages that the first of the symbolic events that form the psychological contract take place signifying mutual acceptance. This major transition, during which the relationship between the new employee and the employing organisation becomes more clearly defined. For the employee, the entry into the first job can be the first time they confront the gap between their expectations and their dreams, finding out what it is really like to work and be in an organisation.

This is a period where individual and organisations test each other to find out whether there is a good enough match to continue the relationship. Employees decide whether they can do the job, that the work is challenging and satisfying enough, and that the values system is compatible with their own personality and values to continue to invest in the organisation; the organisation decides whether the employee has enough talent to make a contribution and the personality and values to fit in. The process of mutual acceptance communicates and ratifies these two sets of perceptions and feelings.

Of the differing types of violation of the psychological contract that Robinson and Rousseau (1994) found, many were related to misrepresentation of the nature of the job and the amount of responsibility that employees were led to believe they would have before starting the job. They were also given a false impression of the type of people employed by the organisation in terms of expertise, workstyle and reputation. Their study was into MBA alumni in their first two years of employment after graduating, which comes with the warning that they may behave differently as a group, partly due to their perceived marketability, which could lead them to resign more easily but also the likelihood that in the race to attract good candidates, recruiters may oversell the opportunities the organisation has to offer .

Reward

Another signal of mutual acceptance (Schein, 1978) is the 'raise'. When individuals receive one they have to decipher its meaning, whether it is routine or whether it is higher than routine which will indicate whether they have been accepted by the organisation and can look forward to a future relationship.

Robinson and Rousseau's (1994) alumni also reported the second most prolific cause of violation of their contract was in the field of compensation, where they found discrepancies between what was promised and what pay, benefits and bonuses were actually realised. This could also be a result of the nature of the group studied.

Reward systems need to recognise contributions rather than status, and also need to be more dynamic and flexible to match the less hierarchical and more cross-functional project ways of working (Hiltrop, 1995). The implication of the change from the traditional system where company loyalty was exchanged for job security to the assumption that people are more likely to be loyal to their own discipline and skills, and care more about their own development, keeping their skills transferable, is that companies need to apply new kind of incentives. Hiltrop (1995) quotes from Kanter suggesting that the change should be from careers, status and promotion to personal reputation, teamwork and challenging assignments.

Performance appraisal

Schein (1978) sees appraisal as one of the commonest ways that organisational acceptance is given and is often the first time that new recruits gain evidence that their feelings about themselves are shared by the organisation, usually by their boss, and their the reassurance that they are acceptable. The organisation sometimes has a dilemma when there is not enough challenging work to especially during periods of rapid economic or technological change, at this time, performance appraisal has a special task to convince the high potential employee

of their worth even though there is no challenging work at the time but that it will be forthcoming.

Robinson and Rousseau (1994) found that lack of feedback and review was one of the areas of frequently cited as violation of the psychological contract. Many writers feel it should be based on continuous performance rather than past achievement or intermittent effort (Hiltrop, 1995; Sims, 1994).

Communications

Guzzo and Noonan (1994) would see communication between the organisation and its employees as at the heart of determining how the contract is viewed. Many of the messages are not communicated through formal channels but happen as employees 'process' the meaning of its HR practices, and therefore are potentially unintentional. They recommend the use of formal instruments such as focus groups and open ended attitude survey questions to check for unanticipated interpretations.

These views are echoed by Schein (1978), who sees it as vital that all the discussions between manager and employee on routine HR practice should be communicated accurately and sensitively. He also sees a vital role for communication in one of the commonest and meaningful ways of demonstrating acceptance by giving privileged information which is obviously only shared with someone who can be trusted not to take advantage of it, or 'sharing organisational secrets' (Schein, 1978). Sharing of secrets is especially powerful in symbolising acceptance as once granted it cannot be taken away - the organisation is making itself vulnerable and, through this process initially involving or co-opting the employee in an irreversible way so that the employee is now in the position of being able to hurt the organisation by receiving those secrets.

Robinson and Rousseau (1994) found in their qualitative research that managers who promote open two way communication have the opportunity to resolve discrepancies in the psychological contract at an early stage. It also featured as a

violation of the contract where the respondents felt they had not been given notice of changes as promised, and felt lack of control and input to the changes that affected them.

Sims (1994) also contributes the area of ethics as an important foundation to the psychological contract and its institutionalisation through training and other areas such as top management communicating and reinforcing them through their behaviour and actions.

Training

Using training to enhance commitment by taking the opportunity to develop skills especially through cross-functional or non-hierarchical courses. (Hiltrop, 1995).

The increase of requirements for employees to develop new skills and government initiatives, coupled with differences in methods of delivery leads Sims (1994) to suggest that HR personnel should clarify expectations of trainees and their supervisors of the training relationship to help define what they should expect of each other within the psychological contract. It was the area of training that was cited as the most frequent violation of the contract with Robinson and Rousseau's (1994) MBA graduates.

Promotion and Managing careers

One of the most important events symbolising acceptance, in Schein's view (1978) is to be moved from the first assignment to a more permanent or challenging one. The new employee knows the first assignment has been given on the limited information gained from interview and CV but now acceptance is based on actual observed performance. This is seen as a more reliable measure as the employee assumes the organisation would not assign important work unless they thought the employee capable of doing it.

The change over time of the psychological contract has a particular impact on careers. What individuals are looking for in a job in their 20s, when they want to

establish what they are capable of, are very different from what they need as they reach the end of their career. Organisations also have different needs as they expand or contract, or develop into different markets requiring different skills and attitudes in their workforce. Schein (1988) reports that in their early career individuals are looking for challenge and are quickly disappointed if kept in menial or training tasks for too long. Later on they are looking for an area where they can make a contribution for which they will be recognised, and in the final career stages security is likely to be a major consideration. As these needs on both sides change, the psychological contract needs to be constantly renegotiated.

Sims (1994) suggests that progressive organisations have established career planning to address employee fulfilment which leads to enhanced performance from both the individual and the organisation. In their research, Robinson and Rousseau (1994) identified the notion of 'careerism' as a way to describe those employees who viewed their career advancement as taking place across a variety of organisations, expecting that this group may have different experiences from those intending to remain. Like Brockner et al (1992), they found that those most affected by violations of the psychological contract were those who were intending to build their career in the organisation, and therefore those 'whose trust the firm should value most' (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994, p257). In the same study lack of promotion came high on the list of frequent violation of the contract, with the alumni perceiving a promise of promotion early on which had not materialised, although the research was carried out early on in their careers, which leaves questions about unrealistic expectations of over zealous recruitment.

Exit/Downsizing

Restructuring and downsizing are one of Guzzo and Noonan's major 'organisational' triggers. The impact of layoff and turnover on commitment has been discussed earlier in reference to Brockner et al's research (1992), their work has been frequently referred to by other writers on psychological contracts and the impact of turnover on commitment of those remaining in organisations (Rousseau, 1995; Herriot, 1995; Doherty et al, 1995). Even in Robinson and Rousseau's (1994) study, where MBA graduates, who it could be argued, should

be more aware of the changing labour market of 1990s, incidents were reported of perceptions that promises regarding the degree of job security expected were not met.

One of the key parts of behavioural commitment is the decision to remain. The decision by the employee to leave an organisation for any reason other than normal life cycle reasons, indicates that the psychological contract has possibly broken down. This may happen from either side: the organisation may fail to meet expectations or changing their needs to those the employee no longer feels able or wants to meet; or the employee may change their requirements and find the organisation unable to or not wanting to meet those new needs. If they are unable to reach a renegotiated contract, then the employee leaves (Herriot and Pemberton, 1995). As Schein (1978), supported by Shore and Tetrick (1994), points out, often the decision to leave is not communicated to the organisation, or the organisation, having mentally written off the employee, fails to let the employee know, leading to mutual dissatisfaction and eventual 'nasty surprises' with sudden resignations or terminations.

Opportunities and Questions for research

Much of the literature at this stage is more a discussion of theories and ideas rather than research results (Shore and Tetrick, 1994), which suggests that there should be many opportunities. This is echoed by Guzzo and Noonan (1994, p491), in feeling that there were still many possibilities for research, who suggest that there is a need to expand the understanding of the essence of the psychological contract by establishing what is and is not a part of it '*we need to better map the subjective terrain of the psychological contract as a prelude to an improved appreciation of it.*' They also advocate further work on the connection between HR practices and the sources of influence on employees interpretation of them. Robinson and Rousseau (1994) suggest there is a need to examine the psychological contract from the employers side and also to examine how organisations and their employees seek to resolve and remedy any violations in their perception of the contract.

Parks and Kidder (1994) point out that they have only examined what happens when the psychological contract is violated, as is the case for many others (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994; Brockner et al, 1992; etc.), there has been little formal research into cases where the contract has been kept. They also suggest that future research should identify the conditions for optimal relationships between organisations and their employees.

The Research Questions

The research study will use careers as the 'lens' through which to understand aspects of the psychological contract as the means of examining that relationship.

This has led to the basic starting questions:

1. *How is the nature of the relationship between organisations and their employees changing?*
 - *change in expectations*
 - *change in obligations*
2. *What are the 'trigger events' that define it?*

How much is the line manager the determinant of the quality of the relationship?
What are the aspects of the organisation that affect the individual's view of it.

The definitions of the psychological contract so far emphasise the matching processes of interaction of expectations and needs which relate closely to Schein's (1997, p52) definition of the career anchor as '*an interaction between the person with his needs and talents, and the work environment with its opportunities and restraints*', and Van Maanen's (1977, p163) '*matching individual talents, interests, and hopes to the demands, requirements, and constraints of the organizational environment.*' These views of the career suggest the close linkages and the possibility of understanding each area through the other, and the psychological contract may provide an explanation of Van Maanen's concerns over matching the extent to which personal and organisation needs were met. That careers would provide a suitable lens is supported by Van Maanen's (1977, p3) view that '*People change, as do organizations. In short, to study careers is to study change itself.*'

Conclusion

There are many similarities between the concepts of organisation commitment and psychological contracts, Guzzo and Noonan (1994) would suggest that it is the extent to which the employee assesses that their psychological contract is fulfilled that influences their commitment. The notion of psychological contract extends the concept of organisational commitment, with commitment potentially an outcome of the employment relationship, and the psychological contract concerned with the process of developing the relationship to achieve that outcome. Organisation commitment is only one aspect of the employee side of the psychological contract. The research inquiry to be undertaken will attempt to throw light on the other side of the contract i.e. the employers' obligations to the employee by examining their expectations through the lens of their careers.

This review of literature has provided the first part of Strauss and Corbin's (1990) 'theoretical sensitivity' and has contributed to the pre-understanding of the field (Gummesson, 1993) before starting out on the research inquiry. The extension of this into the more implicit nature of 'tacit knowledge' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), which also combines the nature of the 'human instrument' and the personal experience already gained, which are seen as important by all these authors, will be the task of the next two chapters. They will provide the other elements to complete the chronicle of the preparation for the research journey.

Chapter 3 - From Philosophy to a Constructivist Paradigm

*“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference”*

Robert Frost

Introduction

For many years there has been a fierce debate raging in academic circles along the continuum between two opposing views of how the world is seen and how this translates into the way that research into the social sciences should be carried out (Burrell and Morgan, 1979, p5; Easterby-Smith et al, 1991, p22; Hassard, 1993, p74). This chapter seeks to provide an overview of the epistemological and ontological perspectives considered in both the design and the analysis stages of this research study. As Guba and Lincoln (1994) point out, questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigm, which they define as the basic system of beliefs, or worldview, guiding the researcher from their ontological and epistemological perspective. This chapter provides an overview of the changing views on paradigms and philosophical positions that have been taking place in understanding within the study of human behaviour and society, and more particularly in this case, in organisations. It is this chapter that provides the background for the research strategy I adopted for this thesis and the reasons behind choices that I had to make.

As with many others coming on a land or culture for the first time, the need to explain it partly to myself as well as to my readers, has led to a lengthier and more simplistic discussion than might have been expected from someone in familiar territory, for this I make no apologies. In this chapter I have traced my arrival at a ‘constructivist’ ontological position, through an overview of the philosophy of phenomenology that underpins it and how it relates to organisation theory. The chapter finishes with the implications for this thesis of a

constructivist position, by introducing Naturalistic Inquiry and its emphasis on the researcher's own values, skills, experience and attributes.

A New Way of Looking?

The origins of our traditional models of research into 'management sciences' has been attributed to the research models developed in the US based on their successful research system in other fields, and the founding of the Institute of Management Science in 1953 (Whitley, 1984). Much of the economic success of the 1950s and 1960s was perceived to be due to the earlier establishment of their post graduate business schools (Whitley, 1984), and this period was to prove to be a fruitful one in terms of research and addition to theory. The debate into whether research should be through 'scientific' methods or those based more on understanding and meaning, has since moved to a period where texts on the newer paradigms have achieved the respectability of publication, (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Reed and Hughes, 1992). This debate has moved on in recent publications into a more "intellectually exciting" arena than that of the simplistic debate between quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Schwandt, 1994). There is now an acceptance that there is a case for undertaking research based on a number of positions along the continuum depending on what seems appropriate to the researcher and the area to be studied (Gummesson, 1991; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Easterby Smith *et al*, 1991; Erlandson *et al*, 1993), which has led to the development of what has been called new paradigm research.

In embarking on the first stage of my academic career some 25 years ago, one of the luxuries students enjoyed then was the knowledge there would be a job somewhere and so there was less focus on passing exams, more on understanding the world around us. Many of those discussions were around such issues that I have now found must have been influenced by such texts as Berger and Luckman's (1967) and Glaser and Strauss (1967) and the effects of the research at the time by figures such as Argyris, Schein, McGregor and their colleagues. Little did I realise then, as I started my working life as a teacher of ceramics, how much I was to prove to be a child of my time, with those ideas that were just

breaking, having now received academic respectability, and ‘my generation’ becoming the influential leaders in many organisations where we can start to see those ideas beginning to work in practice.

Coming to doctoral research, somewhat later in life than the traditional PhD student, has enabled me to draw on, and be comfortable with, a wider body of knowledge and ideas than would have been possible twenty years ago. This has also led to a questioning of the traditional paradigms and ‘received’ scientific approaches to research that would have been accepted at that time. The intervening period having served me well in developing skills, knowing myself and providing experience, that in the rest of this chapter I will demonstrate has contributed to the philosophical stance of my doctoral study, but in many ways this chapter will also demonstrate my own interest and search for understanding in this area.

Phenomenology - a philosophy to underpin human inquiry

In understanding the approach taken to the research study, it is necessary to briefly outline the philosophical issues that have been considered in coming to the research strategy. In order to undertake the form of human inquiry that will be outlined in this chapter, the ‘constructivist’ or ‘interpretivist’ study has been seen to be identified by a particular set of *“theoretical commitments and philosophical assumptions about the way the world must be in order that we can know it”* (Schwandt, 1994, p132). This section will outline the ontological and epistemological issues on coming to a view of the world, grounded in phenomenology and hermeneutics that results in taking a constructivist, or naturalistic approach to inquiry.

Background To Opposing Ends Of A Continuum

It would appear that the twentieth century, with all its scientific advances, rather than coming to any answers has increased the richness of philosophical debate which has spawned many opposing schools of thought, all able to trace their roots to the philosophical traditions of the past. As Sartre observed that “A

philosophical question is by definition something that each generation, each individual even, must ask over and over again” (Gaarder, 1995, p384) .

Interestingly the two main opposing schools of thought this century that affect the research models in the social sciences would both claim to have been influenced by the thinking of the same man, Wittgenstein. In his first published work, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, he emphasises the use of language, which has the primary function of stating what is the case and it is this that makes up reality or the world, “*what can be thought can be said*” (Hamlyn, 1987, p 305) and that these spoken words and the objects for which they stand, are in some way mutually related (Hassard, 1993). From this Wittgenstein suggests that simple, or atomic facts can be derived from the more complex propositions of thought from which the world is made up. It was this concept that attracted the logical empiricists, or logical positivists, who believed that the only type of knowledge is scientific knowledge that has to be scientifically verified in experience. Popper took this a stage further by seeing scientists as revolutionaries using scientific procedures not as inductive, but in putting forward bold conjectures or hypotheses and then attempting to falsify them (Hamlyn, 1987, p309; Kilduff and Mehra, 1997). In general positivism and post-positivism are modelled on the natural sciences with an emphasis on ‘*erklären*’, the explanation of causal relationships or ‘*scientific explanation*’ (Schwandt, 1994, p119).

In his later work, *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein concentrated more on the contexts in which language is used and the different ‘language games’ that people play in terms of the rules of the language of which a proposition is a part. Looking at how language is used and understanding the context in everyday discourse as a way of pursuing philosophy is seen as a significant dimension in contemporary philosophy, and often a key feature of the anti-positivist schools of thought, modelled on the humanities and emphasising ‘*verstehen*’, the use of interpretation. (Baird, R.M., 1996; Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Hassard, 1993; Schwandt, 1994). Indeed Kilduff and Mehra suggest that in order to ‘*understand the created world - that is, the world that humans have created and to which they respond - scientists may have to strive to understand the fictions that people*

perceive and enact" (1997, p464). Phenomenology and hermeneutics form some of these 'anti-positivist' schools of thought.

Hamlyn (1987) suggests that the main influences on modern European philosophy have come from Marx, and Husserl, the founder and leading exponent of phenomenology. However it has been the American philosophers who have dominated the English speaking world with their tendency to the technical, formal, science-based and materialistic, possibly stemming from the break up and emigration of members of the logical positivist group, the Vienna Circle, to the USA following the invasion of Austria in 1938. The American 'scientific' model of research has dominated academia and the social sciences and with it organisational theory, until the last twenty years when there has been a plethora of writing questioning the reliance on quantification methods in social and management research, and by implication the positivist, empiricist paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Gummesson, 1991; Morgan & Smircich, 1980; Whitley, 1984). *"Once one relaxes the ontological assumption that the world is a concrete structure, and admits that human beings, far from merely responding to the social world, may actively contribute to its creation, the dominant methods become increasingly unsatisfactory, and indeed, inappropriate"* (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p498)

The question of ontology - what is the nature of reality in the context of this thesis and to understand my own position, came partly from: my re-interpretation of the meaning of those college discussions of nearly thirty years ago, which in themselves came possibly from the first wave of much of the rethinking that took place in the 1960s; from the need to explain the human factors in organisation theory and other social settings; and the realisation that it could not be explained from the 'received' positivist view. The philosophical tradition that best seems to fit that understanding is that of phenomenology and hermeneutics.

An Overview of Phenomenology

"phenomenology ...

3 *Philos. The theory that the pure and transcendental nature and meaning of phenomena, and hence their real and ultimate significance, can only be apprehended subjectively; the method of reduction whereby all factual knowledge and reasoned assumptions about a phenomenon are set aside so that pure intuition of its essence may be analysed.*" (New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 1997)

"we are partly instrumental in deciding what we perceive by selecting what is significant for us." (Gaarder, 1995, p380)

The phenomenology movement started with the work of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) at the turn of this century, although the term had existed since the mid 18th Century and was given the meaning by Hegel, of referring to "*knowledge as it appears to consciousness, the science of describing what one perceives, senses, and knows in one's immediate awareness and experience*" (Moustakas, 1994, p26). Husserl, like others that came after him, was highly dissatisfied with positivist science, with its uncritical study of facts which he felt was unable to cope with problems of ultimate truth and validity (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The task of phenomenology, seen by Husserl and his followers initially, "*is to provide such intuitions of essence*" (Hamlyn, 1987) by the 'bracketing off' of presuppositions in order to see the phenomenon as itself, he called this suspension of belief, *epoche*, from the Greek. In order to do this it was necessary to return to the self to discover the nature and meaning of phenomena as they appear and in their essence.

"Phenomenology, step by step, attempts to eliminate everything that represents a prejudgement, setting aside presuppositions, and reaching a transcendental state of freshness and openness, a readiness to see in an unfettered way, not threatened by customs, beliefs, and prejudices of normal science, by the habits of

the natural world or by knowledge based on unreflected everyday experience."

(Moustakas, 1994, p40)

Phenomenology has arguably been one of the most influential, if at times not altogether coherent, schools of contemporary philosophy (Hamlyn, 1987; Burrell and Morgan, 1979). In the first half of this century, it was to influence thinkers such as his pupil, Heidegger (1889-1976), who in 'Being and Time', published in 1927, tried to describe the interconnected system of equipment, social roles and purposes that he called the structure of everydayness (Dreyfus, 1996). He makes the distinction between *sein* (being) and *dasein* (being in the world) developing *dasein* around the problems and standing of the individual in relation to the world, thus providing a brand of existentialism. The other school of thought that was extended from Husserl at this time, was the French school of existentialism as practiced by Sartre (1905-1980) and Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961).

Husserl's interest in the ways that people constitute their everyday lives was further developed in the 1960s by Schutz (1899-1959), who had bridged sociology with Husserl's philosophical phenomenology to produce a social phenomenology. He, like Husserl, recommended that the social world should be studied by 'bracketing' and suspending all judgments about nature, the essence of events and things. He also argued that social sciences should focus on the members' experiences and perceptions of the world, "*the safeguarding of the subjectivist point of view is the only but sufficient guarantee that the world of social reality will not be replaced by a fictional non-existing world constructed by a scientific observer*" (quoted in Holstein and Gubrium, 1994, p263).

Links to Hermeneutics

Heidegger's notion of 'being in the world' also influenced the Hermeneutics movement (from the Greek *hermeneuiein*, to interpret), seen as the study of understanding through interpretation (Hamlyn, 1987). Founded by Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) who emphasised the difference between the dominant 'objective' natural sciences and the more subjective sciences such as the humanities. He recognised the dependence of these human sciences on *verstehen*,

seeing them as involving the interaction of personal experience; the reflective understanding of experience; and the expression of the spirit in gesture, words, and art. He also argued that learning must be seen in the light of the historical context to understand “*an author better than the author understands his or her own experience*” (Moustakas, 1994, p8); without this perspective, he felt that knowledge and understanding could only be partial. Dilthey saw a direct interrelationship between the “*conscious description of experience and the underlying dynamics or structures that account for the experience*”(p9). This is reflected in the process of the hermeneutic circle, or as Gummesson suggests the hermeneutic spiral, involves moving through cycles of pre-judgement, or preunderstanding to developing a fuller understanding following reflective interpretation of the data available (Moustakas, 1994; Gummesson, 1991).

In understanding the difference between phenomenology and hermeneutics, Gummesson, (1991, p150), quotes from Odman, 1985, “*Whereas phenomenology is primarily oriented toward the immediate phenomena of human experience, such as thinking and feeling, hermeneutics is more context directed. In interpreting human ‘traces’, hermeneutics often tries to go beyond the observable in order to ‘read between the lines’*”. As Gummesson continues, he explains how the phenomenologist would register all cues in a research study in order to ‘understand’, whereas the hermeneutic scientist would ‘interpret’ them in the light of previous events and experience.

From Philosophy to Ontology

Moustakas suggests that irrespective of the philosophical differences between phenomenology and hermeneutics as well as grounded research theory, heuristics and ethnography, there are several common qualities and bonds in human science research that distinguish them from the traditional, positivist, quantitative research theories and methodologies, which include :

- difficulty of studying human experience through quantitative approaches;
- focus on the wholeness experience rather than breaking it down into parts or objects;

- searching for meaning and 'essence'
- description of experience through first hand accounts
- seeing the necessity of understanding human experience and seeing it as evidence
- questions that reflect the interest, involvement, and personal commitment of the researcher;
- *"viewing experience and behaviour as an integrated and inseparable relationship of subject and object and of parts and whole"* (Moustakas (1994, p21).

Miles and Huberman (1994), make the link between the philosophy of Dilthey and Interpretivism which comes from his thesis about methods of natural and physical science being inappropriate to analyse human discourse and action. Burrell and Morgan suggest that interpretivism is commensurate with phenomenology *"concerned with understanding the essence of the everyday world"* (1979, p31). Interpretivism has traditionally been seen as the opposing paradigm to conventional scientific positivism until the further developments on 'anti-positivist' thinking of the last decade (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Gummesson, 1991; Hassard, 1993; Burrell and Morgan, 1979).

A Constructivist Paradigm

All interpretivists insist that researchers and informants cannot be detached. Researchers have their own understandings convictions and orientation as well as being members of the particular culture at a particular moment so will be affected by what they hear and observe in the field (Miles and Huberman, 1994, Wolcott, 1994). Whereas interpretivism takes its philosophical stance directly from phenomenology and hermeneutics, Schwandt (1994) suggests that constructivism, a later development in social sciences than interpretivism, is better described by what it is not: objectivism, empirical realism, objective truth, and essentialism: *"constructivists are deeply committed to the contrary view that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of perspective"*, (Schwandt, 1994, p125). He describes four different interpretations of constructivism:

radical constructivism, with knowledge seen by von Glaserfield as an activity or process and valid if it is viable;

social constructionism, with knowledge seen by Gergen and Gergen as a collective generation of meaning, shaped by language and social processes, implying that language is the only reality that can be known;

feminist standpoint epistemologies, which are “concerned with portraying the lived reality of women’s lives” (Schwandt, 1994, p128)

constructivist paradigm, which Guba and Lincoln propose as a replacement for the conventional positivist paradigm. They describe the epistemology as transactional and subjectivist and relying on the ‘interaction’ with the subject ‘so that the “findings” are *literally created* as the investigation proceeds’ (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p111). This is different from Denzin’s Interpretive Interactionism which Schwandt reports must explicitly engage in cultural criticism especially in areas that include the position of emotion, violence, power and sexuality in society (Schwandt, 1994, p125).

For the purposes of this study, the constructivist paradigm that has been adopted is that which Lincoln and Guba originally termed as ‘naturalistic’, and seen by them to be such an alternative paradigm which they felt could be equally described as interpretivism, phenomenology or hermeneutics (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Schwandt, 1994; Holstein and Gubrium, 1994). They suggest that people who profess to practice it take different views of what it implies, using the analogy of those who follow the philosophy of Christianity, but call themselves Catholic, Lutheran etc. This study practices the philosophies of phenomenology and hermeneutics, and calls itself constructivist, in the sense of Guba and Lincoln, (1994). In many ways it is difficult to separate out these various elements, as Schwandt puts it “*the phenomenological-interpretive perspective is now being blended with insights from constructivist epistemology, feminist methodologies, and critical hermeneutics*”(1994, p130); the main issue is, having understood the basic philosophical roots, to ensure congruency and fit between the researcher, the area of research and the methods to be used.

Fit To Research Style

As Schwandt explains, the difference between the different types of constructivists and interpretivists, which he sees as a “*loosely coupled family of methodological and philosophical persuasions*” is in the intent of how they shape their meanings. They share a common goal of “*understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it*”, or *Verstehen* (Schwandt, 1994,p118).

The initial intention when producing the research proposal was to study commitment, but it was the failure of existing research studies and the literature, to get to the ‘essence’ of commitment that was disappointing. This led me to consider that commitment was perhaps not the best way to understand the ‘essence’ of the employment relationship, hence the repositioning of the research study in terms of the psychological contract understood through the ‘lens’ of employees’ understanding and experience of ‘career’.

In answering the epistemological question - “what is the nature of the relationship between the knower or would be knower and what can be known?”, the posture would be subjective and interactive, as described by Guba and Lincoln as coming from the constructivist paradigm, “investigator and the object of the investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the “findings” are *literally created* as the investigation proceeds” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

What a Phenomenological Perspective brings to Research Project

As Guba and Lincoln (1994) point out the assumptions behind a paradigm are more than philosophical differences, they have consequences for how the research is conducted as well as how the findings will be interpreted. Getting to the essence of the psychological contract requires a qualitative methodology and an interviewing technique that draws the subjects out, building on their experiences and listening to them.

Guba and Lincoln (1994), with similar expectations that Miles and Huberman (1994) would have of interpretivists, would expect that the methodology coming

from a constructivist posture to be hermeneutical and dialectical, where social constructions would be elicited through the interaction between the investigator and respondents, where the investigator is seen more a facilitator or 'process consultant'. This is similar to Schein's (1987) clinical perspective which has at its heart the interaction with clients, coming out of his process consultancy approach (Schein, 1988), which he also refers to as a 'doctor-patient' model but only where the patient shares in a joint diagnostic approach and the eventual remedy. Gummesson, (1991) would echo the relevance of a consultancy model, especially when based on the 'hermeneutic spiral' between pre-understanding and understanding of the researcher.

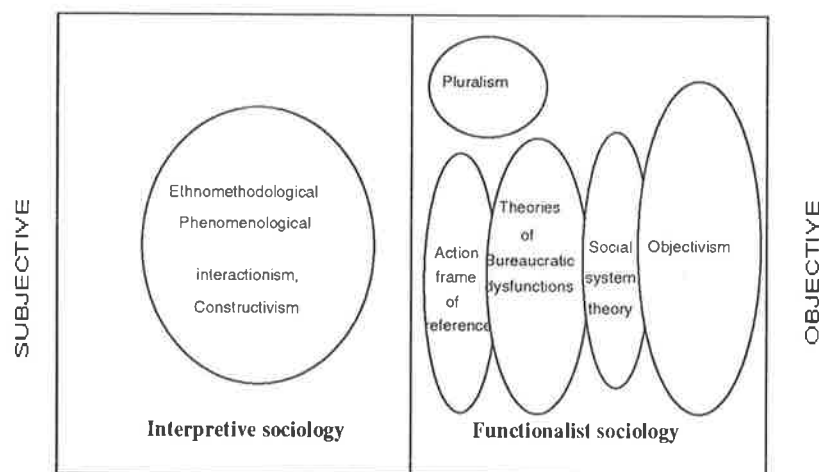
Nature of organisational theory and current perspectives

In parallel to the debates held in the main stream of the social and human sciences, similar challenges to the 'old' order of positivist, scientific, quantitative thinking has also been taking place in the world of organisation and management theory. Burrell and Morgan (1979, px) suggest that "*all theories of organisation are founded upon a philosophy of science and a theory of society ...whether [the theorists] are aware of it or not*" and the purpose of this section is to explore and provide a brief theoretical context for the research area set against the previous philosophy sections.

The originals of organisation theory can be found in three main distinct traditions within the social sciences : 'classical' management theory emerging from practitioners at the beginning of this century such as Taylor and Fayol; the sociology of organisations building on Weber; and the study of the behaviour of individuals in organisations which builds on the human relations movement that comes from psychology and industrial sociology, to a certain extent they have all built on each other to be seen as organisational behaviour although Burrell and Morgan (1979) would deem this reification.

The traditions of organisation theory are firmly set in a positivist paradigm derived from over two hundred years of classical management theory that has likened organisations to machines, starting with Adam Smith's division of labour, to Fayol and

Urwick's view of the task of managers in organisations as planning, organising, command and control. Taylor's model of Scientific Management took this a step further by analysing and standardising tasks from an engineer's viewpoint, simplifying work so that workers would be "*cheap, easy to train, easy to supervise, easy to replace*" (Morgan, 1997, p 25). This view can still be seen in organisations a hundred years after Taylor presented his first paper on management and is based on what Burrell and Morgan (1979, p164) termed "*an ontology, epistemology, methodology and view of human nature characteristic of the most objectivist region of the functionalist paradigm*" opposite to what they see in Husserl's phenomenology as "*foundations for further exploration in the highly subjectivist region of the interpretive paradigm*" (p234) as shown in the diagram below.



Organisation Theories Within Opposing Sociological Paradigms

Adapted from Burrell and Morgan (1979)

Figure 3.1: Organisation Theories

This functionalist, positivist paradigm, as Burrell and Morgan, (1979) and Whitley, (1984) remind us, is also still the dominant paradigm in which managers and academics have been trained in business schools, with the warning by Lincoln and Guba (1994, p116) that positivists still control publication outlets, dissertation committees and other sources of power and influence, representing "*the strongest voice in professional decision making*". In organisations too, the strongest voices

would appear to have been those of the accountants, engineers, production managers, with their 'worldviews' dominated and influenced by quantitative measures and analysis.

Much of what is taught in business schools still comes from the functionalist school especially in the realms of strategic and business planning which is aimed at and remembered by senior management to whom the rational approach appeals (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Mangham and Pye warn that those senior managers in organisations still draw up their organisation charts to reflect their view of the world and how it should be organised to deal with those beliefs and are therefore likely to remain functionalist and inclined toward 'classical management theory' (Mangham & Pye, 1991).

It was not until the mid 1960s that one of the first articles was published criticising the functional approach to organisation theory by Bittner, who suggested that the study of organisations "*as a common sense construct in which the 'methodologist' must be concerned with the procedures and considerations which actors invoke in the construction of their world*" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979, p262). As Perrow (1970) reminded us over 25 years ago, and Argyris (1960) nearly 40 years ago, organisations are made up of people and healthy 'self actualising' ones at that, who often suffer from lack of congruency between their needs and what is seen to be those of the organisation.

The Relationship of Organisation Theory to Phenomenology

A phenomenological perspective poses a fundamental challenge to 'received', functionalist organisation theory. As Burrell and Morgan, (1979) point out for "*phenomenologists, organisations as tangible and relatively concrete phenomena simply do not exist; the social world is essentially processual and emerges from the intentional acts of human beings acting individually or in concert with one another (p273).*" From this perspective, organisations are a social construct or concept meaning different things to different people. As they go on to suggest the socially created world of the organisation "*can become all too real and*

provides a framework which constrains the actions and orientations of human beings, as if it had an existence on its own account.” (p277).

Over the last twenty years organisation researchers have started to resolve the dilemma that Burrell and Morgan saw in researching organisations from a phenomenological perspective, and what came across as a disbelief that organisation theorists, stuck in their functional paradigms, would be able to ‘get to grips’ with the phenomenological challenge. Increasingly the metaphors for organisations have demonstrated the move away from reification to seeing them as made up of people, for instance Morgan’s (1997) ‘psychic prison’, which reflects the radical humanist paradigm of Burrell and Morgan (1979), or Preston’s jazz band with the deliberate choice of a metaphor using an unfamiliar language to organisational theorists, perhaps reflecting Burrell and Morgan’s previous challenge. *“The music is the collective expression of a group of individuals as they perform, interpret and respond to the performance of the other members of the band. Another attribute of the metaphor is that jazz is a human endeavour and so avoids the dehumanizing, mechanistic or biological metaphors typically employed in organization theory”* (Preston, 1986, p82). Morgan explains that he has used and developed metaphor much in line with the hermeneutic approach to social analysis (Morgan, 1997).

Naturalistic Inquiry

In line with the above journey through the philosophical overview of hermeneutics and phenomenology, to a constructivist position, the coherent approach to the research study, to be discussed in the next chapter, would be by pursuing ‘naturalistic’ inquiry using some of the methods outlined in a grounded approach to theory. Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) approach to ‘naturalistic inquiry’ is the forerunner to the ‘constructivist paradigm’, which is seen as a wide ranging, eclectic framework which is opposed to the conventional organisational paradigm of positivism, which they have summarised in table 3.1 below (Schwandt, 1994). This mirrors the denial of Schultz and Hatch (1996) that paradigms are incommensurable (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) and the possibility of pursuing multi-paradigm research.

Axioms About	Positivist Paradigm	Naturalist Paradigm
The Nature of reality (ontology)	Reality is single, tangible, and fragmentable	Realities are multiple, constructed, and holistic
The relationship of knower to the known (epistemology)	Knower and known are independent, a dualism	Knower and known are interactive, inseparable
The possibility of generalisation	Time and context free generalisations (nomothetic statements) are possible	Only time- and context- bound working hypotheses (idiographic statements) are possible
The possibility of causal linkages	There are real causes, temporally precedent to or simultaneous with their effects	All entities are in a state of mutual simultaneous shaping, so that it is impossible to distinguish causes from effects.
The role of values	Inquiry is value-free	Inquiry is value-bound.

Table 3.1: Contrasting Positivist and Naturalist Axioms

Extending the role of values in qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985), suggest five corollaries by which inquiries are influenced: the inquirer's values; the choice of the guiding paradigm; the choice of 'substantive theory' guiding the collection, analysis and interpretation of data; the values inherent in the context; whether the inquiry is value-dissonant or value-resonant, in which case the results would be meaningful.

Implications for Research

As an increasing number of organisational studies are beginning to demonstrate, the problems that Burrell and Morgan uncover with a phenomenological approach are overcome by undertaking research from the perspective of the actors that perform on the organisational stage. The new approaches to human inquiry discussed earlier can also be adopted in appropriate organisational circumstances, such as Lincoln and Guba's approach to constructivism (Schwandt, 1994).

Above all there needs to be congruency between the research study, the methodology and the methods used (Mason, 1996), and as Burrell and Morgan conclude the choice for the organisation analyst is extremely wide. Having explored and begun to understand how I perceive the organisational world, the next section will set out how this combines with my own personality and experience to influence the research model and methods for my study.

Understanding of Self as Researcher

In order to understand the first of Lincoln and Guba's five corollaries that influence a naturalistic inquiry, now that the ontological and epistemological issues have been broached, it is also necessary to understand the 'inquirer's values' and other relevant attributes.

The structure outlined in Rowan's research cycle at Figure 3.2 below provides a framework for illustrating the process of research with the initial focus on 'being', which emphasises the nature of the researcher herself as the starting point for a research project. The 'project' and 'encounter' stages will form the subjects of the next chapter on methodology. The research cycle can be also superimposed on Gummesson's (1993) notion of pre-understanding and understanding from the hermeneutic spiral, which parallels Rowan's 'thinking' and 'making sense' and Lincoln and Guba's characteristics of naturalistic inquiry (1985). All three models emphasise the iteration between the values and 'tacit knowledge' of the researcher and the research process in order to make sense of the phenomenon..

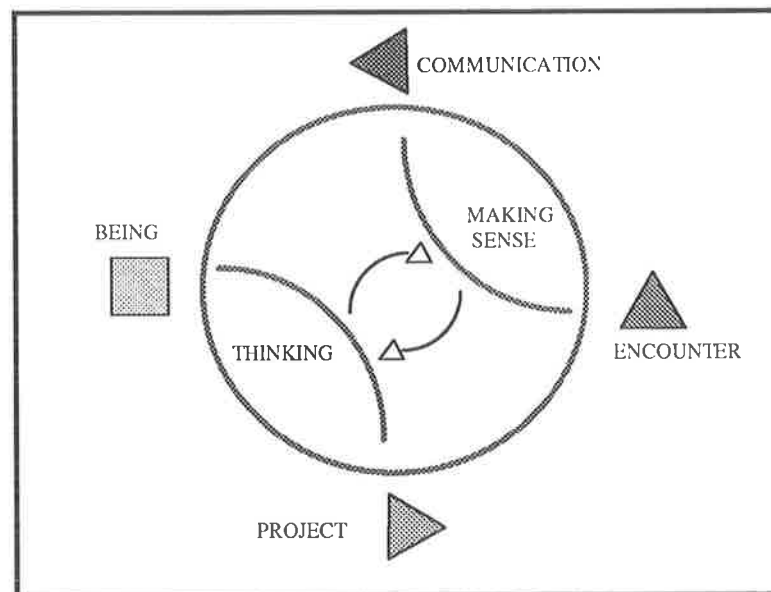


Figure 3.2: Rowan's Research Cycle adapted from Reason, P. (1995)

BEING - Pre- Understanding Phase

In determining both the subject area, research questions as well as much of the approach to research, it is likely that this will have been influenced unconsciously by the nature, beliefs, personality and experience of the researcher herself. As

Schein suggests it is very important that in approaching a research project the researcher is clear of the role in which they are operating, "*Self insight into one's role and the implied self management becomes critical when choices have to be made between what is best for the client organisation and what is best for the inquirer*" (Schein, 1987, p20). This is echoed by Gummesson's 'types of knowledge' which provide a useful framework to explore his concept of 'being' and the pre-understanding phase of the research project and as he suggests "*these types of preunderstanding, knowledge, and personal characteristics are essential in order to fully understand processes in an organization*" (1991, p63). Appendix 1 contains a fuller exploration of the relevant personal characteristics that have informed the research stance and the subsequent methodological issues that come from having chosen a more interpretive position for this research project.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have set out to understand my natural inclinations to take a particular approach to this thesis and the research study that illustrates it. Through exploring the philosophical, ontological and epistemological traditions that underpin that position, I have demonstrated the links with my understanding of myself as the research instrument and how these will enable a congruent and coherent approach to methodology.

The early discussion centred on the changing thinking of the latter half of this century based on the earlier philosophies of those such as Husserl and Sartre, which would later come to impact on the changing paradigms of research as those educated after the second world war were gradually infused by their ideas, included myself albeit much later in life. The second section has outlined my understanding of the legacy of phenomenology to the newer paradigms and constructivism in particular and how that provides the naturalistic inquiry method. Finally I related these philosophies and paradigms to the consideration of the values and attributes of the researcher when considering the appropriateness of the constructivist position and the naturalistic inquiry method to this thesis as a prelude to the next chapter, where the methodological issues and research project will be discussed in greater depth.

Chapter 4 - Methodology

*'One doesn't discover new lands
without consenting to lose sight of
the shore for a very long time'*

André Gide

Introduction

In the previous chapter I sought to provide my understanding of the background to the issues of ontology and epistemology that precede my choice of methodology for my research inquiry that will ensure a consistent and coherent approach. In it the recognition of the appropriate epistemological frameworks (Morgan and Smircich, 1980; Schwandt, 1994), understanding what Burrell and Morgan called the phenomenological challenge, and understanding the nature of research question demonstrated the decision path to the adoption of the Naturalistic Inquiry research paradigm (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Schwandt, 1994; Erlandson et al, 1993). In viewing reality as a social construction, and looking at the process of the development of employment relationship using the "psychological contract" (Schein, 1978; Rousseau, 1995; Herriott and Pemberton, 1995) through the lens of careers would seem to fit with this epistemology in which *"reality resides in the process through which it is created, and possible knowledge is confined to an understanding of that process."* (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p497).

The main section of this chapter is structured around Lincoln and Guba's (1985) model of the flow of Naturalistic Inquiry, which also encompasses the next steps of 'Project' and 'Encounter' stages in Rowan's Research Cycle (Reason, 1988) as used in the previous chapter at Figure 3.2. These are further reflected in Gummesson's (1991) 'development of understanding' in relation to a research project and his 'hermeneutic spiral' symbolising the several iterations between pre-understanding and understanding, as my understandings from the previous chapter are tested through my methodological choices and decisions.

PROJECT - A Constructivist Approach to Researching the Employment Relationship

In the latter part of my previous chapter, I outlined my personal attributes as part of their contribution to the 'being' stage of Rowan's research cycle (op cit.) and my own 'pre-understanding' (Gummesson, 1991) These have been drawn from my experiences in organisations and my later work as a consultant, as well as my preferences for a more holistic, intuitive approach to knowledge that would seem to be appropriate for the 'constructivist' paradigm. With the emphasis on the 'human instrument' as the principal research tool, it would therefore seem appropriate to have approached the research study in much the same way as a consultancy project, in terms of dealing with the client and focussing on their problem (Schein, 1988; Gummesson,1991).

Schein's 'clinical perspective' has resonance with the interactivity between the subject and the researcher advocated by Guba and Lincoln (1994). I reflect this interactivity by the use of the term 'participant' in my inquiry, following Moustakas' quoting the example of Fraelich : 'an active attempt was made to recognize the participant as a subject. Each participant was encouraged to join me as a truthful seeker of knowledge and understanding' (1994, p108). However like Schein, (1987), the methods chosen recognise the value of using aspects of both the clinical perspective and other ethnomethodological research models, moving away from the advocacy and confrontation model, which typifies the hypothesis and verification/falsification quantitative methods of positivism, described by Schein as the discourse versus inquiry model (op cit.).

Iterating the Initial Research Proposal

The metamorphosis of the initial proposal to the actual research inquiry provides an example of the concept of the hermeneutic spiral (Gummesson, 1991), the iterative process between pre-understanding and understanding as shown in figure 4.1. below. This research project was initially conceived or 'pre-understood' to be a study of organisational commitment, in my previous company, employing a variety of methods including quantitative studies. *"It will examine whether existing theories of commitment needed to be amended in the light of the current*

emphasis in organisations on restructuring ... The research will take place in a single company that has just completed a major voluntary redundancy exercise... the approach taken will veer towards the phenomenological and be based mostly on qualitative methods, but will also use a triangulation approach to suit the pragmatism of the researcher” (Parkinson, 1994).

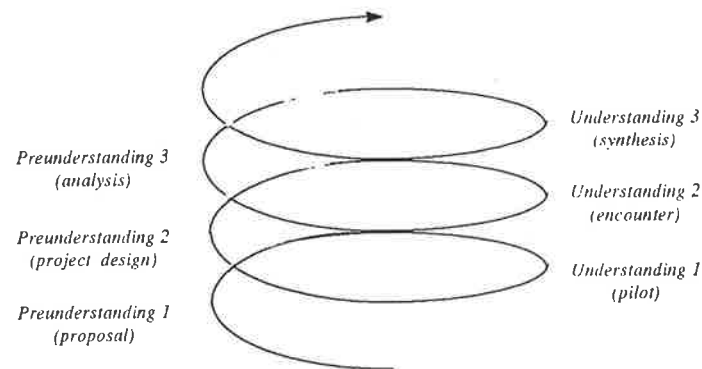


Figure 4.1: The Hermeneutic Spiral. Adapted from Gummesson, 1991

In the first iteration, as outlined in the previous literature review chapter, it would seem that the environmental changes have negated much of the relevance of organisational commitment as a concept (Rousseau, 1995; Robinson and Morrison, 1995; Hall and Moss, 1998), at the same time the opportunity for a pilot research inquiry also demonstrated that the theme emerging more strongly from contemporary organisations was that of the changing nature of the employment relationship (Parkinson, 1995). I therefore felt it necessary to re-examine the direction that the research inquiry would take. This constituted the first complete iteration between pre-understanding and understanding.

The second iteration began with taking my literature review on into the realms of the psychological contract, which although related to organisational commitment, has its own developing body of literature (Schein, 1978; Herriot and Pemberton, 1995, Rousseau, op. cit.). This review led to a revision of research questions. The second major change from the initial proposal came as the result of the time elapsed since leaving the previous organisation, which changed my thinking on the suitability of the original research site. This was partly due to the change in

research focus, as there was no longer a need for access to the original organisation, and partly as I had moved on both in my thinking, my personal life and in having other opportunities offered in my choice of research site.

The final change from my original proposal emerged from my growing understanding of the ontological and epistemological issues that surround research in the area of people and their work organisations. As my previous chapter demonstrates in a naturalistic inquiry there is no need to rely on quantitative data (Erlandson, 1993, Lincoln and Guba, 1985), and with the reorientation of the research questions, and the change of organisational setting, conducting a formal survey would be inconsistent with this approach.

The Pilot

The key driver in my change in thinking came from the opportunity presented by The Future Work Forum at Henley, who commissioned me to investigate the issues for managing the changing, flexible workforce in the organisations that constituted the members of the forum. This took place at an early stage in the inquiry process, see figure 1.1 in chapter one. As the areas of interest were similar it was agreed that this could also form a pilot research project. Sixteen organisations willingly took part in this pilot. Twenty senior managers and directors from either the HR or the IT field of member organisations took part in in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The organisations represented tended to be large, well known and predominantly high users of information technology particularly in the banking, insurance, IT and the public sector although the study also included an employment agency, an ex-public utility and an hotel. The survey took place over a period of a month in November 1994.

The pilot provided an opportunity to test the effectiveness of methods, which had been chosen in the light of an initial, more superficial understanding of the issues implied by different research paradigms. The results of the interviews demonstrated the availability of a rich source of data using interview methods thus rendering the quantitative element of the original proposal unnecessary, which

also contributed to my concern whether quantitative methods would add value in understanding the 'essence' of the concept in question (Moustakas, 1994).

The pilot also enabled me to experiment with techniques: from using a software package to design the semi-structured interviews; and enable ready transcription of the recordings of the interviews into initial categories; and then a hybrid mind-mapping brainstorming tool to cluster ideas and identify possible patterns and themes. I also had to find ways of recording the process. Richards and Richards (1994) used N.U.D.I.S.T for their work and it would appear that my mix of methods allowed me to follow a similar process on a simplified scale but in the end "*no computer can stand in for the ethnographer's discovery of emergent themes as fieldwork progresses, nor the final thinking and analysis. No computer can think through the fieldwork*" (Okely, 1994).

Learning from the Pilot

The pilot is discussed in more detail in the next chapter but in summary its value to my research design and methodology came in five main areas:

- it was easier to focus reading and desk research with actual data in view and to be more analytical in thinking through the implications of other research in this area;
- It was worthwhile to have tested some of the practical aspects of collating qualitative data before starting out on the final doctoral research project as a better idea of what the tools and techniques that are readily available are capable of and the extent that they can aid the research project.
- Themes to pursue in more depth emerged and provided a reorientation for my literature review.
- The pilot provided a potential research base from the organisations involved.
- The importance of understanding the issues around the philosophical approaches to methodology became clear, as did my own stance, even though at this pilot stage it was more about what it was not, rather than what it was.

The Main Research Project

As the objective of the research was to understand the 'essence' and nature of the relationship that organisations have with their employees, the subject area suggests that a phenomenological approach was the most appropriate, irrespective of whether the research question was the nature of commitment or the psychological contract. As Burrell and Morgan (1979), expose, to anyone in a subjective paradigm, organisations are socially constructed and any relationship between the actors, and understanding their expectations of each other cannot be explored as a concrete entity, and therefore should be studied by qualitative methods.

Despite the scarcity of published empirical research in this area (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994), most of it is still coming from a positivist and quantitative paradigm (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994; Brockner et al, 1992, Krackhardt and Porter, 1985; Robinson, Kraatz and Rousseau, 1994; Robinson and Morrison, 1995; Sparrow, 1996), however there has been much literature in this area in the form of theoretical reviews (Parks and Kidder, 1994; Morrison, 1994; Hiltrop, 1995; Sims, 1994; Rousseau and Wade-Benzoni, 1994; Shore and Tetrick, 1994). Miles and Huberman (p17) suggest that where something is known conceptually about the phenomenon that the researcher has an idea of which parts are not well understood and initial ideas where to look and gather the information. 'At the outset, then, we usually have at least a rudimentary conceptual framework, a set of general research questions, some notions about sampling, and some initial data-gathering devices'. This notion can also be seen in the tacit and pre-understanding of Lincoln and Guba, (1985) and Gummesson (1991).

The frameworks and models used in this study have come mainly from the psychological contract literature, in particular how Herriott and Pemberton (1985) have translated the idea of Schein's (1978) matching process into their 'contracting process', and the use of Schein's 'career anchors' as a base from which to examine the changing perspectives as the values of the 1990s potentially change the way people think about their relationship with their organisation. The intention in using the career anchors, as it questions the points where people have

made decisions to move, is not to duplicate or replicate, but more as a framework for discussion of 'trigger events' (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994), and one which might enrich Schein's work through greater understanding of this particular situation.

The Research Questions

Moustakas (1994) reminds us, the phenomenological researcher's questions grow out of an intense interest and curiosity in a particular area, which therefore have both social meaning and personal significance. The research question should narrow the inquiry into a manageable size but still achieving the balance between keeping focus on the one hand whilst keeping flexibility and opportunities for innovation on the other (Erlandson et al, 1993). They also provide the focus that bounds the inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). For the formulation of the core question to emerge and remain alive throughout the investigation, it has to go through the stage where "[a]s the fullness of the topic emerges, strands and tangents of it may complicate an articulation of a manageable and specific question (Moustakas, 1994, p104)."

In the case of this study, the underlying questions that the inquiry seeks to understand have come through the intermediate tangential stage, arising from the emerging theme of the pilot and built on from further literature search and review. Erlandson et al (1993) refer to the question as it is emerging as the 'working hypothesis' but draw the distinction with the conventional definition "unlike traditional hypotheses, though, they genuinely interact with data collection and analysis, modifying and being modified as the research process continues (p61)." The inquiry uses careers as the 'lens' through which to understand aspects of the psychological contract as the means of examining that relationship. This has led to the basic starting questions:

1. How is the nature of the relationship between organisations and their employees changing?
 - change in expectations
 - change in obligations
2. What are the 'trigger events' that define it?

These questions, based around a discussion about careers, provided me with the basis to pursue my curiosity in how people interpret relationships between employees and the organisations that employ them and how they have changed. They follow Moustakas' characteristics of a human science research question in that:

1. "It seeks to reveal more fully the essences and meanings of human experience;
2. It seeks to uncover the qualitative rather than the quantitative factors in behaviour and experience;
3. It engages the total self of the research participant, and sustains personal and passionate involvement;
4. It does not seek to predict or to determine causal relationships;
5. It is illuminated through careful, comprehensive descriptions, vivid and accurate renderings of the experience, rather than measurements, ratings, or scores." (1994, p105)

ENCOUNTER - the Research Project In A Naturalistic Inquiry

Context

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) diagram of the flow of naturalistic inquiry helps put this major section of the chapter in context. In describing the methods used in this study, these characteristics of operational naturalistic inquiry also provide a useful framework and combines both some of the planning / design aspects of the inquiry and how it was carried out. It also demonstrates, in the practical sense, that the inquiry lent itself to this research approach.

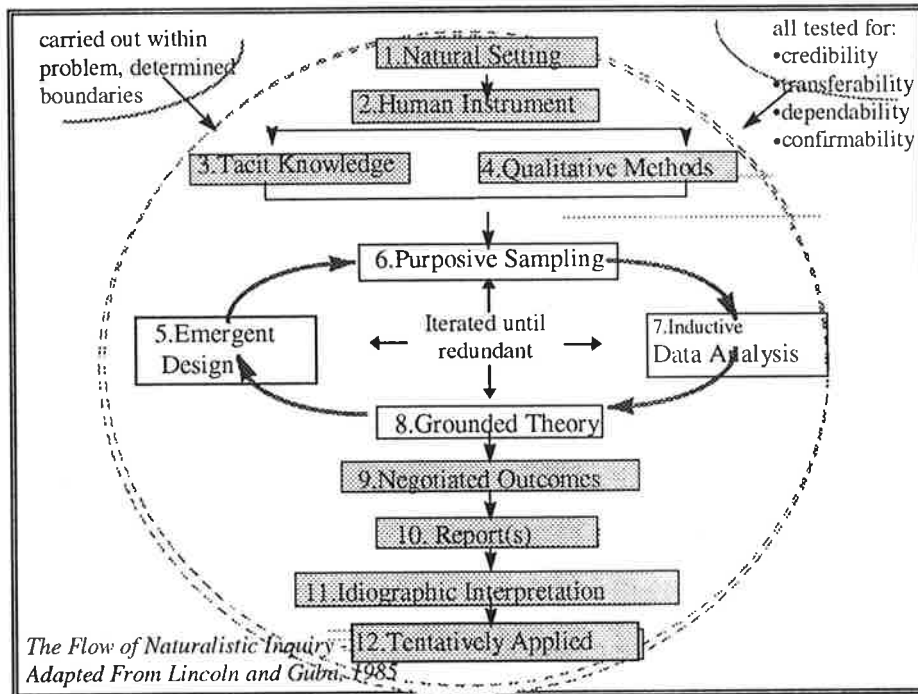


Figure 4.2: Flow of Naturalistic Inquiry

1: Natural setting

The distinguishing feature of naturalistic inquiry is the notion of the natural setting as opposed to laboratory or controlled setting, as it is stated that the phenomena of the study will take their meaning from the context around them as much as from themselves and cannot be separated from the world in which they are experienced (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The importance of context is echoed by Pettigrew's notion that in researching change it must be put in historical context, (Pettigrew, 1990). The subjectivist paradigms suggest that just by undertaking an investigation the context is changed, so that the *“investigator must become so much a part of the context that he or she can no longer be considered a “disturbing” element”* (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p192). Erlandson *et al* (1993, p18) take this a step further seeing *“[i]nterpretation is both limited and enriched by context”* which they see as the contrast between rich precision and diversity which combine to make naturalistic inquiry an exciting adventure.

In this research study, the interviews were set in the general context of the consultancy work that I was already undertaking so that my name was linked in the minds of the interviewees with the notion of managing careers. The

interviews all took place in the office environment in which the interviewees worked either in London, Basingstoke, or Warwick. Many of them travelled around the country and arranged to meet in the building that was most convenient to them, for those that were office based, the meetings took place in that building. The meetings took place in a spare office where they could talk in confidence, mostly neutral territory as many had no designated separate office and were used to booking whichever office was spare when they needed one. Most of the interviews were recorded to enable me to do more active 'listening', they all seemed very relaxed about being recorded with no one objecting. However I also kept notes of the interviews, which were invaluable when the technology failed through the tape jamming as well as during the transcription process. These interviews took place over a period of four weeks with up to three interviews a day (Interview schedule attached at Appendix 2a).

Unlike a more objective study where the research strategy demanded *a priori* hypotheses and then finding an organisation that would fit particular criteria, in a naturalistic research design the selection of the site is critical as it provides the natural setting and affects the viability of the study (Erlandson *et al*, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The site selection, development of the 'working hypotheses' and formulating the research questions all interact to form the emergent research strategy. For this inquiry, the research problem and area had been identified as the essence of the employment relationship; the notion of the psychological contract decided on as the possible route for further exploration; but it was taking this a step further and linking it with careers, as Schein (1978) had done when he developed his career anchors, that enabled me to identify the opportunity for a research site.

This opportunity for a research site arose through a consultancy project I was involved in looking at career management for the future for a division of a major multinational company. Having developed credibility and a rapport during the project with the management team, they readily agreed to allow access for the research study over and above that needed for the consultancy, recognising that in the long term they would gain a greater insight into the nature of the employment

relationship within their division. It is the growth of identifying the research site out of an introduction through a consultancy problem for a client, that makes the discussions about the role of the researcher/consultant particularly pertinent (Schein, 1987; Gummesson, 1991).

2: Human Instrument

The research study was designed using interviews as the means of collecting information, which relied on the inquirer's skills, experience and attributes as discussed in the previous chapter. *"Relying on all its senses, intuition, thoughts and feelings, the human instrument can be a very potent and perceptive data gathering tool"* (Erlandson *et al*, 1993, p82). Lincoln and Guba (1985) had identified seven characteristics that underpin the previous statement demonstrating how, in naturalistic inquiry the human is uniquely qualified to be the instrument of choice, which are used here with examples of how appropriate they are to this inquiry:

- a) **responsiveness** - the study went across different functions within the division, each function attracting different types of people, which led to the need to interact in accordance with the personality in order to gain their confidence and thus gain greater understanding of how they viewed their world. The subject matter of careers, in many cases touched on personal issues, and I found myself taking a consultant role for a part of some interviews, with the usual dilemma of being mindful of the client's wishes, while responding to the interviewee.
- b) **adaptability** - I needed to be adaptable to be able to try different ways to elicit the required information and also to cope with unexpected situations. For instance, one interviewee could only spare 'ten minutes' to meet with me, and had so far avoided involvement with the consultancy project as well, so I had decided on which I felt were the key two or three questions to ask. The participant turned out to be someone I had met at the coffee machine that morning, who responded to my willingness to take his requirements into

account, and when briefed on the purpose of the discussion, suddenly found he had the time after all and then spent nearer two hours with me.

- c) **holistic emphasis** - Lincoln and Guba see the human instrument as the only one that is capable of making sense of any phenomenon and its surrounding context, which is backed up by Erlandson *et al* (1993, p10), who cite a research project where different team members came to similar conclusions from looking at dissimilar data through focussing on the 'holistic' question "*what's happening here?*". In this inquiry the holistic question was "what is this telling me about the participant's view of the employment relationship?".
- d) **knowledge base expansion** - in the study, it was clear early on that the insights emerging went beyond what it would have been possible to gain just through reviewing literature so far and developing an instrument with specific questions that may or may not fit the participant's view of the research area. In the same way as taking an holistic view, Lincoln and Guba suggests that the human can make the connections between tacit and propositional knowledge simultaneously to "*lend depth and richness to our understanding of social and organisational settings*" (1985, p194).
- e) **processual immediacy** - although the interviews were mostly taped, I still took notes, which prompted ideas and thoughts in the analysis stage. The discussion also provided opportunities to 'bounce' an idea back to my participant, that was developed together to provide a 'working hypothesis' in the way that Lincoln and Guba describe as "*generate hypotheses on the spot, and to test those hypotheses with respondents in the very situation in which they are created*" (1985, p194). A key example of this happening was the development of the notion of the 'formal contract', which then became part of my set of models for subsequent interviews.
- f) **opportunities for clarification and summary** - in a similar way the interview format allowed for me to clarify and test participants' responses when I was

uncertain of their meaning. In the few instances where the tape recorder failed it was particularly necessary to summarise at the end of a long discussion point to ensure that the key points made reflected what my participant thought they had said. The types of questions used to do this were 'how would you summarise that?' or 'what I understood from what you were saying was ...?'. It also gave me the opportunity check out possible emergent themes:

C a possible move would be from here to pre-sales, and then that would just open up more opportunities for me and that's all I'm looking for.

A So you're still sort of standing back and saying I'll take it as it comes and if I see...

C Oh yes. I was always frustrated because I thought, one of the my colleagues that I worked quite closely with always had a five year plan at least of what they wanted of their career. I looked at this and thought I can't think that far ahead. I suppose everyone has their own way of managing their moves and their lives and it's not, I can't, even though I'd been in a planning rôle I can't do that with my own life.

A Yes, you like leaving things open?

C Yes, I like to have the options available to me, rather than set myself a goal in five years time, that come next year, I may decide that's not really what I want actually and now that I've started down that path it's going to be difficult to sway off it so I'd rather just keep my options open really.

(A = myself, C= participant)

g) opportunity to explore atypical or idiosyncratic responses -

The human instrument is able to explore atypical or idiosyncratic responses to establish relevancy as well as understanding:

C "The real ambition is to make a difference in a marketplace, to actually either, and I don't know whether it's launch a product or it's taking something from where it is, but to make a difference in a marketplace and that actually means running a piece of the business but equally being very market focused in a broad sense.

A So far most of your job changes have brought you nearer to that goal then? It's almost within sight now isn't it?

C Well, the difficulty with HAL is that you have so many players - you have so many areas that impinge upon it, and one reason I want to go to product is that I would get to do something in which the product business owned and yet actually what I've done is focused upon the software business - you know I still don't have my clear area, not a total control, but quite a large amount of freedom in terms of how you go to the marketplace.

A Is that quite important to you, having that sort of freedom, having control within a particular area?

C Yes I think it is. However I think now I realise you cannot ever actually achieve it, there's always something else that impinges upon it, so it's always freedom within degrees of freedom really."

Much of the comments about the human instrument also mirror the notions of Schein's process consultant (1988), Mayon-White's 'soft' systems approach (1990), and Gummesson's researcher/consultant in the OD consultant role (1993, p34). The final comment on this inquirer as the 'human instrument' became clear from the pilot study and echoes

Porter, as she quotes from Stacey, that the inquirer is also able to draw "*upon such traditionally female strengths as empathy and human concern, allows for an egalitarian reciprocal relationship between knower and known*" (Porter, 1994).

3: Utilisation of Tacit Knowledge

Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe tacit knowledge as that knowledge that people have but cannot put in language form, opposite to propositional knowledge, for which they quote Stake suggesting that for most people it is the observations of objects and events. Stake goes on to describe tacit knowledge as "*all that is remembered somehow, minus that which is remembered in the form of words, symbols, or other rhetorical forms*". Lincoln and Guba see that "*tacit knowledge, like values, intrudes into every inquiry whether or not the investigator recognizes that fact or is willing to own it*" (1985, p197). In this inquiry experience and intuition in many ways would have influenced the study through: having been in a

large organisation; having been concerned about issues of career and relationship with the organisation; experience in interviewing; knowing the research site through the consultancy project; all these potential sources of tacit knowledge would have all contributed to the interaction that took place in the inquiry interviews. In many respects the area of tacit knowledge mirrors the concepts of 'preunderstanding' and the 'prepared mind' of Gummesson (1993) and Easterby Smith *et al* (1991), respectively.

4: Qualitative Methods

As Guba and Lincoln point out naturalistic and conventional positivist paradigms are often equated with qualitative and quantitative methods, but they argue that it is as possible to use quantitative methods in a naturalistic study as it is to use qualitative methods in a positivist one (1985, p198). They also emphasise that the naturalistic paradigm is not anti-quantitative, it is more that the naturalistic inquirer is more likely to lean to qualitative approaches and methods that lend themselves better to the 'human as instrument'. This study is no exception, with the inquirer, as discussed above, more inclined to the methods that they describe as extensions to normal human activities such as listening, interviewing, observing and reading. An interview undertaken from an objective framework would be considered as the unbiased, recording of data whereas in this more subjectivist framework it is considered more as an opportunity for interviewer and subject create their reality by working interactively (Moustakas, 1994; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Czarniawska, 1997).

The interviews were designed to try to create a climate of intensive listening and the creation of a psychologically safe and supportive environment which Schein (1987) saw as necessary in order to draw "deeper" levels of data from the client. The interviewing style I adopted recognised the interactive nature of the event, although the focus was to listen and draw out the interviewee, I used more of the consultative style implicit in his 'clinical perspective'.

In common with most interviewers (Miles and Huberman, 1994), I used a semi-structured interview format, where I was guided by the questions that Schein

(1990) used in his Career Anchors approach which enabled me to explore the issues raised by my research questions, but the exact wording or order of questions were not adhered to. Thus enabling me to explore in greater depth when required, to check for understanding and to develop '*the researcher and respondent dialogue in a manner that is a mixture of conversation and embedded questions*' (Erlandson, 1993, p86) that is also reminiscent of Czarniaskwa's (1997) conversations.

The intensive listening was aided by recording so that I could concentrate more on listening, my learning from the pilot and my other experiences of recording interviews gave a more appropriate balance between my voice and that of my participants. The psychologically safe environment was aimed at through the reassurances of confidentiality, that the inquiry was for research purposes and would not be reported back to the organisation in any form other than a general report, and through the more informal style of the interview. My participants were all also shown the pause and the stop button on the tape recorder should they want to stop the recording at any time, but no-one felt the need to use them.

5: Emergent design

"The naturalistic researcher, however, recognizing the complexity of the context goes into the setting with only as much design as he or she believes is faithful to the context and will help answer questions about it." (Erlandson et al, 1993, p73)

In this inquiry, in order to maximise the time available with each participant, there was an element of design used in the interview process. The interviews took place at the end of the financial year, a particularly busy period, which placed more onus on me to set an appropriate environment and to divert my participants away from the day-to-day pressures, especially as the interviews took place during the working day and were limited to around two hours.

The instruments used to provide that context were Schein's Careers Orientations Inventory and a time line exercise. The Inventory was completed but not scored before the interview and was intended initially to be a reciprocation to the individual for the time they spent with me, however it also provided me with a

consistency check at the end of the interview process as well as having provided a 'warm up' prior to the process. Later in the analysis phase it also enabled me to corroborate my interpretation of the conversations I had with my participants with their view of themselves at that time.

The second instrument, the time line, was primarily used as a way of focusing the discussion and enabled my participants to think through their career as a whole before starting into the interview process, and to provide the synopsis for their own story (Weick, 1995). These two instruments were used more to inform the research process and provide the necessary context and focus for the ensuing conversation. As I was using the career as the lens through which to understand the employment relationship, it seemed appropriate to use Schein's Career Anchors interview format (Schein, 1991) as a base, which from my own experience provided an open ended informal structure, particularly as the questions allow people's views of why they make changes to emerge, which would also highlight potential 'trigger events'.

Following my introduction of myself, the assurances of confidentiality, and the Career Orientations Inventory, I started the questions by asking my participant to talk about their career over the last five or so years with the help of the timeline against their level of responsibility or influence, as a way of attuning them into the inquiry area. This was then followed up using some of the careers anchors interview questions as a basic structure, although this was not followed rigorously, to allow people to talk more generally through their progress from joining the world of work to the future expectations of their relationship with organisations. If it had not already emerged they were then asked to talk about how they viewed the relationship between the organisation and its employees, the interview finished with the participant being asked if there was anything they would like to add or had expected to be asked (interview questions attached at Appendix 2).

I prepared a form in Pinpoint, at a practical level in order to be able to make notes in the appropriate area as a prelude to transcription and developing categories,

but also to be able to change them easily should other areas emerge that could be explored in subsequent interviews. As Glaser and Strauss point out “*it is presumptive to assume that one begins to know the relevant categories and hypotheses until the first days in the field, at least, are over*” (1967, p34). Due to the open ended nature of the questions and using a well tested design (Schein, 1990) it was found that only minor changes were made over the course of the interviewing.

6: Purposive sampling

As the inquirer’s major concern in naturalistic inquiry is to discover the patterns and problems in the context of the study rather than the generalisability of the findings to the wider population, Erlandson *et al*, see two decisions to be made in purposive sampling, who and what to investigate and who and what not to investigate (1993, p82). Miles and Huberman echo this with their notion of ‘*bounding the collection of data*’. My concern in this inquiry is more for quality and richness of information, rather than quantity and volume and therefore small samples which ‘*nested in their context, and studied in-depth*’ (1994, p27), and which have some purpose, rather than being representative of a population, were what was required in the study. Miles and Huberman, Erlandson *et al* and Lincoln and Guba all refer to Patton, who not only pointed out that Freud based his findings on 10 cases, but also felt that, provided the inquirer was not attempting to overgeneralise from a small purposive sample, much can be done to allay fears on inadequate sample size (Erlandson *et al* , 1993, p84). As Miles and Huberman point out random sampling “*can deal you a decidedly biased hand*” (1994).

In this study, the mode of purposive sample was that which Patton described as maximum variation sampling, which Lincoln and Guba suggest is often the mode of choice. The list of participants were identified for me by the client to provide as wide a range as possible across the division in terms of function, level, length of service, which accords with the description of the purpose of this mode as “*to document unique variations that have emerged in adapting to different conditions*” (1985, p200). The group consisted of 10 managers, 6 ‘professionals’

to provide a perspective of both sides of the psychological contract, and from different functions to provide the contrast between technical and sales expectations, as these two form major groupings in the organisation, thus reflecting the context and setting of the inquiry.

7: Inductive Data Analysis

The pilot study was an opportunity to practice developing categories from transcripts of the interviews and then finding the properties (Parkinson, 1995). As Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest the first interview was critical in determining the questions and areas to explore for subsequent discussion and in effect allowed some initial categorisation as the responses were noted under the appropriate areas when transcribed, helped by written notes in the interviews.

In the main study the initial categories, that were in effect, more like labels or Miles and Hubermans' (1994) settings, were predetermined through the Career Anchors structure (Schein, 1990) which was open ended enough to ensure the continuous flow of dialogue. Although categories and themes emerged and were explored during the interviews, as explained previously, the main analysis work occurred after the interviews were transferred to the screen based Pinpoint questionnaire, that I had printed off for my original interview notes.

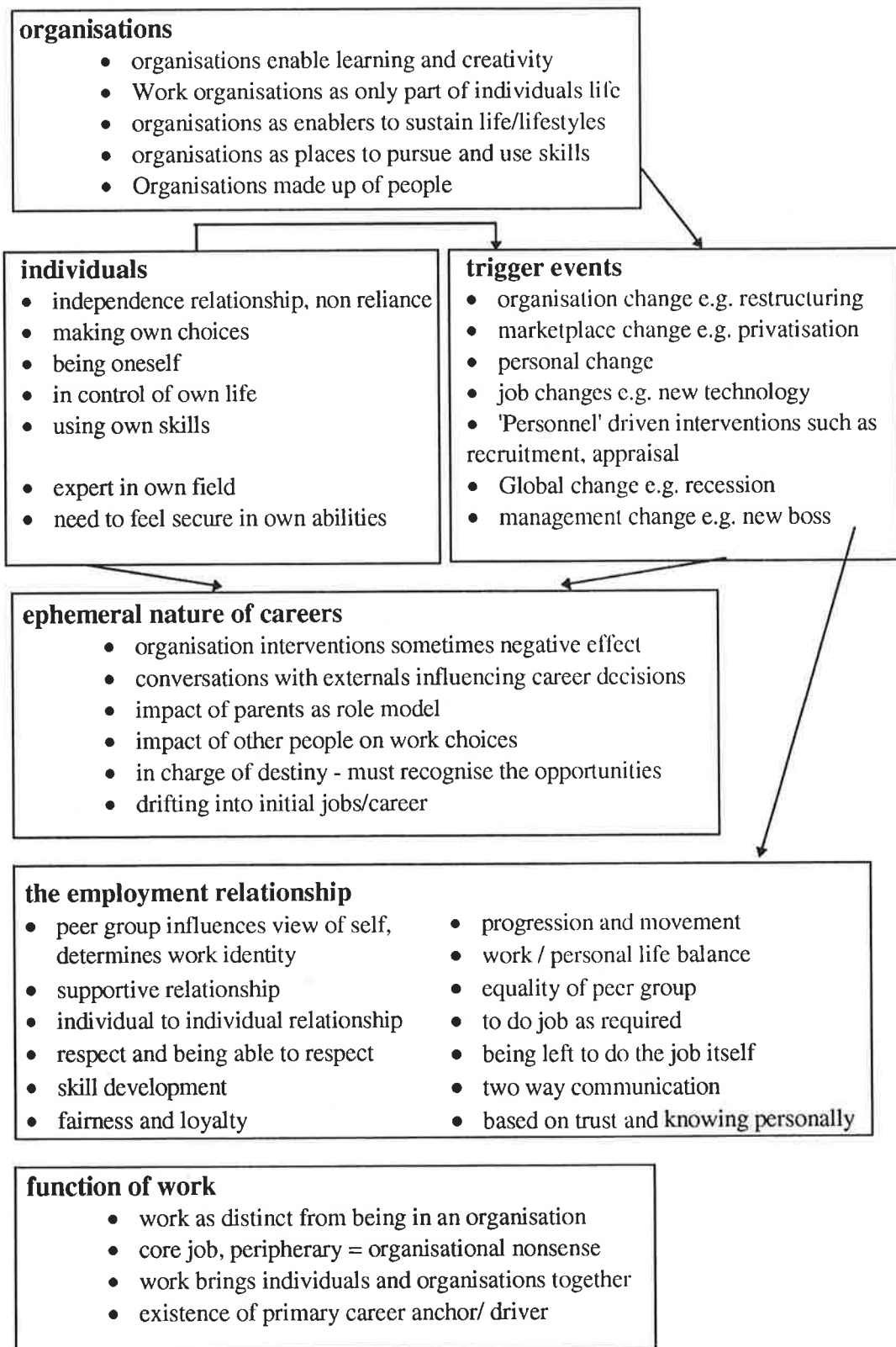
Taking the advice of Strauss and Corbin, (1993) I also had a majority of the tapes fully transcribed, partly so that I could then examine key emergent themes in more detail, but also so that the interviews could be seen as a complete narrative. Those interviews not fully transcribed were those where the sound quality was too poor for a 'third party' to understand what had been said, incomplete or not taped at all, two interviews fell in each of these categories. Dependent on when or whether the transcript of the interview was available at this time, I transcribed relevant sections of the interviews directly into Pinpoint, expanding the space available each time more was described on a particular theme than I had allowed for, cut and pasted the Word transcripts where possible or filled in the Pinpoint record in note form from the notes made on the blank interview form, where the interview had overrun the length of the tape or there had been technical problems.

It is always my habit to take notes when talking to people to aid my own concentration and listening, which had the dual function of allowing me to structure and locate the data under appropriate headings when transcribing the interviews. This structure allowed me to take a wider perspective and overview of key themes at an early stage, as later I could select all the responses to a particular comment field, such as what people felt the organisation's obligations to its employees were, exporting them to text file to read as a whole and examine the emerging themes, before delving into the detail.

Like Okely I found that I was beginning to “*responded entirely to intuition and elusive memory before grounding myself in the recorded notes. interpretation moves from evidence to ideas and theory, then back again*” (1994) and in reading Moustakas (1994) I was aware that in the process of phenomenological reduction, I needed to ‘bracket off’ my own ‘tacit understandings’ (Guba and Lincoln, 1985) so that I could focus on my participants interpretations. This ‘bracketing’ is described by Moustakas (1994) and Burrell and Morgan (1979) as ‘*époché*’ from the Greek, ‘*the setting aside of assumptions and known facts in order to perceive the essence of a phenomenon*’ (New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 1997). “*The Epoche is the first step in coming to know things, in being inclined toward seeing things as they appear, in returning to things themselves, free of prejudgements and preconceptions*” (Moustakas, 1994, p90).

Moustakas (1994) modified Stevick's, Colaizzi's and Keen's work in designing one of his methods of analysis of phenomenological data, which requires an early step of exercising the *époché*, to obtain a full description of the researcher's own experience of the phenomenon using a phenomenological approach. In my own case I went through my career anchor interview questionnaire, considering and listing ‘*each nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statement*’, before clustering them into themes with an overriding description (copy of cluster analysis included at Appendix 3), which should then be reconsidered to construct ‘*a textual-structural description of the meanings and essences*’ (Moustakas, 1994, p122). The output of this process is shown below at Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 : Époque - my view of the employment relationship



(See Appendix 3 for Clustered Hexagons)

I went through a similar procedure with my participants' data. The interviews had initially been captured in Pinpoint, with the discussion points allocated to the initial wide ranging categories based on the question areas. For the initial analysis, all the responses in a particular question area, such as: 'As you look back over your career, have there been times you particularly enjoyed or not enjoyed?' were selected and exported into a Word document, then I used the '*convert text to table*' function to separate out each participant's response, which was subsequently numbered using the bullet point facility. This provided me with all the responses to a certain question area, numbered by participant, so that I could track each unit back to a specific area of the interview by the code (question area, participant- 21, 4).

Responses to each question area were read carefully to find, what Erlandson *et al* (1993) and Guba and Lincoln (1985) called 'units' and Miles and Huberman (1994) called 'chunks' of meaning, which were words, phrases or sentences that fulfilled Guba and Lincoln's criteria of units, being '*the smallest piece of information that can stand by itself*' and '*heuristic, that is, aimed at some understanding or some action that the inquirer needs to have or to take*', they precede this by demystifying the process:

"It always amuses me when I read books on how to do content analysis ... the units are really fairly obvious - you get chunks of meaning that come from out of the data itself. ... Also the books say, "Arrive at the categories you will use." Well I don't do that either, but let the categories build up all the time as I put things together that go together. I think this is partly about how much anxiety and uncertainty you are willing to tolerate for how long; I think the more you can, the better the analysis works out."(Judy Marshall, in Guba and Lincoln, 1985, p345).

This however could be seen to be in conflict with Riessman's view that '*because they are essential meaning making structures, narratives must be preserved, not fractured, by investigators, who must respect respondents' ways of constructing meaning and analyze how it is accomplished*' (Riessman, 1993, p4), but as a

neophyte researcher, I have felt it sensible to follow the recognised methodologies in naturalistic inquiry that suggest unitisation.

The idea of each separate ‘unit’, often in the participants’ own words, was then noted onto the magnetic hexagon shapes, that I had used in the pilot, which I could then move around a magnetic whiteboard until I had formed the units into clusters of meaning, which in turn provided themes. In order to provide an audit trail each hexagon was coded for the question area and participant, in recognition of Lincoln and Guba's charge that *‘the writer should report no “fact” without noting its source, make no assertion without supportive data’* (1985, p368).

These units were then permanently recorded in Ideabase¹, a graphics software package based on the principle of the magnetic hexagons, or as time went on I began to input the units and cluster them directly in Ideabase (see figure 4.4 below) without using the whiteboard.

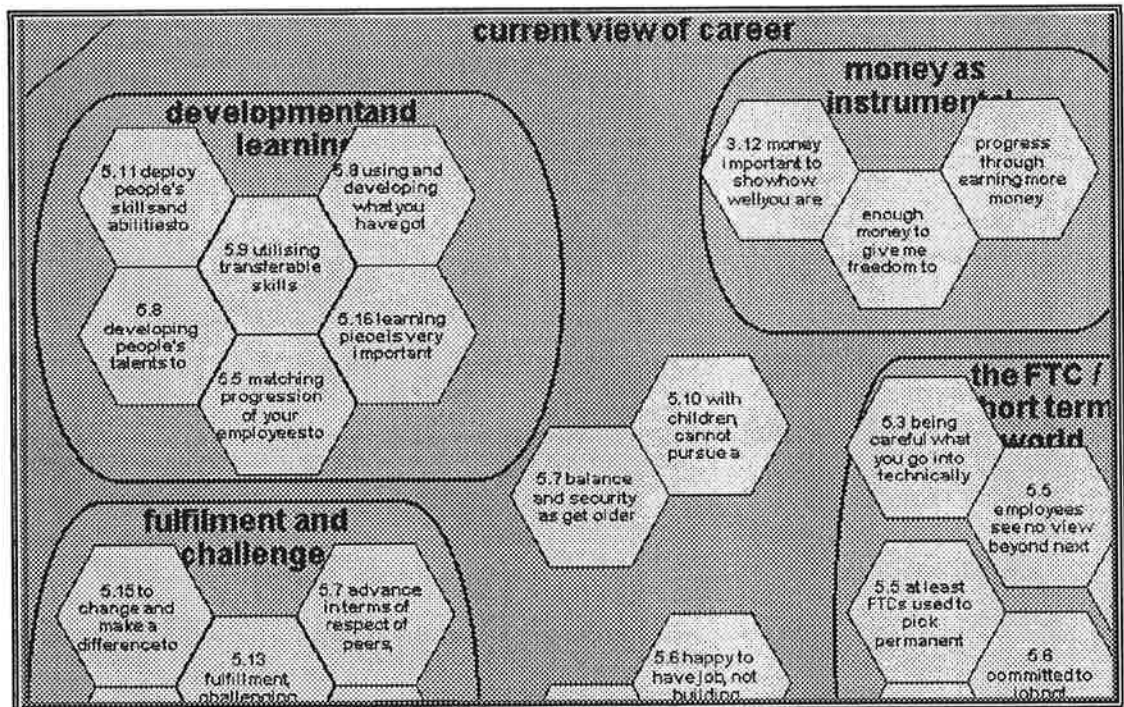


Figure 4.4: ‘units’ organised into clusters

¹ developed by Inspiration Resources

This process provided my first level of analysis which is recorded in Chapter 6 - From Conversation to Description and at Appendix 7. It also provided the first level of what Moustakas describes as '*a description of the textures of the experience*' (1994, p122), which has been written up as the recommended 'thick description' (Denzin, 1994; Erlandson *et al*, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). One of the advantages of recording the contents of the hexagons on Ideabase was that it provided an output of the cluster analysis for each separate question area, showing which 'units' with their reference number came under each theme label, see Figure 4.5 below. The hexagons, together with the referencing system provided by the computer output, gave me my equivalent of the index cards frequently used in qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Erlandson *et al*, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Figure 4.5 : Output from Ideabase

PEAKS	
Challenge and Winning	6.1 creating things affecting the business
	6.10 major bid won - bossing people around
	6.11 when pressure is on and thrown in the deep end
	6.7 challenge of winning
	6.8 taking account to new level of relationship
	6.5 Getting the CCA deal
Respect and Recognition	6.16 gaining respect in the business
	6.13 being respected for what I bring in
	6.10 promotion and recognition
	6.12 being well thought of from top
Personal learning and achievement	6.7 sense of fulfilment
	6.11 when doing something I am exceptionally proud of
	6.6 learning and using new skills
	6.3 at the beginning when learning
	6.16 personal achievement
tangible success	6.9 successful year - unlimited commission
	6.13 being ahead and earning more than anyone else
	6.14 being promoted as technical expert

In considering how I would write up the 'thick description', I often re-examined the 'unit' with the reference, enabling me to trace the idea back into the exported Pinpoint document, or even the full transcript. Sometimes my reflections led me to reassign the unit to a different theme. This output, provided in one step, the indexing process, the cross referencing, and the outline that Erlandson *et al* (1993) suggest is required to begin writing the report.

The 'thick description' was developed '*using the natural language of the respondents*' (Erlandson et al, 1993, p165) through my participants' own voices as far as possible partly: to see the world through their eyes; to be free of my own interpretations (Lincoln and Guba), and to provide the '*reconstruction of the respondent's constructions*' required of an *emic* study (1985, p 359). The results chapter therefore is also free of others' interpretations in the form of synthesis of existing theory, as described in the previous literature review, with the description, this is left until the next chapter, Chapter Seven - Analysis and Interpretation.

In working through this process , I would agree with Okely that "*no computer can stand in for the ethnographer's discovery of emergent themes as fieldwork progresses, nor the final thinking and analysis. No computer can think through the fieldwork*" (1994). Where computer technology was useful however, was in holding the transcripts either through Pinpoint and Word which could be then manipulated to 'unitise' the data, described earlier for Pinpoint. However I had also divided each full transcript into units, as suggested by Erlandson *et al* (1993) through the word processing package in a similar way to working on the Pinpoint export file, then I numbered the paragraphs, then converted the text to a table, adding an additional column for emergent codes, themes or categories, so that each interview could then be easily sorted by code should it be necessary at a later point in the study. This changed a twenty five page or so transcript of an interview to a series of around 300 statements. Although Strauss and Corbin's view is that it not necessary to transcribe everything, they also suggest that it is wiser to do so with a study consisting of relatively few interviews, especially the first few interviews, until the evolving theory is established and it is then possible to discern and select the relevant parts. (Strauss & Corbin p30).

Computer technology also provided the indexing system through recording the hexagons in Ideabase. Finally I also used Hierarchical Cluster Analysis from SPSS and Correspondence Analysis in Minitab to explore my matrices of participant

responses against emergent themes, in order to lend support to my intuitive approaches. This was despite feeling this might be inconsistent with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) view of data analysis in a naturalistic inquiry being a inductive, generative, constructive and subjective process with enumerative systems seen as peripheral to a naturalist's main interest, or a phenomenological approach which works '*from the invariant constituents, the researcher, using phenomenological reflection and imaginative variation, constructs thematic portrayals of the experience*' (Moustakas, 1994, p131).

8: Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is theory that is inductively derived from the data, and therefore follows the data gathering stage, rather than the conventional testing of existing theory that is prevalent in a positivist framework (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). It is central to the naturalistic inquiry paradigm: where the inquirer cannot predict the outcome of her research before the encounter in the field; where data collection, analysis, and theory have a reciprocal relationship enabling what is relevant to the phenomenon being studied to emerge (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Glaser and Strauss suggested that grounded theory that is well constructed could be judged by how it applies to the phenomenon especially in terms of fit, understanding, generality and control. By fit, they meant that the categories must be applicable to the data and the substantive area of study and that the theory is relevant to the phenomenon and explains it (1967, p3). With comprehensive data, the theory should be abstract enough to be able to be applicable in a variety of related contexts, but with the context and conditions under which it was developed clear, so that it should only apply in those specific situations (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p23). The methods of analysis that Strauss and Corbin propose require "*maintaining a balance among the attributes of creativity, rigor, persistence, and above all, theoretical sensitivity*" (1990, p58), which accords with Lincoln and Guba's arguments against the critics of grounded theory that they have not considered the use of 'tacit knowledge' which comes clearly into play in a naturalistic investigation. However as Lincoln and Guba, (1985) point

out, when Glaser and Strauss first introduced grounded theory in 1967 they were ahead of consideration of the existence of any other research paradigm than a positivist one.

This inquiry uses the principles of grounded theory to develop theory around the area of the employment relationship. In that a major part of the literature review was undertaken prior to the field work it is possible it may have unwittingly influenced the study in terms of Glaser and Strauss's view that "*an effective strategy is, at first literally to ignore the literature of theory and fact on the area under study, in order to assure that the emergence of categories will not be contaminated by concepts more suited to different areas. Similarities and convergence with the literature can be established after the analytic core of categories has emerged.*" (1967, p37). However it could also be argued that the original literature review on commitment, and the pilot, established the need to look elsewhere in agreement with Oliver (1990) in that existing commitment theory is inadequate in understanding the 'essence' of the relationship. A brief review of existing psychological contract theory was undertaken initially and did not yet appear to be sufficiently developed in this area, and could therefore be considered to be part of the 'theoretical sensitivity' of the inquirer when embarking on field work (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). At that point I wanted to leave my mind open to emergent themes that might suggest alternative sources of literature to investigate rather than undertake too extensive a review of another area that may turn out to be less relevant than it initially seemed. In performing the 'epoche' exercise described earlier, I was able to commit my own views and experience to paper and thus put them out of my mind, so that in writing the 'thick description' of the results chapter I was in effect taking Glaser and Strauss' (1967) advice of ignoring the literature until my core categories had emerged.

As I was writing the 'thick description' I found myself either confirming or re-orientating the categories, which led me to review my clusters of hexagons a little, which I then printed out, cutting the main clusters out and pasting them onto 'post-it' notes so that I could perform a macro view cluster analysis on flip chart paper to develop a different perspective of the main themes in the future. My

individual hexagons now mirrored the paragraph headings in my results chapter. Taking this exercise further I 'dumped' the headings into a separate file, numbered each one using bulleted list function, and triple spaced them, having already kept a copy of the file as an index. I then chopped up a print out of the file so that I had 135 strips of paper which I spread out and re-clustered using a hexagon to write the idea/emergent category on and I then pinned the strips that fitted that idea onto a board using the magnetic hexagons, so that once I had recorded which headings came under each category I could recluster my hexagons to start to develop the framework around the emergent themes ready to synthesise with existing theory. These became the 46 constructs I later analysed, which seem to fall into the individual, organisation and change triggers that reflected the original research question.

It was these 46 constructs that I was able to analyse in a number of ways including computer aided methods to develop the typology that I eventually wrote up as vignettes. Lincoln and Guba (1985) see case study reports as the natural form of the research report. In this case I used vignettes that were crafted from the words of the participants to provide a representation of their experience in the form of a 'typology', which is discussed later in this chapter under narrative analysis. Figure 4.6 summarises the various analysis steps in the process, as described in from conducting the interviews through to writing up the emergent 'typology' as vignettes, and then subjecting the analysis to correspondence analysis to ensure credibility. The methods I employed are outlined more clearly at more appropriate points in this thesis.

I also wanted to be able to ensure the trustworthiness of my interpretation of my participants' views which led me to employ computer techniques as well as other researchers as forms of triangulation. As a neophyte and part time researcher as well as being aware of the '*slim tradition to guide their analytic moves*' (Miles and Huberman, 1994 p262), I had to take a pragmatic approach and use the resources I had available. If I had been in an academic setting I would have had a larger number of other researchers readily available to me, but a combination of

the two I was able to use, and the use of SPSS hierarchical cluster analysis and Minitab's correspondence analysis went some way to overcome this disadvantage.

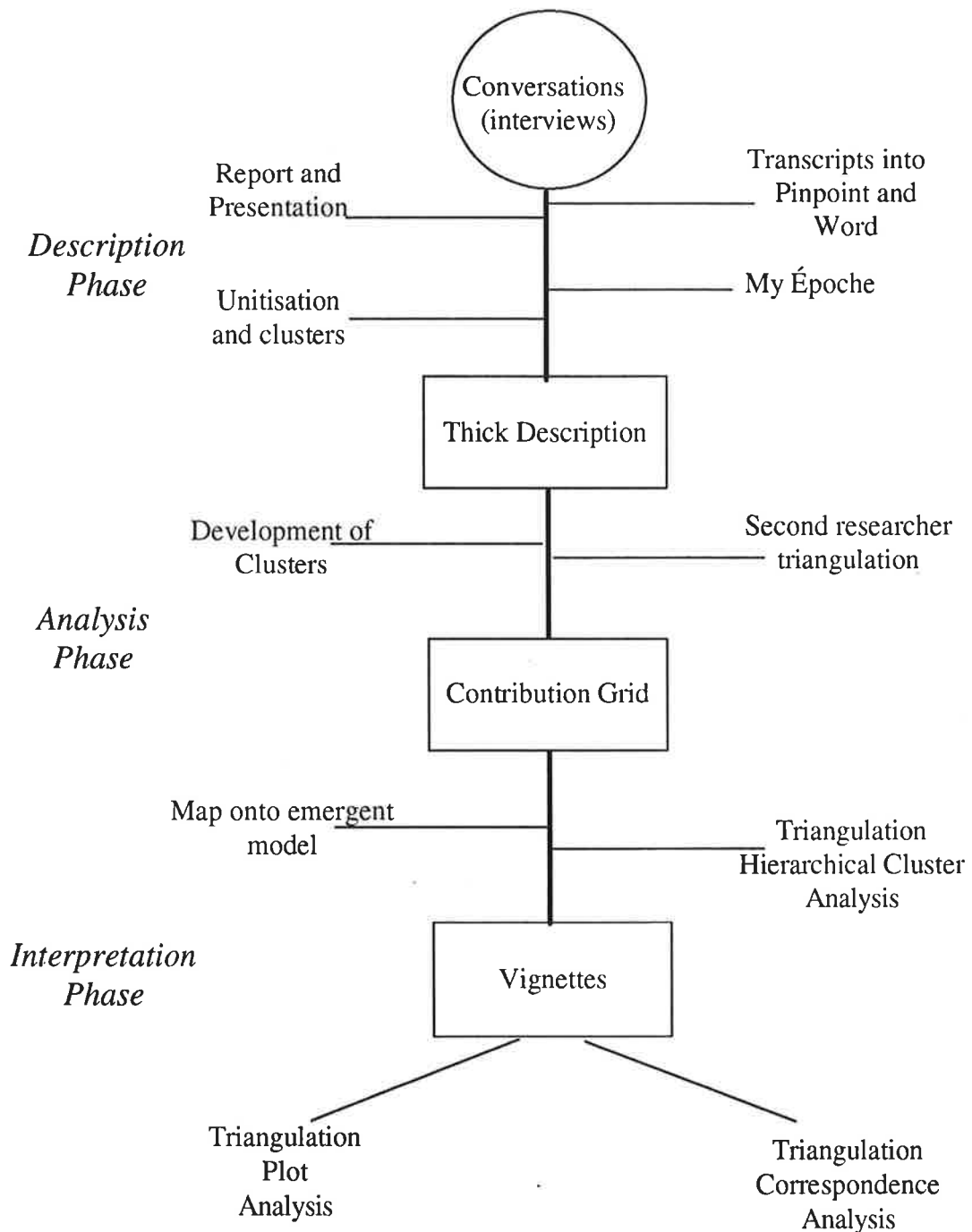


Figure 4.6 : From Conversation to Vignette - analysis process

Table 4.1, below, further illuminates the contribution of each step to the analysis contained in my methodology.

Process / Task	Purpose	Output/outcome	Where in thesis	References
Interviews and transcripts	To record participant views	Emergence of potential themes	Chapter 4	
Report and presentation to client (review panel)	To check themes 'rang true'	Confirmation that initial interpretation seemed reasonable	Chapter 4 – 9: Negotiated Outcomes	Lincoln and Guba (1985) Erlanson et al (1993)
My Époque	Phenomenological reduction	To set aside own assumptions	Chapter 4 – 7: Inductive Data Analysis	Moustaka (1994) based on Coliazzi, Stevich, Keen
Vertical unitisation of data by question, clustering of themes	Holistic view of data	Emergence of main themes	Chapter 4 - 7: Inductive Data Analysis: Appendix 7	Moustakas (1994) Lincoln & Guba (1985) Erlanson (1993)
Thick description	To explore meaning through writing	Database for analysis, interpretation and transferability judgements	Chapter 6	Lincoln and Guba (1985)
Titles from Thick Description clustered to form 'constructs'	To understand abstract constructs underpinning data	46 categories / constructs	Chapter 4 – 8: Grounded Theory	Glaser and Strauss (1967)
Second researcher repetition	Triangulation	Confirmation that constructs are reasonable	Chapter 7 Appendix 5	Miles and Huberman (1994)
Horizontal categorisation of transcripts by construct	Identify contribution to understanding each construct	Grid of contributions to each construct	Chapter 7	Houldsworth (1995)
Map of participants on emergent model	To test emergent model	Linkages between experience of some participants	Chapter 7	
Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (SPSS)	Triangulation, to test emergent model, stimulate new insights	Framework for typology	Chapter 7 – Computer aided methods	Miles & Huberman (1994), Houldsworth (1995)
Vignettes	Representation of types provide reader 'what it's like to be me'	Composite case study reports as part of Naturalistic methodology	Chapter 7	Lincoln and Guba (1985)
Plot Analysis	Triangulation	to understand 'timelines'	Chapter 7	Downing (1997) Reissman (1993)
Correspondence analysis (Minitab)	Triangulation; test dimensions of model and contents of 'types'	Clarification and naming of model dimensions	Chapter 7	

Table 4.1 : From Conversation to Vignettes

Throughout this analysis phase I had recorded my thoughts, either as reflected thoughts written as a journal or in the newly discovered annotation function in Word, which enabled me to write memos on my ideas (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and be able to immediately see what had inspired it. Printing out my annotations also enabled me to see the development of my ideas as I moved into the next phase of writing the analysis and synthesis.

9: Negotiated Outcomes

In the pilot study, findings were fed back to a sample of respondents and then presented to them. Due to pressure of work on the inquirer at the time and subsequent re-structuring within the organisation, it was not possible to send out transcripts of the interviews to the participants of the main study. However the immediate impressions were fed back verbally to a group of the respondents, which constituted the 'review panel' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) to check that the data sounded plausible or 'rang true' in Erlandson *et al*'s (1993) terms, which was followed up by a client report written on the areas that they were particularly interested in, which was presented to several of the managers involved in the study. It is planned that the overall findings will be fed back to the Human Resources Board, highlighting the issues for the organisation with possible follow up work to understand how the findings can be applied.

10: Case Study Reporting Mode

Both Lincoln and Guba (1985 and Erlandson *et al* (1993) propose that the research report should be written as a case study, the former because they see it as useful in achieving firstly the improvement of the reader's level of understanding of the phenomenon in question and secondly as it has advantages for the naturalistic researcher, which include being well suited to an emic study, effective in demonstrating the interactivity between inquirer and participants, and providing thick description that they see necessary for judging transferability. Although Erlandson *et al* (1993) dismiss narrative as being less complex than a case study, as well as being written from one perspective only, from Lincoln and Guba's description of the variety of different types of case study, the use of

narrative in writing naturalistic research would not appear to be in opposition to the case reporting mode and in many ways could be used synonymously: *'writing a case study is more like writing a novel than a journal article. The plot line of a case should be exciting and should unfold in skilful ways. Foreshadowing techniques should be well used. Intricate relationships must be made clear'* (1985, p364). It is with these considerations in mind that I explored how appropriateness of the use of narrative as an alternative in a naturalistic or constructivist paradigm.

Ethnography - Ergonography - Telling Organisational Tales

How appropriate is a narrative stance to a naturalistic or constructivist approach? Much has now been written in the area of narrative analysis and writing reports of research inquiries in a more literary manner especially in the area of ethnography (Van Maanen, 1988; Jeffcutt, 1994; Riessman, 1993; Denzin, 1994; Barry and Elmes, 1997), starting in Europe and spreading to the US - *'scholars from various disciplines are turning to narrative as the organising principle for human action'* (Riessman, 1993, p1). This inquiry cannot claim to be an ethnography, it is neither an anthropological study nor is it a study of culture and it has involved direct interaction with the participants. However with phenomenological roots, it is in line with Van Maanen's view that the changes to ethnographic writing, away from the standardised ways of reporting of the early anthropologists, could be seen to be the *'result of an increasing interest by fieldworkers in the social philosophies of hermeneutics and phenomenology, philosophies that blur, if they do not demolish the subject - object distinction so central to traditional ethnography'* (1988, p 34).

In answer to my earlier question, Czarniawska, echoing Jeffcutt (1994), legitimises looking to other disciplines when she reminds us that the *'hermeneutic principle recommends explaining the less known with the help of the better known'* and she suggests the use of metaphors which come from anthropology, literary theory, and the institutional school from sociology (1997, p4). She also provides a possible home for this study with her notion of ergonography, taking the element of 'writing' from *graphon* (Greek) and 'work' from *ergon* (also

Greek) to come to a narrative approach to 'ethnographies of organizations' (p202).

Denzin sees constructivism as an interpretive style that uses inductive analytical approach that is interpreted idiographically, which when moving from the field inquiry to text, the writer could take a variety of stances as '*there are conflicting views and disagreements on the very topic of interpretation itself ... In the end it is a matter of storytelling and the stories we tell each other*' (1994, p512). He also points out that different interpretations are given by different storytellers of which he describes two types: the etic, or experience-distant interpreter and the emic, which is appropriate to this study as I have experienced the issues under study and would therefore expect to use similar meanings and words as my participants. "*we actively create truth by assigning meaning to the phenomena we observe and experience ...our knowledge of objective reality is subjectively constructed. Just as organizational participants subjectively interpret events in order to experience everyday life as meaningful, so administrative scientists superimpose analytical frameworks on empirical observations to render knowledge meaningful*" (Astley, 1985:509)

Narrative as Sensemaking

Stories and narratives are seen to have an important role in the interpretation of human situations, both for researcher and researched (Van Maanen, 1988; Jeffcutt, 1994; Downing, 1997), and in the extension into sense-making that Weick sees as going beyond interpretation as it is '*about the ways that people generate what they interpret*' (1995, p13). Barry and Elmes re-iterate this when, in seeing narrative as an interpretive lens, they quote Boje, '*storytelling is the preferred sensemaking currency of human relationships*' (1997, p430). Weick explains that one of the most distinguishing features in sensemaking is taking a retrospective view as '*an action can become an object of attention only after it has occurred*' quoting Schutz '*the meaning of a lived experience undergoes modifications depending on the particular kind of attention the Ego gives to that lived experience*' (1995, p26).

Wolcott with his '*qualitative researchers need to be storytellers*' (1994, p17), and Lincoln and Guba suggesting that writing up a naturalistic study is '*more like writing a novel than a journal article. The plot of the case should be exciting and should unfold in skilful ways*' (1985, p364) reflect this increased use and understanding of narrative in interpretation and representation of inquiries in the newer research paradigms.

'Stories are cues within frames that are also capable of creating frames. Ideologies, paradigms, and traditions are known by their examples, not by their abstract framing principles. When people are asked to describe their ideology, they start with examples that imply patterns of belief within which those examples make sense. Stories that exemplify frames, and frames that imply stories, are the two basic forms in which the substance of sensemaking becomes meaningful' (Weick, 1995, p131).

Weick's 'frames that imply stories' are similar to the plots and tales that come from the genres of literary theory that have all be used in a social science and organisational behaviour setting (Van Maanen, 1988; Jeffcutt, 1994; Downing, 1997; Barry and Elmes, 1997; Czarniawska, 1997). They mostly refer back to the primary plots that have underpinned narrative forms from ancient mythology to present day film and television: epic or quest, downfall, scam, and contest which have their roots in the romance, tragedy, irony and melodrama literary genres (Downing, 1997; Jeffcutt, 1994). The names of Van Maanen's tales (1988) reflect their settings and the nature of authorship, which makes it difficult to equate the main genres of realist, confessional and impressionist tales to the more traditional literary ones described above.

In moving the focus from the problems of analysis and interpretation to the problem of representation, post modernism has made a major contribution to questioning and enlivening the traditional approach to writing up research (Richardson, 1994; Jeffcutt, 1994) so that it '*become[s] something more than and something less than sheer "literature"*' (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p302). In

highlighting the potential difficulties in writing up qualitative research, Czarniawska suggests the '*positivist frame of reference offers its adherents a clear and systematic structure concerning the "method of inquiry" and its outcome, the research report*' (1997, p54), which reflects Richardson's appeal for a move away from a mechanistic model of writing which has left its mark on early qualitative research, often making it boring and unread. '*Almost unthinkingly, qualitative research training validates the mechanistic model of writing, even though that model shuts down the creativity and sensibilities of the individual researcher*' (1994, p517).

Post modernism has also brought in its wake a blurring of the traditional boundaries between scientific and literary writing (Richardson, 1994; Phillips, 1997) with Miles and Huberman reporting '*in the wake of postmodernism, it's even been claimed that all modes of reporting on social science research are essentially rhetorical*' (1998, p302). Richardson (1994) explains that traditionally scientific writing was seen to be objective, reporting facts through plain language unlike literary writing, or fiction, which invented reality using rhetoric and figurative language and other literary devices such as metaphor. Increasingly crossovers have meant the use of literary and rhetorical devices in all disciplines, leading to the diminution of the conventional differences between fact and fiction (Czarniawska, 1997; Richardson, 1994; Phillips, 1997), as Van Maanen observed the '*use of narrative tricks the ethnographer uses to claim truth are no less sophisticated than those used by the novelist to claim fiction*' (1988, p25). Phillips demonstrates the closeness of the steps between fact and fiction, or literary and scientific writing with his narrative vs. fictional approaches to organizational analysis table, which I have adapted below in Table 4.2, and would situate this inquiry in the narrative, non-fiction box: '*researchers working from this perspective are interested in understanding the meanings inherent in the organizational world inhabited by organizational members. The focus is not on counting, but on developing an understanding of the symbolic world of the organization*' (1995, p633).

	Narrative	Non Narrative
Fiction	short stories novels poems films plays <i>focus: creating a world that rings true to those in similar worlds</i>	theories typologies models <i>focus: providing ways of seeing a phenomenon</i>
Non Fiction	case studies ethnographies <i>focus: developing understanding</i>	quantitative data <i>focus: presenting results</i>

Table 4.2: Narrative vs. fictional approaches to organizational analysis, adapted from Phillips, (1997, p630).

Miles and Huberman also substantiate this closeness to fiction when writing qualitative studies when they refer to Zeller's view that '*often these reports may not be compiled into factually accurate accounts, but rather serve as a corpus from which the researcher actively selects, transforms, and interprets the material at hand*' (1994, p298)

Their stories play a large part in not only making sense of what my participants have related to me, but also in consideration of how the inquiry should be written, and like many researchers, in my own quest for understanding (Jeffcutt, 1994), hence the choice of a narrative approach. In the same way that they have to find a framework that fits their experiences, which may be the quest for a satisfactory relationship with organisations to meet their career goals, I have found that the thick description stage of my inquiry best fits an 'impressionist' tale. The study is not a 'realist' tale with its largely invisible fieldworker and methods, providing a 'matter-of-fact' portrait, nor is it the 'confessional' tale written entirely from the fieldworker's viewpoint (Miles and Huberman, 1994), but it contains at least two of Van Maanen's (1988) four 'impressionist' tale conventions:

- textual identity - which requires recall that is roughly in chronological order, 'the audience is asked to relive the tale with the fieldworker, not to interpret or analyse it' (p103);

- dramatic control - where 'impressionist tales move their authors back in time to events that might have later given rise to understanding (or confusion)' (p105)

In setting out to represent my participants experiences, I am aware of the romantic image that Denzin (1994) suggests can be portrayed of the writer setting out against the background of the above discussion, and the dilemma of the 'search for authenticity' against Richardson's charge of the boring nature of many qualitative texts. From Phillip's (1997) criteria, telling an organisational tale is a non-fictional narrative, with the intention of also trying to provide the type of 'realism' that Czarniawska appeals for, not mechanical, photographic and imitative, but '*richly, abundantly, colourfully*' (Czarniawska, 1997, p204). There is also the challenge that Barry and Elmes describe of how to write '*an engaging compelling account*' whilst providing Shklovsky's criteria of a convincing and plausible story and '*bring[ing] about a different way of viewing things, one which renews our perception of the world*' (1997,p434).

To present full case studies from a narrative view would require a better understanding of literary theory and literary critique and would take me into the new realms of the feminist methodologies when I had decided on a constructivist stance and rooted my methodology in Naturalistic Inquiry methods. Phillip's (1997) concept of the role of narrative fiction would appear to be more appropriate for this study, which I have interpreted into developing semi-fictional vignettes, rather than apply the approach taken by Riessman (1993) and Downing (1997) to write in-depth studies also concentrating on language and tone as well as content, which I feel would be too big a step for the apprentice researcher.

Once the first draft of the 'story' is complete, Lincoln and Guba (1985), as well as Denzin (1994), suggest that it should be subject to a number of reviews. The first with those knowledgeable on the study and the research site to establish:

1. is the narrative, or case, an adequate representation of the site?
2. are there errors of fact or interpretation?
3. are there important omissions?

4. have the writer's interpretations been erroneously been portrayed as interpretations proffered by respondents?
5. have confidentiality and anonymity been adequately protected?
6. are 'hot' issues included that could be left out?

Sections of chapters six and seven, the 'thick description', the vignettes and the description of the clusters, were submitted to the research sponsor and those participants remaining in the organisation following the analysis stage, to establish the above issues and for more general feedback, see Appendix 4 for the accompanying letter. Lincoln and Guba (1985) also suggest further reviews with those knowledgeable in the discipline and with a 'sophisticated' reader to ensure no errors and readability, before submitting it to the respondents for member checking.

11: Idiographic Interpretation

Lincoln And Guba (1985) remind us that in a naturalistic study the findings only have meaning in the particular context of the study at that particular time, and thus the issues of generalisability are problematic and for a constructivist not seen as useful. In this inquiry, the conclusions drawn are aimed at understanding the situation at the time, which may provide more holistic insights for people or organisations undergoing similar processes, rather than the positivistic goal of being able to predict and control for all similar situations. They quote Cronbach to demonstrate that this goal of generalisation is made impossible by the context of the study '*when we give proper weight to local conditions, any generalization is a working hypothesis, not a conclusion*' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p124).

12: Tentative application

The tentative application of the emergent theory and the findings from my participants' findings will be explored more fully in Chapter 8, where the practical implications of the emergent theory and models are assessed against the key issues for organisations and managers especially from a Human Resources management point of view particularly in the areas of management development, career management and selection and retention.

A Constructivist Approach to Reliability and Validity

In constructivism and therefore in naturalistic inquiry, the criteria for judging the quality of research findings are different from the traditional concepts of validity and reliability, or as Strauss and Corbin put it *“the usual canons of ‘good science’ should be retained, but require redefinition in order to fit the realities of qualitative research, and the complexities of social phenomena that we seek to understand”* (1990, p250) which echoes Kirk and Miller (1986). One of the problems that Kilduff and Mehra raise is that of the crisis that they see in the social sciences when looking at generalisability, which they attribute to three main issues: firstly, that it is impossible to isolate all the potential contingencies that could affect the research outcomes; secondly, the way that social science research is situated in historical models of research; and lastly, that once the results of the research are disseminated or translated into policy recommendations to the potential subject group the possibilities of replication are radically altered. (1997, p465)

Guba and Lincoln, (1994) suggest that the more appropriate concepts can be seen as:

Positivism		Constructivism
internal validity	→	credibility
external validity	→	transferability
reliability	→	dependability
objectivity	→	confirmability

Lincoln and Guba also suggest that the more appropriate questions to ask are those that underlie the traditional positivist criteria, which lead to those redefinitions above:

- *“How can one establish confidence in the “truth” of the findings of an inquiry for the respondents with which and the context in which the inquiry was carried out?”*
- *How can one determine the degree to which the findings of an inquiry may have applicability in other contexts or with other respondents?*

- *How can one determine whether the findings of an inquiry were replicated with the same (or similar) respondents in the same (or similar) context?*
- *How can one establish the degree to which the findings of an inquiry stem from the characteristics of the respondents and the context and not from the biases, motivation, interests, and perspectives of the inquirer?"* (1985, p218).

Credibility

One of the main difficulties in establishing credibility is in the interpretation of the constructed realities within the minds of those people in the context being studied, Erlandson *et al*, (1993) and Lincoln and Guba (1985), however have defined several strategies to deal with this:

- **Prolonged engagement** - which they suggest is required to ensure that enough of the culture of the research setting is understood, this also avoids the risk of distortion and misconceptions, as well as allowing trust to develop between the participants (Erlandson, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this instance the research setting was one of the pilot study organisations, so that I had been given a strategic overview of some of the issues from the organisation's point of view and had been able to maintain some contact through the Future Work Forum at Henley. At the same time I had the opportunity to take part in a related consultancy project in the research organisation, which gave me the contacts and the introductions to my participants and meant that I spent a period of six months in frequent contact. I already knew the organisation fairly well from a previous customer supplier relationship I had had with them some ten years previously, which also gave me some insights into the extent of the changes that they had undergone during the last decade. I also felt that being female and older, with an organisational background, helped me establish my credibility with my participants. As the consultancy had been on personal development issues, I was not seen as providing a threat and I was already known by some of the managers in the sample, so that I had had the opportunity to build trust with my participants (Erlandson *et al*, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

- **Persistent observation** is also required to ensure that the inquiry remains purposive and factors explored are salient, relevant and in sufficient depth to avoid premature closure (Erlandson *et al*, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985), which in this study is provided by the focus given by the research questions and use of a semi-structured interview in the form of the Career Anchors (Schein, 1990).

- **Triangulation** in this inquiry has come from :
 - ‘*within method*’ by using multiple interviews,
 - it has used ‘*between method*’ as I also used the ‘*timeline*’ exercise at the beginning of the interviews, as well as the career anchors instrument to provide a consistency check with what my participant was telling me (Erlandson *et al*, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). We discussed the outcome of the career anchor instrument after interview with only occasional inconsistency which was usually easy to explain e.g. a manager surprised that Technical Functional came out rather than General Management ‘*I still enjoyed hugely technical things*’, ‘*it was a huge technical learning curve, I didn't call on a customer for a year as I didn't want to until I had an understanding of the product*’. During the analysis phase I also used hierarchical cluster analysis to support my inductive analyses, which also enabled me to establish links between my participants’ views of themselves in the Career Orientation Inventory (Schein, 1990), and my own interpreted view of what they had said.
 - Erlandson *et al* (1993) would also consider ‘*theoretical*’ triangulation as a criteria to provide credibility, which as this study draws from commitment, psychological contract, and career theory, would seem to provide a further source of credibility but as Lincoln and Guba point out, these theories are all interrelated and in their view ‘*the use of multiple theories as a triangulation technique seems to us to be both epistemologically unsound and empirically empty*’ (1985, p307).

- The other form of triangulation used was the use of *second researchers* to confirm the emergent themes. My 'tabula rasa', Dr Cristina Russ, as a natural scientist, came from an opposing paradigm, but having explained my stance and giving her these chapters to read, she then repeated the ordering exercise from my 'thick description' chapter to come up with themes of her own, several of which were parallel to mine and shared many similarities as well as providing me with a different or alternative perspective. I have included my notes of our conversation following her orderings at Appendix 5. I was also grateful to my fellow DBA, Dr Peter Nuttall, who provided a fresh view and review of my assumptions from the correspondence analysis.
- **Peer debriefing** - I have been able to share much of this DBA with a peer group, and used several opportunities to present my progress to others in the same process, either DBA or PhD researchers as well as the faculty at Henley and visiting faculty, who have given useful feedback and advice. I have also presented my research experiences to external research audiences both at Henley and beyond during this period, see Table 4.3 below.

Date	Presentation / Paper (focus/research stage)	Audience
December 1994	Key Issues in Managing Flexible Workers (initial findings from pilot research, later written up and published as Henley Working Paper)	Future Work Forum subjects in pilot study
May 1995	Henley Research Colloquium - <i>Notes from preliminary research into management issues of flexible working: a personal account of doing it backwards</i> (methodological issues raised by undertaking the pilot)	Professors M. Morris, A. Pettigrew, Henley faculty, DBA and PhD external PhD researchers
April 1996	The Management School, Imperial College REDRESSING THE BALANCE: The Changing Relationship between Organisations and their Employees. (synthesis of pilot and literature on psychological contract)	Ethical Issues In Contemporary Human Resource Management Conference, including leading UK academics in this field
June 1997	<i>The Changing Nature of the Employment Relationship: A Qualitative Approach</i> (methodological issues of analysing field work)	Professors Ed Schein, Pat Joynt, Dr Steven Downing Henley DBA and PhDs
October 1997	<i>The Changing Nature of the Employment Relationship: Peer Debrief</i> (implications of a constructivist stance on research)	Professors Fred Luthans, Pat Joynt, Henley DBA and PhDs
May 1998	Henley Research Colloquium: <i>The Changing Nature of the Employment Relationship: From Philosophy to a Constructivist Paradigm</i>	Professors Nancy Adler, Pat Joynt, Henley DBA and PhDs

Table 4.3 : Opportunities for peer debriefing and presentation

Much of the journey has been shared with one fellow traveller, Helene, using same research paradigm but different study area which meant that we were able to ask each other the searching questions required to ‘*keep the inquirer honest*’, (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p308). Lincoln and Guba’s role of devil’s advocate was well played by Professor Fred Luthans and fellow DBAs, when I had the opportunity of my formal Peer Debrief session at Henley in October, which enabled me to test my working hypotheses, defend my stance and seek advice on my next steps (presentation material included at appendix 6).

- **Member checking** provides in Lincoln and Guba's eyes (1985) the most crucial technique for establishing credibility. For this study the immediate exercise was with a group of my participants to check my first impressions prior to writing a summary report for the organisation on those areas in which we had an mutual interest. The next stage has been to send the 'thick description' and the description of the 'types' those participants, who had not been restructured into inaccessible parts of the organisation during the period between the field work and writing up, for their comments and confirmation that my interpretations were reasonable, I also included in this group my sponsor for the study who was not one of the participants but understood the context and setting of the inquiry, to provide a level of confirmability.

In a separate point Strauss and Corbin (1990) cite the use of the literature for validation of the accuracy of findings by referencing it in appropriate places, whilst Eisenhardt (1989, p545) sees literature having a key role in providing credibility *"tying emergent theory to existing literature enhances the internal validity, generalizability and theoretical level of theory building from case study research. While linking results to the literature is important in most research, it is particularly crucial in theory building research because the findings often rest on a very limited number of cases. In this situation, any further corroboration of internal validity or generalisability is an important improvement"*.

For each category of trustworthiness, Erlandson et al (1993) suggest that the **Reflexive Journal** also supports the study. Coming to an understanding of the full implications of a qualitative and a naturalistic research methodology was a lengthy process, my formal journal was started late on in the process and as a part time researcher was only added to during times of intensive work on my inquiry. However I have kept a 'research notebook' where I recorded notes of relevant talks, lectures, and conferences I have attended, as well as ideas and thoughts as they have occurred and notes of discussions with peers and supervisors. Many of my 'Aha' moments have been recorded at the time in the notes I have taken of the literature, presentation or conversation that inspired them. It was in reading

Richardson (1994) that I recognised the value of keeping a formal journal with the discipline of writing regularly demonstrating how much easier it becomes and regret not picking up the habit earlier.

Transferability

The 'canon' of generalisability to other settings is not possible in naturalistic inquiry. Strauss and Corbin, (1990) stress, the purpose of grounded theory is to specify the conditions under which particular events or actions arise around a phenomenon and therefore generalisation can only be to the specific circumstances. Also as no two contexts are identical "*attempting to generalise about one phase of the contexts to other settings ignores the unique shaping forces that exist in each context*" (Erlandson et al, 1993, p17). Lincoln and Guba state that it is "*not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability; it is his or her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers.*" (1985, p316). In the case of this inquiry the use of '**thick description**' which includes '*everything the reader may need to know in order to understand the findings*' (p125) thus provides such a database, supported by **purposive sampling**, in this case maximum variation sampling to give the widest possible base of participants.

Dependability

Whereas much of the conventional 'scientific' models require that the research study is replicable, in qualitative research and naturalistic or constructivist inquiry, it is highly unlikely that all the conditions could be reproduced especially when examining a social phenomenon. Therefore it becomes more important that the theoretical perspective of the original researcher is understood, so that given the same theoretical perspective "*and following the same rules for data gathering and analysis, plus a similar set of conditions, another investigator should be able to come up with the same theoretical explanation about the given phenomenon*" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p251). The provision of chapters describing both my philosophical approach as well as the methodological implications of this approach, are aimed at ensuring my theoretical perspective is able to be understood.

Confirmability

To the constructivist, Erlandson *et al* (1993) would contend that objectivity is an illusion, so that the best way to judge whether the findings of the inquiry are the product of the inquiry rather than the biases of the inquirer, is through the data. In this study I have ensured an audit trail back from interpretation, through the 'thick description' to headings for clusters of units of data, that can then be taken through the transcript to the original tape recording of the participant conversation, and indeed, have been able to 'prove' the trail when checking quotations. As my analytic processes were recorded through my hexagons into Ideabase, they are also available to demonstrate the stages of data induction or the 'data displays' of Miles and Huberman (1994), as are various other materials included in the appendices.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Erlandson *et al* (1993) refer to the confirmability audit that Schwandt and Halpern prescribe, among the items they suggest, this study has involved those items shown in Table 4.4 below:

Audit Trail Classification	Evidence in existence
Raw Data	tapes transcriptions interview notes documents
Data reduction and analysis	hexagons - cluster analyses at different stages matrices of participant / category Pinpoint output of questions areas Ideabase output summaries Cluster Analysis tables and dendrograms Correspondence analysis output
Data reconstruction and synthesis	included as chapters 6 and 7 reflexive thoughts in 'ideas and thoughts'
Process notes	notes in this Methodology chapter
Intentions and disposition	original research proposal literature review recorded thoughts and ideas on PC and in 'research notebook'
Instrument development	cluster analyses, tentative matrices, etc.

Table 4.4 : Confirmability Audit Trail

Conclusions

This chapter has been designed to provide the reader with the bridge between the abstract world of philosophy, ontology and epistemology developed in the previous chapter, and the more practical world of what those assumptions and perspectives mean in designing and implementing a practical research inquiry, as a prelude to the description, analysis and interpretation of my naturalistic inquiry. As a method of inquiry, although with philosophical roots firmly in the first half of this century, constructivism and other phenomenological approaches have only recently started to gain respectability in these last few years of the century (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). I have therefore had to lean heavily on the few writers who have had the time and opportunity to design and complete research projects, and then to publish their descriptions of such a project with the practical details and advice (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Erlandson et al, 1993; Moustakas, 1994).

The purpose of the chapter has been to ensure that one of those canons of good research 'dependability' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) is made possible by providing the rules I used for data gathering and analysis, explaining the set of conditions

and the theoretical assumptions provided by previous chapters, to enable another inquirer to surface a similar explanation of the same phenomenon.

This chapter has tracked the practical progress of my research project from my initial proposal to investigate organisational commitment, through the iterations of pre-understanding and understanding, to arrive at the reasons behind my decisions and how they fit within the constructivist paradigm, and thence the naturalistic inquiry methodology that I have chosen to follow. It has also previewed the theory on narrative analysis, that will take the reader on to the next stage of my research journey, chapters that take them through the pilot, the main study results, analysis and interpretation of my research findings. Finally I hope to have demonstrated through the section on credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, how the criteria for judging the quality of my research findings can be satisfied and be deemed trustworthy.

Chapter 5 - Early Empirical Work, The Pilot

*'a wave of job-free workers intent on doing what
needs to be done rather than doing their jobs
would wreck most traditional organizations'*

William Bridges

Introduction

This chapter will outline the contribution that undertaking early empirical work in the form of a pilot study made to the final inquiry. The pilot had enabled me to both test the methodology that I would eventually use and to explore the relevance of the concept of organisational commitment at an early stage, see figure 1.1, following reviewing the then current literature, most of which had come from studies undertaken in a very different economic environment. Whilst the pilot study particularly looked at the management issues of flexible working in the employed workforce, in this chapter I will outline those management issues with general applicability, leaving those with focus on flexibility to other papers (Parkinson, 1995 and 1996).

The chapter is presented in four short sections: the first section describes the subject matter of the study and how it came about, as well as outlining some of the new perspectives on organisational thinking relating to flexibility and commitment; the next part concerns the opportunity to test out methods and try out my methodological stance; the third section examines the findings of the pilot and discusses the relationship to the main study; and finally in the conclusion, I outline what I learned from the pilot and how it changed my thinking in approaching my research inquiry.

The Pilot Opportunity

The pilot was designed as part of research commissioned by Henley's Future Work Forum to explore the issues of managing flexible ways of working, on which I was able to superimpose my interest in commitment. The study itself involved sixteen organisations and twenty senior managers and directors from

either the HR or the IT field. The participating organisations were members or potential members of the Future Work Forum, who are mostly companies with an interest at being in the vanguard of new ways of working either for technical reasons, such as the IT and telecommunications sector or from having a large workforce and wanting to look at new ways of managing them, such as banks and local authorities.

The request to undertake the investigation came at an opportune time, as it was during a period of considering how to progress research beyond the initial proposal stage where issues such as methodological stance, data gathering and analysis methods, and where to start were becoming a cyclical whirl. Here was an opportunity to explore the implications of using qualitative methods such as "grounded theory" before launching into the main research inquiry and to be able to discover what philosophical stance was most comfortable through action learning. I had also recognised that exploring the issues involved in flexible ways of working provided the opportunity to work with organisations that were in the forefront of enlightened thinking, so that the issues that I would be working with would be looking to the future rather than reflecting on the past with limited potential application.

Following my review of the commitment literature, I was already uncertain whether the concept had the same relevance in the 1990s. Research undertaken in the boom conditions of the 1980s could not take into account the impact of the dramatic economic changes that had taken place for many companies. At that time, much of the focus of the labour market had been on how to manage the coming demographic time bomb, instead following aggressive downsizing and restructuring in many industries, the UK was faced with growing numbers of people who were having to rethink their careers. Many of my concerns were echoed in the literature emerging at the time of the pilot, or immediately after while I was reflecting on the data.

Despite the emergence of the above movements and 'soft' approach to human resources management with its goals of flexibility, commitment, quality and

strategic integration (Hodgetts *et al*, 1993; Guest, 1989; Beer *et al*, 1985), organisations seemed to have developed 'a fear of commitment' with a 'no guarantees' attitude and had been accused of only being interested in one side of the 'New Deal' (Pascale, 1995; Doherty and Horsted, 1995). Organisations still wanted a high trust, high commitment model, emphasising the derivation of individuals' objectives from strategy and values but expected the short term financial targets to be met as the first priority (Stiles *et al*, 1995). They were further supported by a range of government policies in the UK that aimed at deregulating the labour market and producing low labour costs (Beatson, 1995; Marullo, 1995).

In many cases flexibility seems to have been introduced to reduce costs, with transactional contracts (Rousseau, 1995) which raised the range of issues from low wages and exploitation to that of deskilling and a return to the principles and 'command and control' management style. Pralahad (1995) would argue that the UK is unnaturally focussed on the perceived danger of high wage costs affecting competitiveness, considering it was already a low-wage economy. This view is further demonstrated by Marullo (1995), who suggested that part time working had been favoured by organisations to reduce labour costs in some sectors, especially since much employment protection legislation had been repealed since 1979, such as the qualifying period for job protection with further change in discussion such as removing protection from those working in small businesses. This had been further exacerbated by Government policy by removing what were seen as outdated restrictions of working hours on young people and women and rescinding such mechanisms that regulated pay of some groups such as the Fair Wages Resolution and Wage Councils (Beatson, 1995).

One of the areas that I considered was that flexibility may be a transition strategy, as organisations moved from their historic functionalist paradigm based on scientific management (Argyris, 1960; Burrell and Morgan, 1979, Morgan 1986) to a new style characterised by the 'excellence' school, summarised by Hodgetts *et al* (1993) as total quality, learning and world class. This would be in line with Pfeffer's (1982) view that paradigms change because of values and changes in

social theory, whereas Pralahad (1995) suggest that organisations remain the victims of “the tyranny of the dominant logic” that he describes as the 'intellectual' capital that senior management have built up as a combination of their deeply held beliefs about products, customers, individuals and organisations.

Rousseau (1995) had suggested that by creating contracts that can be easily understood and kept, in the future it should be possible for the 'shamrock' organisation (Handy, 1989) to have both flexibility and commitment. However for many of the workforce, the creation of new contracts meant that their old psychological ones had already been broken or violated which affected their commitment (Brockner, 1992) as, using Herriot's (1995) model, they had not been able to renegotiate, rather the terms had been imposed on them.

Methodological Issues

The timescales involved in the pilot study did not allow for the consideration of a separate research proposal, or a prior literature search on flexibility and the impact of new technology for this particular project. As a human resources practitioner, who had been involved in strategic issues, I already had some awareness of the overall issues that were likely to emerge but had little in-depth knowledge of the technical side of flexibility such as teleworking. The timescales involved in developing, testing, distributing, chasing up and analysing a questionnaire also precluded taking, what seemed then to be the traditional quantitative route, if the required presentation to the Future Work Forum was to be delivered on time. My original research proposal had also led me to the opinion that a more interpretive and qualitative approach would be more appropriate to my style of working.

These circumstances all led to taking a qualitative approach to the study and a process was developed based on previous experience of what had worked for me when collecting information in the past, both in a process consultant role in an organisation and in conducting previous surveys, which also reflected what I had envisaged in my original proposal. This past experience had also taught me that the use of interviews, together with developing a rapport with the subject, can

lead to a rich source of data. In hindsight one of my interests was to compare how my intuitive research style matched, in this instance, with the reported approaches to qualitative research and methodology by other academic researchers.

The study had many of the elements that enabled me to take a 'grounded theory' approach, as the researcher, I already had a level of 'theoretical sensitivity' from my previous experience, *'having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn't'* (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p42) as well as a knowledge of the literature in the area of commitment, which I was able to make a main part of this study. The initial research question that I was given, 'the issues of managing a flexible workforce', also lent itself to this method of inquiry, giving the flexibility and freedom that Strauss and Corbin recommend for exploring a phenomenon in depth. The shortage of time also enabled me to make a virtue out of necessity and pursue what Glaser and Strauss saw as *'an effective strategy is, at first literally to ignore the literature of theory and fact on the area under study'* (1967, p37), thus entering the study without trying to make the resultant data fit a preconceived framework.

The decision to take a 'grounded theory' approach led to less structured interviews than a positivist stance would require, described by Silverman (1985) as having the aim of generating *'data which hold independently of both the research setting and the researcher or interviewer. One way of achieving this is by attempting standardised interviews.'* He goes on to state that positivists concede that unstructured interviews are more flexible and allowing *"more intensive study of perceptions and feelings"* and have inherent problems for them, as they realise that they are more difficult and time consuming to analyse. At the time of writing my proposal, I had only understood that a positivist approach did not 'feel' right, and that intuitively I wanted to understand the phenomenon in question rather than explore issues such as causal links. In undertaking the pilot, I recognised the opportunity it would provide to explore and understand the issues behind the methodological decisions I had made, almost intuitively, and to

practice the methods those decisions entailed. It was the pilot that enabled me to confirm the research paradigm that felt most comfortable, its philosophic tradition, and the need for coherence between that philosophy and the methods employed as described in the previous chapters.

Pilot Methods

The pilot also provided an opportunity to test the effectiveness of methods, which had been chosen in the light of an initial, more superficial understanding of the issues implied by different research paradigms. Although the final methods chosen were similar, the approaches to those methods have been slightly different in recognition of a slightly more subjective, interactive stance. The results of the pilot interviews demonstrated the availability of a rich source of data using interview methods thus rendering the quantitative element of the original research proposal unnecessary, as well as the researcher having doubts whether quantitative methods would add value in understanding the 'essence' of the concept in question.

My pre-understanding of the area led me to design a semi-structured interview, rather than take the completely unstructured approach that strict adherence to 'grounded theory' would require. Initially some general question areas were mapped out to give some comparative information, the format was tested on my initial interviewee and adjusted for subsequent interviews. The questionnaire software, Pinpoint version 3 enabled me to make these adjustments easily. Interviews were tape recorded but the paper version was also used to record the main points, especially useful when relevant points arose after the hour and a half recording period or there were technical difficulties with the tapes! Tape recording allowed total flexibility within the interviews and for many interviewees it allowed a better flow of discussion with the question areas answered in a more appropriate order for them, which would have been impossible to record fully on a common format.

The recordings were directly written up into Pinpoint as comments type fields, having the main points noted on paper in the appropriate places speeded up this

process. From this it was possible to select the areas to consider at any one time, either printing out everything that had been said on a particular subject, or through searching for particular words. At this depth Pinpoint met the needs well and avoided the 'cut and paste' or possible double typing that might have been involved using a word processing package.

The next problem was how to study the data to start to develop some themes for future research or draw some conclusions for the presentation to the client for the investigation. For some years I had been using a form of mind mapping and brainstorming to develop my thoughts when writing reports or papers which involves the use of magnetic hexagons to cluster ideas. This appeared to me to be a natural way of viewing the comments made and thus developing the themes identified in the initial analysis performed when transcribing the interviews, and it also had the benefit of taking a more holistic approach with all the ideas visible at the same time, easy to move around and possible to see patterns and themes emerging. This method reflected the steps that Okely (1994) describes "*already themes had emerged and I made a provisional list of topics, with subheadings ... Nothing can be taken for granted nor rigidly prearranged. So the classification is made after, not before, fieldwork. ... As I re-read through the notes, I added to the subheadings and categories*".

For recording the research steps and working with the data, I experimented using Ideabase, the software that came with the hexagons, but quickly returned to the original hexagons and whiteboards in order to view more ideas than would be available at any one time on screen. For simplicity a simple charting package was all that was needed at this stage for recording, as illustrated by Figure 5.1 below. It also had the advantage of being able to be inserted into other Windows products, although this would not provide the linking and clustering facilities useful to the more 'in depth' research required in the later inquiry, that was to be available in later versions of Ideabase.

from home already where they would be interrupt free' (NB.1). There was also a view that flexible working was more a way of coping with a world where the pace has changed and more is outside the individual's control, than a positive move, *'it has been a way of coping and improved morale, motivation and bottom line where implemented'* (SJ.1). It was seen as a way of giving back control and choice as reflected in the banking sector where a major driver was to help staff retain a balance between work and home, as well as to win the 'hearts and minds' of Jamieson and O'Mara (1991).

However when flexibility was a policy imposition at the instigation of the organisation, it was often in response to business drivers such as cutting costs, or providing an extended day, meeting peaks and troughs, then often the form of flexibility was the more traditional methods of part time workers and short term contracts. This method retained control by the organisation.

The barriers that were identified to flexible working were also different depending on who had instigated it. When it was the first model, giving people some control over their working lives the barriers that emerged seemed to be those of mindset and managers' attitudes, where managers would have something to lose and their status and power in the organisation rested on numbers of people visibly working for them, *'managers worried about losing control'* (AR.1); *'managers horrified at the idea of not being able to see staff working, their status and power were built on the floor are their staff occupy'* (SJ.1). When organisations instigated the change they found people already feeling 'battered' from current changes, together with suspicion and loss of trust especially in those organisations engaged in restructuring, *'a symptom of downsizing, they are unwilling to change the status quo, keeping their heads down, unwilling to put their hands up'* (PC.1), which accords with Robinson and Rousseau's violation of the psychological contract (1994).

Commitment

When asked what the organisation currently valued, several respondents felt that it was still long hours, those ensured they were visible, *'loyalty, being seen at the*

desk, willing to put in long hours' (AL.1), the public service ethos in the public sector, *'committed to public service and committed to the public, staff and colleagues'* (MA.1), length of service and loyalty and stability. In many ways these reflect what could be considered to be factors in the existing models of commitment.

In discussing what they considered were the attributes of commitment: on Porter's (1974) first factor of 'belief and acceptance of the organisation's goals and values', there were some responses that fitted, *'belief in what we are doing'* and *'gets involved'*; on the second factor along with *'willing to go the extra mile'* responses there were more job related responses - *'takes a pride'*, *'enjoys it'*, *'finds ways to improve'* and also comments on quality of performance, response to customers; on the third factor, wanting to retain membership, there were no relevant responses, perhaps reflecting the economic situation. Allen and Meyer (1990), in their research implications, have also suggested that it is "what employees do on the job is as important, or more important, than whether they remain", therefore questioning whether this form of commitment, in traditional terms, is still useful.

Several respondents raised the issue of how new people could be integrated into flexible organisations *'new employees must be in the office first to absorb the culture, tools, systems and policies'* (SJ.5). There was a recognition these styles of working may affect young people who may not have the required skills, *'we want to maintain the maturity, the training and skills that people have, it's all about customer skills, service quality, the school leavers don't have the maturity'* (AC.1), *'sometimes we have a problem with the attitude of the young, teaching people that they need to learn a new set of skills in a way that's acceptable, it's a fine line to get the right response, if you bludgeon your way through the staff, they will bludgeon their way through customers'* (OC.5).

The picture of the future committed employee that emerged was more focussed on the individual: a person who was confident, empowered, self motivated, able to change, committed to staff and colleagues, working in groups and teams, and not a workaholic. There were not seen to be any differences in the commitment

required in the future for flexible workers. The implications of being able to recognise and reinforce the models of commitment, whether the traditional view, or a new model would require a different style of management from the old 'command and control' style which was still felt to be prevalent in my sample, *'when you have crawled, kicked your way to the top and you've got the status and all you ever wanted - why give it up to provide the role model'* (SJ.4).

The Changing Role of the Manager

The key themes that emanated from the question of the skills required to manage flexible workers were that they were no different from managing any other employee but with some aspects emphasised. This was also complementary to the view that there were few groups of people who could not work flexibly with the appropriate enabling conditions. The successful manager of flexible and other workers is someone who has a good relationship with their team and cares and trusts them, with a participative style, taking a coaching, mentoring role, *'you need good working relationships with your team and regular staff meetings, if you spend time with them you become capable of seeing their problems'*, (CE.5).

A major consideration was communication in terms of, providing regular feedback and appraisal, bringing people together in regular team meetings, helping them create 'collision' opportunities and generally keeping in touch, *'communications and teamwork are big, big, big ones'* (AL.3). The other key area was in providing the appropriate framework through providing vision, knowing what is right for the business and being able to match skills, agreeing clear objectives and ground rules.

Another aspect raised was that of the recognition in organisations, both by individuals and their managers, that lifestyle issues were becoming increasingly important to people, *'everyone is feeling highly pressurised and the whole life is becoming more important'* (MA.1). This was summed up by one respondent with the view that jobs were *'being adapted to the differing needs of people and the marketplace'* (OC. 1).

Discussion of related issues

Flexible working had been defined by the pilot organisations in different ways depending on the reasons they had for adopting it, the group, and skills of employees involved and the approaches they took broadly fit and can be explained by Rousseau's (1995) transactional to relational contract continuum.

Flexibility that had been adopted to retain or attract the skills of people who would otherwise have left the labour market or the organisation, could have a positive flavour, especially when undertaken by management and professional employees to enable them to balance work and family commitments through part time and job sharing. In theory job sharing, based on a full time job allows organisations to retain key skills and the employee to retain career progression and the non monetary benefits, such as development and training, often lost to part timers (Branine, 1995).

One of the issues that emerged from the interview discussions was that of the effect of flexible working on young people as it was not felt to be appropriate to expect school leavers to work away from 'an organisation base' where they could learn the cultural norms of the organisation as well as work disciplines. They would therefore be more likely to end up in work with a transactional contract rather than relational. These views reflect the concerns of Collin (1995, p8) who foresees major social problems ahead as organisations and society rob young people "*of the traditional socialising effect of employment, with its workplace roles, values and inter-generational contact*".

The other key related area that Collin identified, reflected in the views on transactional contract based working, is that flexibility in these forms would '*further loosen the attachment between an individual and a specified bounded job*' (1995, p7) whereas it could be a liberating experience, it is more likely to increase the levels of anxiety and limit people's time horizon and future view of self.

The research findings, due to the nature of the organisations involved, tended to focus on the second category described of flexible working, which has been described by Lyons (1996) as able to 'work independently of time and location'. These flexible practices such as teleworking for the new 'elite' of knowledge workers had positive benefits for individuals, especially as for many of them their flexibility had come from a recognition of their needs and as such demonstrated a more relational contract.

In the case of the respondent organisations most of them had implemented flexible working through evolution especially for those working from home and with a relational contract. Where the new forms of working were introduced as a response to individual demand which would include balancing family, avoiding relocation and for personal effectiveness, it could certainly be seen as an opportunity to renegotiate their 'psychological contract' as suggested in Herriot and Pemberton's model (1995), unlike their colleagues following restructuring, who often have little choice but to accept a change in their contract.

Many of these reflections have been developed into the framework outlined below which builds on Rousseau's (1995) notion of the continuum of contracts.

	Transactional	Relational
<i>Type of flexible working</i>	Part time / annual hours / term time working Short term contracts Homeworking	Teleworkers Job sharers Homebased Part time / annual hours / term time
<i>Driving force</i>	cost reduction	getting the best from people
<i>Contract</i>	Changed	Re negotiated
<i>Issues</i>	reducing wage costs reducing accommodation costs	retention women returners avoidance of relocation
<i>Work orientation</i>	Only job available	work independently of location and time
<i>Focus on</i>	Low skilled	managerial and professional skills
<i>Timescale</i>	Short term	Long term
<i>Measurement</i>	Time / input / transaction	Outcomes
<i>Control model</i>	Command and control	Commitment
<i>Development</i>	Very little	Self development

Table 5.1 - Psychological Contract Implications on Flexible Working

The findings of the initial research suggest that the style of management required for a flexible workforce with a relational contract was at variance with the old functionalist paradigm and its command and control management style. It could be argued that flexibility born out of restructuring takes on a transactional mode. This equates to a classical scientific management paradigm focussed on cost cutting; paying for activities, measurement of time and inputs, short termism with an autocratic management style that used to foster a dependence culture but now resulting in a 'disengaged' workforce (Argyris, 1960).

In suggesting that the difference in managing a flexible workforce is “95% of problems are attitude”, the findings suggest that the key is in the flexibility of organisational 'mindset' as made up of its senior management and in new organisational thinking. The management style that distinguished successful managers of flexible workers was that of developing good working relationships with their people, trusting them to achieve specified objectives and as they were frequently 'out of sight', either by working in different locations or at different times, putting an emphasis on communication, thus reflecting Guzzo and

Noonan's (1994) findings. The respondents agreed that managing the flexible workforce was no different to managing the traditional workforce.

New models of organisation reflect Schein's (1978) understanding that the whole person comes to work, the importance of commitment, a long term view, people engaged in self development as part of the learning organisation, are all congruent with the relational model of the psychological contract. Where organisations have been driven by individual need and demand respondents reported that flexible working has given them the opportunity return some control to their lives.

Conclusion - Learning from the Pilot

The pilot proved extremely valuable from several points of view, particularly from methodological considerations and in the field of study that I was later to undertake in my main inquiry. It enabled me to learn several things about my own ways of preferred working, as well as providing me with the opportunity to reflect on my chosen field of study before committing myself to a particular approach.

From the methodological point of view, I was able to confirm my feelings when writing my research proposal that my instinctive research style leaned towards the interpretative, anti positivist approach, and that this also seemed the most appropriate stance for the subject area I had chosen. It also enabled me to appreciate the importance of the issues around the philosophical approaches to methodology, although at this pilot stage it was more about what my preferred stance was not, rather than what it was.

From the more practical aspects, I was able to have tested some of the practical aspects of collating qualitative data before starting out on the final doctoral research project, and have better idea of what the tools and techniques that are readily available are capable of, as well as the extent that they can aid the research project. I also found that it was easier to focus reading and desk research with actual data in view and to be more analytical in thinking through the implications of what other research has found for what I had seen in the data from my respondents. The pilot also provided a potential research base from the

organisations involved for my main project, and it was one of these organisations in which my inquiry took place.

The most important aspect of the pilot was that themes to pursue in more depth emerged, such as the issues of control, communication and the changing role of the manager, that seemed to give better explanations and therefore provided a focus for my reading. The pilot shifted my thinking from organisational commitment as it had been depicted in the pre 1994 literature, to the wider notion of the psychological contract as a way of understanding the employment relationship, particularly as my interviewees surfaced the issues around the importance of developing a good relationship with people that worked flexibly and that this was no different whatever the working practices of the organisation.

Chapter 6 - Results: From Conversation to Description

“In the social sciences there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself. Confronted with a mountain of impressions, documents, and field notes, the qualitative researcher faces the difficult and challenging task of making sense of what has been learned.”

Introduction

Denzin (1994, p500) goes on to describe this process of making sense and then conveying this to others requires telling stories with a beginning, middle and an end. Initially this chapter will build on the considerations that I took into account before embarking on this challenging phase of committing my inquiry process into the written word in the form of ‘thick description’, which are detailed in the previous methodology chapter. The rest of the chapter takes the impressions gained in the field and starts the process of interpreting the experience of the respondents into a story to represent those experiences to the reader. As Denzin reminds us, that until we sit down to write the interpretive text and tell the story to ourselves, we do not know what we have learned.

However appealing it is to take up the challenge of writing a tale that would stand up equally as a literary piece as well as a representation of my research inquiry, I have heeded the warning given that this not only takes artistic nerve but it is also not appropriate for works that have an academic purpose such as obtaining tenure or a doctorate (Van Maanen, 1988; Richardson, 1994). This reminder about being aware of the audience is reinforced by Barry and Elmes' (1997) view of the impact of the history and values of the reader who is interpreting this subjective, heterogeneous interpretation, already filtered by the researcher (Denzin, 1994) and Miles and Huberman's advice on the use of a 'scientific' stance. This stance fits with the intention of the study to: *heighten insight, illuminate, deepen understanding; add to existing information on a topic; expand or revise existing concepts, theory, explanations; convince the reader of the report's worth, truth,*

and value; advance the methodological craft of research' (1994, p300). The appeal of following their 'aesthetic' stance or Richardson's example in using poetry will therefore be incentives for future work (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Denzin, 1994). With an academic purpose for the study, the use of narrative can be justified in Burrell's view that "*If one gives up the search for narratives, then in a very real sense one gives up the search for academic understanding.*" (1992, p179)

There is the need to move to the reporting stage sooner rather than later (Wolcott, 1995), with the very act of writing being inseparable from thinking and analysis (Richardson, 1994, Miles and Huberman, 1994). In moving forward there have been several choices to make on the voice, genre and stance to use (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The impressionist tale and the scientific stance have been the first decisions. For the decision on voice, Erlandson (1993) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest using the natural language of the participants and the first person where the researcher has been involved. As the study does not assume an authoritative stance, or an overriding search for unity and harmony, it is appropriate that it is not 'monological' authorship (Jeffcutt, 1994; Barry and Elmes, 1997) but reflects the conversations that Czarniawska suggests are central '*Thus the Self is produced, reproduced, and maintained in conversations, past and present*' (1997, p45).

This introduction has discussed and reprised the issues raised in my preparation to 'write up' and represent my participants' stories, in providing the rationale for the approaches taken to transform them from the literary to the academic and theoretically enriching (Wolcott, 1995). '*The art of interpretation produces understandings that are shaped by genre, narrative, stylistic, personal, cultural, and paradigmatic conventions*' (Denzin, 1994, p507).

Methods used for entering the descriptive phase

The method outlined in detail in the earlier methodology chapter was partly developed from the 'naturalistic inquiry' or constructivist literature (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Erlandson, 1993), partly from the phenomenological approach

through the suggestions of Moustakas (1995) and Houldsworth (1995) in their individual adaptations of Colaizzi's and others methods, and partly from my own intuitive approach that had been tested during the pilot phase (Parkinson, 1996). In preparation for analysis of the interview data that I had elicited from my participants, from the transcripts held in Pinpoint, I downloaded each area of interest into a Word file and then proceeded to 'unitise' these 'multiple' transcripts by recording each separate idea on a hexagon. The hexagons were then clustered into initial groups or labels to form a cohesive outline for the overall view of the data (as shown in Figure 4.4 in Chapter 4 and in Appendix 7). At this stage there was no intention to synthesise the data with theory in order to enable the 'grounded theory' process to surface the emergent themes and categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and also to provide the nearest to 'raw data' to prove an audit trail. This chapter provides the equivalent of the tables of data that the reader would expect to find in the results chapter in a quantitative study.

Report Structure - The Use Of Thick Description

The initial analysis of the findings will be thickly described in a narrative structure as this seemed the most appropriate following the clustering of units. As the data has come from informal interviews most resembling conversations which as Czarniawska suggests that "*conversations in particular, and human actions in general, are enacted narratives*" (1997, p13) it would seem to fit. She answers the challenge that constructivists are often criticised for putting people's lives in the narrative form, in order to understand them, by reminding that in a conversation, they can never be the sole authors.

Authors cite the use of thick description as appropriate in qualitative studies (Erlandson, 1993; Schwandt, 1994; Denzin, 1994; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Wolcott, 1995), Denzin describes it partly by demonstrating it's contrast to 'thin description', or a statement of facts, but he is situating his description in an ethnographic account of culture, Lincoln and Guba suggest that the salient features required are the inclusion of any features that the reader needs to know in order to understand the findings. It is with this in mind that the 'thick description'

will be written. I have also taken the advice of Wolcott (1995) that for 'beginning' researchers to err in favour of the descriptive part of the inquiry, when trying to decide when to introduce the more analytical or interpretative frameworks into the study.

Results in the form of thick description

Developing the thick description

The thick description that follows has been developed following the chronological sequence in which I asked my participants to describe their career journey through the original question areas adapted from Schein's Career Anchors interview format, to provide the structure or 'storyline' of the thick description that follows. My 'second order' clustering of themes from the interviews lead to several overall categories emerging at a more holistic level, which were in line with the original research questions and provided the overall contextual headings of the individual, organisation, trigger events and employment relationship. These are the themes that will be discussed in greater depth in the analysis chapter following.

In writing the thick description, sometime after the clustering exercise, I found that a second viewing and consideration of the 'units', led to my placing a slightly altered construction on several ideas as different aspects emerged. I had to subsequently change the contents of my initial categories or re-categorise some units, which reinforced Richardson's (1994) notion of writing providing a powerful form of analysis as well as providing the second step that Erlandson *et al* (1993) prescribe of repeating the analysis of the units into the emergent categories. From these now refined categories I reviewed the holistic view that I had already begun to develop before starting to plan how to approach embarking on the next phase of analysis and interpretation. One of my analytic tools was the development of a matrix of emergent categories displayed against the contribution of each my participants, which also demonstrated that after my tenth interview no new categories emerged thus reinforcing the effectiveness of my purposive sample (shown as Appendix 8). I was later to develop a subsequent matrix using the revised constructs, which formed the basis for my analysis in the next chapter.

Providing the Synopsis

Prior to the interview questions I had had a discussion with each of the interviewees based on a 'time-line' around how their career had developed over the past five or six years in terms of influence and responsibility. This preliminary discussion, as well as previous completion of Schein's Career Anchors Inventory (1990), had started the process of thinking back over their recent career in their minds so that they were beginning to put their career into context for themselves, giving them the opportunity to develop an outline synopsis of their career history so by the time we were into more detailed discussion they had been able consider their 'storyline' and begun the process of sensemaking for themselves. *'When people put their lives in narrative form, the resulting stories do not duplicate the experience. The experience is filtered. Events in a story are resorted and given an order, typically one in which a sequence is created ... personal narratives are the product of severe editing ... people who build narratives of their own lives use hindsight'* (Weick, 1995, p128).

Introduction to my Participants

The participants were chosen by their company to provide a representative 'slice' of the organisation, providing a purposive sample (Erlandson, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The majority of the group were full time, permanent employees with only one part time and another with a fixed term contract (FTC), which had been introduced by the company some two years earlier for all new employees.

The sample was structured to ensure representation from each of the business areas: technical support (1), including pre sales support (3) and post sales support (3); operations (1); solutions centre (2); and sales (6). The other distinguishing features were spread across the groups so that, for instance, at least one participant in each business area would be one of the five women or one of the six professionals involved in the study. One of the objectives of the study was to obtain the organisational view and as agents of the organisation, the sample was deliberately biased towards managers as they could give both the view of the employee as well as the organisational perspective. As most of the existing commitment research and that into the psychological contract seems to have used

the individual as the unit of analysis (Morris et al, 1993; Oliver, 1990; (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994; Parks and Kidder, 1994), I had originally considered only interviewing managers, but in order to provide checks against a possible different picture professionals were also included. A higher number of managers has also been advantageous as for many becoming a manager is a tangible sign of career achievement (Zabusky and Barley, 1996, Arthur and Rousseau, 1996) as well as providing an opportunity to analyse more career steps.

Manager professional	Frequency
manager	10
professional	6

Gender	Frequency
male	11
female	5

Table: 6.1 Level and gender of participants

The amount of time that the participants had spent in the business was also spread across the study group along with their age group. These reflect the recent fortunes of HAL UK with general downsizing in the early 1990s and the rapid growth of the business unit following restructuring, leading to the need to hire in new software skills to manage this growth. The age of the participants also reflects the bias towards managers in the sample but the small number of over forties is also indicative of the nature of the industry.

Age	Frequency	Number of years	Frequency
20 - 29	3	[0 - 4]	5
30 - 39	9	[5 - 9]	4
40 - 49	3	[10 - 14]	5
50 - 59	0	[15 - 19]	1
		[20 - 24]	1

Table 6.2: Participants' Age and Time in HAL

Each participant completed Schein's Career Anchors Inventory prior to the discussion, partly to start the thinking about their career, partly so that they had a tangible output to compensate them for the time they gave me, and partly as additional information for the inquiry. The level of 'pure challenge' and

'technical/functional' were no surprise with participants who either worked in sales functions or technical support, but it was interesting to see 'lifestyle' emerging as the third first choice and autonomy, although no-one's principal anchor, coming third in overall popularity.

Career Anchor	Frequency
Technical/ Functional	4
General Managerial	1
Autonomy / Independence	0
Security / Stability	1
Entrepreneurial Creativity	2
Sense of Service	0
Pure Challenge	5
Lifestyle	3

Table 6.3: Participants' Career Anchor

Career Anchor	Popularity
TF	5.6
GM	4.6
AU	5.2
SE	3.2
EC	4.3
SV	3.1
PC	6.0
LS	4.6

Table 6.4: Popularity of Participants' Career Anchors

Initial categories

The initial descriptive analysis that follows as thick description, has been looked at under the following general categories, based on the question areas developed from the career anchor interview format and the existing theory review, discussed more fully in chapter 4, in order to enable my participants to tell their composite tale chronologically:

1. The Unfolding Career
2. The Current Understanding of Career
3. Major Career Changes
4. Reflecting on the Career so far
5. Hopes for their Future Career
6. The Employment Relationship
7. Obligations and Expectations
8. Events and Symbols

It is in the intermediate headings that the themes that will form a major part of my subsequent analysis start to emerge from the conversations with my participants. From the following sub paragraphs of thick description I was able identify 135 themes which I then clustered into 46 constructs, in table 6.5 below. This table

contains the key emergent constructs from my analysis, the method for arriving at the clusters and their potential meaning are discussed in the following chapter, these themes could also be taken to be taken to be the invariant constituents (Moustakas, 1994). To provide that analysis at this stage would be to downgrade the role of this results chapter.

Cluster	Career Quest	Personal Factors	Career Influences	Required Contract	Attitude
It's not broken	Achievement	Directedness Commitment Old Hands	Career Drivers (negative) Change Triggers	organisation / management responsibility for careers	Enjoyment
Desire to get on	Challenge Recognition	Autonomy Lifestyle Directedness-active Family & Careers, Gender	Career Drivers (positive)	Manager's role in organisation Organisation's expectations Individual's obligations Individual's Expectations	Sad / disappointed
I come to work to get money	Extrinsic	Directedness passive Motivation	Influencers	Relationships with the organisation , Legal contract	Fear / Nervous
I know what I'm talking about	Skills	New Hires General Management Technical Functional Entrepreneur	External factors		
Organisational view	Advancement Development	differing expectations	Independence Expectations met/not met Organisation's obligations	Manager's role in contract, Relational /Informal Contract Relationships with individuals Personnel Practices, Symbols	

Table 6.5: Constructs emerging from thick description of conversations with participants

The role of the rest of this chapter is to provide the thick description, or the database, from which I have drawn the above constructs and in allowing my participants to give their views, and for my readers to see the basis for my subsequent interpretations. It is the work of the following chapters to provide the analysis, the interpretation and the synthesis with existing theory. In order to provide an audit trail back to the original conversation each excerpt from my participants has been coded according to the question number on the Pinpoint form and each participant so that (3.14) would be question 3 (What is it now?), participant 14.

The Quest: The Unfolding Career

The first group of questions asked of my participants concerned their early career:

- What areas did you concentrate on in your last period of education, why did you choose those areas and how do you feel now about those choices?

- What was your understanding of career when you first entered the world of work?
- What is it now?
- What were you looking for in your first job? Why did you make that choice?
- What were your goals and ambitions then, how did they work out?

In talking about their initial choices and understanding of career there appeared to be three types of driver in entering the world of work. Some participants reported that they 'drifted' into the employment relationship with very little in the way of expectations beyond that of the 'standard' contract - looking for employment and remuneration, nothing in particular, just to have a job.

The Drifters

- *just drifted into it* (1.11)
- *It was just a job ... it was just random chance* (2.3)
- *money - I would have done anything, anywhere* (2.8)
- *after being a 'pop star' it was security* (2.7)
- *looking for anything - HAL provided opportunities* (2.4)
- *salary and employment* (2.11, 2.12)
- *not looking for anything in particular - came through the milk round* (2.3)
- *I haven't a clue why - it just happened* (1.15, 4.4)

The Self Directed

Other members of the group had a much clearer view, some from as early as their school days - *'I always wanted to join the Navy ... all the way through'* (1.2), *'single mindedly computing, had been interested in them since age 11'* (1.5); others since the industrial year of a sandwich course - *'I knew I wanted to work for HAL and join the most successful company in my industry'* (5.1), *'I did my sandwich with HAL, I liked the culture'* (1.13). Some participants knew the wider area that they wanted to be in *'I wanted to go into business'* (1.6); *'I wanted to go into the commercial world'* (1.16); *'I loved [my business studies degree], and am interested in trade'* (1.13); *'to go into sales and marketing and to move into management'* (3.6) ; *'to run own business'* (3.7). Another

participant, ironically, *'whatever I did I knew I didn't want to do computing'* (4.10).

Only a few had any idea at that point what they wanted out of the employment relationship, *'fun, progression, somewhere I could continue to learn'* (2.13); *'I wanted to develop a portfolio of skills'* (3.8); *'I thought the training and the variety would be good'* (2.16). Others had a more global view of their ambitions, *'to be a very successful woman'* (1.10); *'to be Mr Senior Manager'* (2.9).

Directed by others

Some of them had entered the relationship at other people's instigation particularly influenced by parents either positively or negatively *'my father worked for HAL'* (4.14); *'my father was a frustrated engineer'* (1.12); *'my father is a very demanding man ... leave me alone'* (4.4), or had expected that someone else would manage it for them, *'[university] was as guilty as school I still didn't know what I wanted to do'* (2.12); *'went into the careers office and said you tell me what I should do'* (4.4). One participant had put their career so far down to the company, using the passive tense throughout this part of the discussion *'they must have spotted something'* (2.2); *'I've generally done things because people have asked me to do them'* (5.2). Another group expressed any direction in terms of comparison with others both financially *'to earn as much as my graduate peer group'* (3.13); *'I challenged my french teacher that I would earn more than him within five years'* (3.8) and enjoyment, *'people I was working with were enjoying their work so I just carried on and tried to do the same'* (2.14).

Initial expectations of the career

Many of the participants expected their careers to have an strong element of advancement:

- *to get to a certain status position* (3.16)
- *to do something important, that was both challenging and enjoyable* (3.12)
- *career meant working up the grades in the computer profession* (4.8)
- *working up the organisation ... to somewhere where you have awe and respect* (4.9)

- *achieved by hard work and talent until you achieved promotion* (4.11)
- *get promoted every two years and paid more* (4.13).

Another group saw their career mainly in terms of material achievement:

'attractive salary, company car and the ability to use skills' (4.5); *'to earn and acquire physical goods'* (3.11); *'to have a brand new BMW when I was 21 and be a millionaire when I am 35'* (3.15). Others took more of an investment viewpoint both as *'an insurance policy for making a living'* (3.9); *'a foundation for the future to rest of working life'* (4.7), although one participant saw it as *'recognition rather than security'* (4.13) and from a personal development view *'a variety of options for me to grow'* (4.7) and *'training and variety'* (2.16). There were a couple who sought to *'enjoy my job'* (3.13); *'the important thing for you was that you enjoyed the work you were doing'* (4.14); *'I didn't think of it in terms of a career but in terms of what I wanted to do ... how do I earn some money and what will I enjoy doing'* (4.2), and the last group who confessed *'I had no idea about work'* (4.10); *'it was extremely limited'* (4.1); *'never even thought about it - a career was a job rather than a career'* (4.15).

The Middle: The Current Understanding of Career

As their careers have developed the participants have tended to shift their view of career achievement in extrinsic terms as status and progression or rewards to more emphasis on the intrinsic elements reflected in the earlier statement of *'recognition rather security'*. Money is however still seen as important *'to show how well you are doing'* (3.12), and as instrumental in enabling lifestyles.

'I am paid enough money to give me freedom to do what I want when I am not working' (5.13),

'I come to work to get money, to pay for the house, to look after the family and me. What I want is to be able to enjoy what I'm doing, so in a way career progression is to get more money' (5.14)

Much of the group saw careers in terms of fulfilment and challenge or development and learning. Advancement changed from *'hierarchy but having the respect of peers, supervisors, subordinates ... I am willing to sacrifice financial*

gain for personal fulfilment' (5.7) with fulfilment described by another participant as *'self fulfilment, challenging, stretching, learning'* (5.13). It was also seen as *'a progression of both responsibilities and, I guess, self importance ... the want to change and make a difference to things'* (5.15). Challenge was another driver that participants were seeking from their careers, *'looking for stimulation and challenge'* (5.7); *'it is now about flexibility and different challenges'* (5.16), although one participant's view's about the progression aspect of careers had not changed *'it is still the same - the people that I would aspire to be, are the people who go forward by changing jobs quickly'* (5.12).

'[T]he learning piece is actually tremendously important' (5.16) to several of the participants who saw careers as also *'developing people's talents to their benefit, balancing the degree of difficulty, taking on more challenge and then plateauing and then taking it sideways rather than vertically ... using and developing what you have got'* (5.8); *'how to match [my employees] to opportunities for them in the company'* (5.5), *'you have a lot more capabilities than you understand'* (5.9); *'need balance and security as you get older and a sense of perspective doing what you are good at and maximising your potential growing'* (5.7).

The 'Old Hands' World

An interesting divergence emerged on how participants thought 'old hands' saw their career and how they thought 'new hires' saw it. These views were reinforced to some extent by the confidence, and almost leisurely approach, held by 'old hands' that there will be jobs coming to them that they can select and shape but do not have to put much energy into finding.

'I see a marked difference in the people who have worked for HAL for some time, they feel HAL owes them the opportunity to do whatever is available and they have the skills for ... the responsibility to give them a job' (5.6)
'when I look at where my next move is going to be ... there is the Internet because that's growing very rapidly, at some stage I might well consider moving to that' (5.4)

'a career is something everybody else has ... I've generally done things because people have asked me to do them, I haven't generally instigated them' (5.2)

'doing things that enhance my CV ... I have been able to shape the role' (5.1)

The New Hire's world

This confidence was not readily observable in the short term employees at this stage.

'looking at doing a good job and then looking externally for a new job ... the FTC's feel they have to demonstrate their capabilities continually - more committed to the job, less committed to the organisation' (5.6)

'most people working for me don't have a view beyond the next job' (5.5)

'people go forward by changing jobs quickly' (5.12)

'you do have to be careful what you go into technically' (5.3)

'I don't know where I am going or what I want to do' (5.3)

'It's very difficult to see - as late into HAL I'm not going to be able to fast track and its difficult to see how I'm going to get further up the ladder in HAL in managerial terms' (5.5)

One of my participants found that having children meant that *'my idea of a career is completely different now ... to pursue my career I can't be on the road all day everyday and be in hotels most nights ... I was very ambitious [now it is] going to work, being happy and getting on'* (5.10).

Major Career Changes - How I got to here

With the next group of questions I asked the participants about the changes that they had made in the last five or so years, which is the period covered by the 'time line' over which we had had the opening discussion . I chose this period to ensure the discussion was focussed on more current issues around the research questions rather than potentially valuable time being taken on the detail of a long career history. At the design stage also I considered that having asked about their early career choices, I would have a clear indication where there had been major shifts. What I found however, was that during the course of the whole discussion my participants found the opportunity to fill in the blanks somehow or other.

The questions asked during the phase of the inquiry were:

Moving on to five years ago, what was the next major change in job or employer? How did this come about? Who initiated the change? What were the reasons for the change?

How did you feel about the change? How did it relate to your goals?

These questions were repeated for any other changes during that period.

Something I Wanted To Do

Recent job moves for one group of my participants enabled them to achieve something positively that they had wanted to do: *'I started my own company ... I wanted to prove that I could do it and still have time to rectify any mistakes if it didn't work out' (7.7); 'the thing that attracted me was the general advertising campaign by HAL about a career change ... it appealed to this general sort of business interest' (7.16)*

These moves were achieved in a determined manner for one participant: *'so I said to [my manager] this is what I wanted to do - I also made sure I delivered what I said I would to make sure I was seen to be reliable' (11.5); 'my knowledge of the channel ... got me into HAL - said give me a management job or I'll be on my way and they gave me one, I was reasonably influential because I had an opinion that they thought was worth listening to.'* (10.5)

Something I wanted to be

Another group of my participants gave their next career move a more passive flavour, often using the verb 'to be' rather than the more active 'to do' or the passive tense: *'to be group leader of the team' (7.13); 'to be a GIS specialist' (7.14); 'got promoted to manager' (7.15); 'I was promoted twice'; 'became a manager' (10.9); 'eventually took a team leader role' (10.8); 'moving into sales' (10.11); 'the classic scenario of the head-hunter giving me a call ... I said I'd only work for a big company, and I said therefore it's going to have to be DEC or HAL' (11.15)*

Another aspect that emerged was the recognition of the need to make interim moves in order to achieve the eventual objective: *'I have always wanted to be a manager, my manager said that you would be better moving around the business a bit to gain more experience'* (10.10); *'HAL had, at that time, a view that if you were going to progress you had to have a 'staff' role which was internally focussed - that was my stint, my year'* (10.6)

Active Move for Personal Reasons

For many of my participants, mostly those that have spent at least ten years in HAL, their recent career moves have been as a result of their own 'inner' need to move on, *'I was ambitious and I wanted more than they could offer me'* (7.10); sometimes this had been influenced through a learning or other external intervention: *'I'd started this MBA and decided I really wanted to do something broader and was prepared to make the transition out of sales'* (8.16); *'course made me realise the need to tell people that I wanted to get on and wanted to be a manager and register interest'* (11.9); *'I had had approaches so was becoming to feel I needed to make a change'* (8.1).

Another group saw their move as more skill related *'I broadened out a bit and thought I had some marketing skills, and changed into direct sales'* (7.11); *'the opportunities were there to fill in lots of gaps in knowledge and things, to learn technical things'* (8.4); *'I had been on [a large company] account and enjoyed the work so I moved to join the group'* (8.14) There was also the element of *'I was bored and pushed, the boredom came as the admin. job was too easy'* (8.13); *'I had a desire to get moving - everyone has a boredom threshold'* (11.6).

Some participants reinforced the development, achievement and challenge view of the career cited earlier with their moves: *'It was a challenge, one of the things I have always tried to do has been the next transition to a role would be more demanding than the last role'* (8.4); *'a new set of things, skills, different challenges, new things to learn'* (12.8); *'still gave me the challenge'* (12.7); *'a different language, environment and people, a huge technical learning curve'*

(10.1); *'as a salesman you can measure your contribution exactly, the sense that I wanted to be able to point to something and say 'yes I am a success, I've achieved' (8.11)*

Moving from an Undesirable Situation

For many participants their career moves came as the result of feeling to need to move from their current situation, partly from their feelings about the company itself: *'I was very unhappy at this place, it came along at the right time ... I needed to get out' (8.3); 'it was so awful I ended up working there for 5 weeks, it was everything that I didn't want to do ... a head-hunter phoned me to see how it was going, "just get me out" and got me an interview with HAL' (7.6); 'I absolutely hated that, I stayed there for a year to give it a good go but I just hated the ethos of the whole company' (7.10); coming through a traumatic experience - reassessed my career' (10.7); 'when I joined I was the new kid on the block, I got given the sales territory that no-one else wanted, the rate of selling on it wasn't such that I could justify staying there ... so I decided to leave' (11.11). Other job related factors also impacted on the decision to move particularly promotion: *'there were two candidates for a management position and the other person was seen as more stable ... expenses started to be eroded' (7/8.9); you wait forever to take more responsibility and unfortunately they have a lot of people who have waited a very long time and when they get there they don't move - it's as simple as that' (10.15)**

Company Factors

In a similar way many participants found that wider company factors influenced their career moves, for the 'old hands': *'In 1991 the UK collapsed - business units were formed out of huge verticals and broken up' (11.1); 'didn't bring out new products so the group disappeared' (10.14). For those participants in other companies, this was often the factor that caused them to join HAL: *'the franchisor ran off with ten million from the bank ... it doesn't take long for it all to crumble' (8.2); '5 years ago was when the first company was sold out - had no choice' (8.3); 'In 1993 I closed the business' (8.7); '[previous company] was**

insecure at the time not knowing what the take-over would mean, and HAL was head hunting at the time' (8.8)

Although for two participants there was still another move to be made to complete the move from the first company: *'they were obviously going to go down, so I ended up looking for a job quickly'* (7.6); *'the company got bought out before I could start ... worked for the new buyers for 2 or 3 weeks - the sales manager suggested I join them [in a buyout by the former staff]'* (7.5)

Organisation Influence

Several participants had their career moves directly influenced by the organisation rather than seeking change themselves: *'was invited back to run [education programme]'* (7.2); *'they said you are the ideal candidate to go on some education and it just stemmed from there'* (7.4); *'I was poached by a dealer to be UNIX support manager'* (7.5); *'I joined as part of the team that built this building, having worked for the contractor'* (7.11); *'there is a shortlist and you get invited to come for an interview ... you are not allowed to [look for promotion to manager]'* (8.15); *'someone else has instigated them ... I don't know what's happening'* (11.3); *'then I was asked to do this [business] centre because again of my previous existence'* (10.2); .

Managers' Influence

Many of the participants cite their managers as being influential in their career moves: *'she approached me and I said I've done that before'* (12.16); *'he actually offered me the next move'* (10.4); *'the manager worked hard to find roles for us and then retired'* (11.14); *'[my manager] said I think we need to stretch you a bit and to give you some more work'* (11.2); *'they have always helped in terms of setting timescales, and then moving me on, and if there was any education I needed to help me get into that role, then they planned that in as well, they have all been very good in that respect'* (11.4); *'I had a good manager, we had a proper employee development plan ... he was promoting me quite well'* (11.10); *'my manager was moving into sales himself, he knew I was ready to move - we went on the initial training courses together'* (11.13); *'I think I was ready for a*

move and had had the discussion about it and he knew I was interested in marketing' (10/11.16)

Attitude to risk

The questions about recent career change have demonstrated that many participants like to limit their exposure to risk: *'when I took on the previous job - I built in some conceptual escape routes with hooks into the previous organisation' (7.1); 'I wanted to prove I could do it and still have time to rectify any mistakes if it didn't work out - not so much at risk' (7.7); 'I'd left doing the programming for a more secure environment' (7.8); 'I use [assignment] in a similar way to encourage moves' (8.2)*. However at least one member of the group professes: *'I like a risk, I like a risk' (12.15)*.

Looking Back in Hindsight - Reflecting on the Past

This part of the discussion gave my participants the opportunity to reflect on the enjoyable and not so enjoyable aspects of their career so far by asking them:

- As you look back over your career, have there been times you particularly enjoyed or not enjoyed,
- what was it about those times that made them particularly enjoyable or not?

The reasons for career choices was also explored from the more negative angle of:

- Have you ever refused a job or promotion and why?

The categories that emerged from these conversations reflected those arising from the previous discussion on the participants' current view of careers, with the prominence of development and learning, fulfilment and challenge as well the role of money as a tangible indicator of success. However, although the similarities of category holds for the group, the peaks for individuals do not always fall into the same category as their current view of the career.

Challenge and Winning

The comments from participants in this area reflect the high level of the 'pure challenge' career anchor (Schein, 1990) in this group. *'I was running a full bid*

campaign, major stress, and we were way behind and we won it, I absolutely adored it, I was just so happy' (6.10); *'The pressure was on and I had been thrown in at the deep end'* (6.12); *'overcoming obstacles, taking on a challenge and winning'* (6.7); *'taking the [major company] account to a new level of relationship with RS6000 - it was well publicised that all was not well, now taken to the other extreme, and getting significantly more business'* (6.8); *'when I moved the centre from free to fee, moving the profit from £0 to £3 million in three years and making it into a competitive advantage'* (6.1); *'Getting the [important contract] deal was an incredible peak'* (6.5).

Tangible Success

For some participants, their most enjoyable times were linked to tangible, extrinsic rewards such as earnings: *'I had a very successful year, with unlimited commission, although I had a high quota I did three times that. The money was the main bit - but I didn't get the recognition so I focussed on the money'* (6.9); *'I want to be ahead and earning more than anyone else, money allows me to quantify things ... I have made every target that I have ever been set'* (6.13) and promotion *'where I got promoted, enjoyed my job as a technical expert, I worked with customers, I lived close to work and then was not away'* (6.14); *'my whole career - I think joining HAL was a very good move for me, my first manager was just one long peak because he promoted me and I got every award going'* (6.10).

Personal Learning and Achievement

Although linked to the above categories, the descriptions that the participants gave here have a more personal element than winning for the company or tangible success: *'a sense of fulfilment'* (6.7); *'when doing something I am exceptionally proud of, because it's hard to do especially in a competitive situation'* (6.11); *'where I had a very clear position, I had achieved quite a lot of success, I had actually made a space for myself, which was that I had gained quite a respect within the software business in terms of what we were doing and therefore it was quite a personal achievement if you like, particularly having come from this bit here'* (6.16).

Others linked their most enjoyable times to their own personal learning: *'when in learning environments, using new skills and learning new ones as well.'* (6.6); *'The peaks have always come at the beginning of the job (AP: When you are learning?) that's it exactly ... troughs have always come at the end, one of the things that is a factor is that you are not learning any more, because I need to be, I feel that I start to stagnate, I should be moving on'* (6.3)

Respect and Recognition

The area of recognition and respect had not been seen as a separate element of what they wanted to achieve in their careers by my participants earlier in the interviews, and it is interesting to note that each of these participants are women.

'I liked to be well thought of' (6.12)

'I got every award going' (6.10)

'I'm my own boss and respected for what I bring in - I've a sense of being more 'looked after' now' (6.13)

'I had actually made a space for myself, which was that I had gained quite a respect within the software business in terms of what we were doing' (6.16).

The Pleasure and the Pain

For at least two of my participants the times of greatest enjoyment were also tied to the least enjoyment: *'it's been a double edged sword really in terms that every time I have moved on it's been a new challenge, but the challenge has caused me concern, am I really able to do this, do I have what it takes?'* (6.4). In the other case, the eventual downfall could potentially be seen to be as a result of the peak:

'The biggest peaks and the biggest troughs were both in that period when we had our own company. Getting the [important contract] deal was an incredible peak. You know, we all went out, we'd had a very good quarter, we all went out and got absolutely blasted on the company, but we got lots of new equipment and you know we really rolled. Some of the biggest troughs were there as well. Just at the end when the other directors started disappearing and whatever it was a nightmare. And a lot of mistakes were made that I feel could have been avoided if we hadn't rushed into things' (6.5)

Not Challenged

As one might expect, with the perceived importance of challenge in the group, for many, the times they had least enjoyed were when they felt the least challenged '*I am not being challenged, as the company is not using me and I am not adding value*' (6.12) or '*bored*' (6.1, 6.2, 6.6, 6.12); '*it was waiting time, they just hadn't had a role to put me in*' (6.6) or '*frustrated*' (6.7, 6.3, 6.15); or not progressing within the company: '*when not enhancing the value of my CV*' (6.1); '*not getting on in the company plus not getting on in general*' (6.9). Another participant, who saw himself as a technical specialist found '*the trough was when I joined, when I was a generalist*' (6.14).

In Conflict

There were a number of my participants who found that the time they liked the least was when they were in conflict, either with a particular personality: '*that particular individual I didn't have a great deal of respect for*' (6.6); '*he was aggressive ... basically destroying the company*' (6.9); '*I didn't get on with the customer, I hated that*' (6.10); '*everything was highly stressed, everyone was going around shouting at each other*' (6.5) or with internal conflict: '*personal conflict, I suddenly had to choose between one loved thing and another loved thing and the family won*' (6.2); '*personal conscience versus financial sense - i.e. reducing headcount*' (6.7).

Not in Control

Participants was also unhappy when they felt out of control of their personal situation, either through not having the right skills: '*that was landing me in the deep end and I hadn't planned on that*' (6.4); '*I didn't understand the technology, didn't understand what was required, and was just unable to do it [AP: you don't like not having the skills?] No.*' (6.8); '*I hated my first job, the detail ... I hate filing and admin., I like talking*' (6.13); feeling unable to influence the situation, or the organisation had made the decisions without their involvement: '*I didn't want them to invest clearly, and I didn't want to become a consultant and it wasn't particularly handled very well - bit nasty*' (6.16); '*I had no control and got pushed into it*' (6.10); '*it was robbing me of my own self worth, I honestly don't*

think it was anything to do with me' (6.11); *'[in my previous company] there were no goals, no future, no money'* (6.9).

Allied to feeling out of control, some found they felt the times they least enjoyed also had an element of feeling isolated *'felt out of it'* (6.9); *'cultural difference is phenomenal to [previous employer]'* (6.15); *'I was feeling lost and at the bottom'* (6.12). This feeling of isolation also applies to *'other dips are when I am away from home'* (6.14).

Unwanted Job Offers

Half the participants reported that they had never refused a promotion, although some of this group had refused job moves. Amongst the participants that had refused a job offer there were three main factors behind their refusal:

- the job itself: *'doing the job, but not getting the status or the responsibility'* (13.6); *'there wasn't enough responsibility'* (13.10); *'not significantly different'* (13.8); *'there is not a job outside I can't do in HAL, why go?'* (13.1);
- personal reasons: *'personality - I didn't look past him'* (13.1); *'I would always be the new kid on the block'* (13.11); *'I couldn't imagine myself working for them'* (13.12); *'it just didn't suit me'* (13.15);
- and situational factors affecting lifestyle, *'primarily security and location ... I didn't want to drive from London to Basingstoke everyday'* (13.5); *'with a 3 1/2 year old son ... it is just too much travel'* (13.6); *'contracts that would take me away from home'* (13.14), security, *'looking at the totality of stability, rewards, etc.'* (13.9), *'it was a not a permanent contract'* (13.12), and incentive *'they didn't know how to incent sales staff properly'* (13.13).

The end: their hopes for their future career

To end their stories about their own careers I asked my participants about how they saw they saw them progressing into the future, which could be seen as what is the quest now, or what lessons have been learnt from hindsight and give insights into their frames of reference.

The questions I asked to elicit these views were in the area of:

- Looking ahead, what are the things you are especially looking forward to, and why?
- Are there things you would especially like to avoid and why?
- What do you think your next two career moves will be and why?
- Who do you think should be responsible for these moves?
- Who else should be involved, and why?

Incremental Change

Many participants saw their future changing incrementally rather than in large leaps. For some this was expanding their existing role: *'trying to expand the existing role I do, while keeping that in the confines of something that I can do (14.6) ... taking on a wider brief' (15.6); 'whatever I go onto I want to have some experience and build on my skills' (15.4), or it was a step away from where they are now: 'back to sales - its not retrograde as it is different levels' (15.9); 'waiting for the next thing to happen I suppose and see what it is - I'm looking ahead for a different angle' (15.8), 'only another position in [the same unit]' (15.4).*

They also see their career progressing through greater responsibility and promotion but without an ambitious goal: *'the next promotion and next job and progression - I don't have an ultimate goal' (14.13); 'within technical support or service, could be greater responsibility beyond [this business unit], or a different product or marketplace' (15.1); 'doing the same things with more responsibility and scope, working with bigger customers and products ... I don't want to be the Business Director' (15.14); 'I don't see myself as being a manager of managers as such ... I don't want to be too far off the front line' (15.8).*

For another group, development was seen as a way of progressing: *'another move sideways to fill in gaps in experience' (15.5); 'I would see that as an area I could grow into' (15.6); 'continue to use my skills but in slightly different areas while being able to keep up my commitments at home' (14.6).*

Major Change

Participants were also actively considering making what they saw as major changes in their careers with some of them: *'thinking about contracting, because I've built up enough skill to do it, I've had long enough to think about it, but I'm still uncertain'* (15.3); some possibly outside the company: *'unless something dramatic happens I think I would leave the [business unit] and that probably means leaving HAL ... although I wouldn't look to leave HAL because there are all sorts of good reasons to stay, I could see that there would be fair chance I would'* (15.5), *'it looks like there's a possibility in sales ... I'm not getting my hopes up as I feel it is touch and go with HAL'* (14.12) but the same participant would then move on *'to do the same thing in a different company in a more managerial role'* (15.12). One participant felt *'one of the things I would personally like to do is work overseas for a couple of years, and when I say overseas I don't mean nice places like the States or whatever ... there's a kind of personal fulfilment thing there that keeps niggling away'* (14.5).

Managerial Progression

Half of my participants saw progression in terms of management positions: *'the boss's job ... I want to do a people management job and manage other people'* (15.11); *'I expect the option of my boss's job, I am not sure if I would accept it ... you know I do see myself becoming Divisional Director'* (15.7); *'management would be the next logical step and I would like to have a go at it'* (15.13); *'manage a bigger unit ... it would be to manage a unit within a company. I don't think actually managing a company per se'* (15.16).

This was whether or not it was what they aspired to: *'I don't want to be a manager, I'm not very good at delegating, maybe I can, but I don't like doing it.'* (14.3); *'I don't see me getting into management, a team leader perhaps - not the formal aspects, I want to benefit HAL through customers - I see management as an overhead'* (14.14); *'I don't want to become completely a manager where I can't add any technical value'* (15.5); *'I don't see myself as being a manager of managers as such ... I suppose the only thing more interesting would be a more combined role - sales, sales management, technical management'* (15.8); or

recognised the impact of recent changes: *'the way they are cutting out management levels it's difficult to see myself going after the next step ... to lead manager, I wouldn't have the breadth of skill and knowledge to make that step'* (14.4).

The Drifters and the Reluctant

Some participants, some of whom were seen as the 'drifters' earlier still have doubts about where they are going: *'I don't quite know where I am going anymore - I'm tootling along doing this job and I'm enjoying it and then I'll have to tootle along and do another job but I don't quite know what I will do next'* (14.10); *'should I be looking for other challenge and stimulus in the near future'* (14.7); *'God only knows. I'm on this [fast track management development programme] thing, if I knew what it was I'd be delighted to tell you whether it was worthwhile'* (15.15), and some are reluctant to change at this moment *'Dramatic changes in career would be unsettling, challenging but unsettling'* (14.4); *'it's difficult making a job move, but you have to pick yourself up and do it'* (15.3).

Allied to the above theme is that of passivity, a number of participants took a more passive view of their future: *'[it would] be interesting to see, after I have been here six months or a year where the opportunities lie from here onwards, and then maybe in another two years from now I would start looking around and asking questions about moving on'* (14.4); *'as long as the opportunities keep rolling up then I will consider them'* (14.5); *'an insurance, so long as the job is good and is fun, I'm never going to light up the world but I'm not going to get up at 4:30 am'* (14.9); *'what am I looking forward to in my career, let's think about this. I think it's just being able to see the continuation - the future, the progression'*(14.15).

Self Worth

The notion of self worth that came through from some of my participants also reflects the earlier themes of challenge, fulfilment and personal achievement: *'something I would like to do, it keeps niggling away - personal fulfilment'* (15.7);

'I want to avoid being a failure, I am very competitive, I want challenge and more motivation' (14.12); 'the real ambition is to make a difference in the marketplace' (14.16), respect and recognition: 'I would rather be singled out than seeking it out' (14.7); 'to be highly paid for the efforts of others, fixing things to give the appearance of success without delivering the sorts of things success is - I couldn't live with myself' (14.11) and being in control: 'I don't now want a job if somebody else is dictating their terms on me ... the thing that comes first is my children' (14.10).

Career Anchors

Occasionally during the conversations with my participants on their hopes for the future, aspects that linked directly to Schein's Career Anchors (1990) emerged, which usually reflected the individual's reported or the anchor that emerged during discussion. Pure challenge can already be seen in the discussions above which is the dominant reported anchor of the participants, but there were also issues around technical/functional: *'I don't want to go into an environment that doesn't involve my technical skills at all' (15.5); 'avoidance - technical obsolescence (I still programme)' (14.1), lifestyle: 'that's not about having children, it's about private life - I like the people who work for me to have a balance about working hard but being able to put that into perspective' (13.6); 'I want to avoid travelling' (14:14); 'but I'm not going to get up at 4:30 am' (14.9); 'I am not going to prostitute myself for the organisation ... I don't expect to work in a job that keeps me away from home for most of the time and involves weekend working' (14.6); and security: 'redundancy I would like to avoid because my pension plan says I can't go until I'm 55, I'd like that to be' (14.2), 'retirement on a reasonable pension' (14.11); 'working with bigger customers and products that result in more money' (14.14).*

Responsibility for Career

My participants felt the responsibility for their careers rested firmly with themselves: *'I know myself better than anyone else does ... it's very difficult to involve anyone else as they have their own agenda' (16.13); 'it's only me that manages my career' (16.15); 'I always think that it is you that makes your own*

destiny' (16.10), *'ultimately all moves should be the responsibility of the individual'* (16.8) although there was one participant who was reluctant *'not me, I think it's just fate, it has just happened, I suppose it should be me, but since I've not got a clue'* (16.3). Two of them would also involve their spouses: *'My wife ... she is someone to talk it over with'* (16.3); *'spouses and interested parties from your personal life'* (16.5).

They also saw their line managers playing a crucial role: *'I would look to my manager to assist me with advice and guidance'* (16.4); *'my manager and I hope my manager's manager would look at me and say I think we might get [participant] to do that'*(16.10); *'quite obviously my boss'* (16.15); *'other HALers with whom I have to negotiate these moves which are my own boss and the people with opportunities'* (16.16), including their future manager: *'the person I am going to and the person I am moving from'* (16.12).

Some participants thought the organisation beyond their manager should also be involved: *'people for whom I will be working, and there's a whole rake of people really, those who will be responsible for running the business'* (16.11); *'I believe the company must be given the opportunity to provide what you want'* (16.5); *'it should be corporate responsibility to make sure that the right opportunities are created for the right candidate'* (16.8); *'The organisation has some responsibility to me - there is a psychological contract, which says my value to you is more than the fulfilment of a function, I would look to the organisation to do whatever it is reasonable to do within its powers to assist in the development of my career - the development lies with me.'* (16.7).

The employment relationship and the events that change perspectives

In the second half of the conversations we focussed more directly on the participants' views of the employment relationship they had with HAL through the use of the following question areas to more explicitly access the commitment and psychological contract concepts that may have not emerged previously:

- How would you characterise the relationship between HAL and its employees?
- How do you think this has changed in the last few years?
- How would you like it to change in the next few years?

Views of the Current Relationship

The key theme that emerged from my participants was that of change from the paternalistic, protective, organisation of ten years ago to the variety of businesses where the onus is on the individual to add value. These retrospective views were considered, seeing the downside as well, rather than a view through rose tinted spectacles.

How it used to be ...

'It used to be very paternal and it used to have tremendous loyalty, but also its employees demanded tremendous loyalty from HAL' (17.6); 'people in my unit would give up certain earning power for the company' (17.9); 'HAL tries to be like big daddy, all part of one family, treat everyone as well as we can, protect and look after them, but it can be smothering. HAL should differentiate between the good and the not so good, it is almost communist - the same rights for all' (17.13); 'there are a lot of people around in HAL who think HAL is brilliant and that anyone who works for HAL should think themselves lucky' (18.3); 'the idea that the company will look after you for years and years' (18.8).

The Old Contract - A job for life ...

- *'In the old days you had a much closer, smaller community in your branch office, you knew the managers there and you had quite a lot of contact with them, it was quite a high degree of trust and a psychological contract was there, I think, in terms of progress, in terms of promotion, in terms of salary and in very wealthy days it was all very much simpler' (17.16)*
- *'Ten years ago it was very different, people were almost certain of job security, life was more leisurely, much more process oriented, things were different, expense budgets far more lax, but then HAL had a virtual monopoly' (18.11);*

- *'in the early days of HAL when I joined ... managers were moving over, moving across, moving up, so there were always these opportunities and they appear to have dried up now'* (17.2);
- *'It used to be a job for life when I joined, new jobs would be found if things weren't working but that's disappeared'* (17.14);
- *'The quid pro quo of this was that they really expected, well I've worked for HAL for 20 years and therefore of course I should have this job, at this level, earning this much money and they weren't looking in terms of their actual contribution to the organisation, after a period of time they rather demanded that HAL put them into a position of a certain status and didn't look on the return that they need to give'* (17.6);
- *'compensation would have been played down in the past in exchange for security'* (18.7);
- *'when I first joined I went to lots of retirements, the time served 30 years club recognition ... the job for life appeals to people as they get older'* (17.10).

How it is now

The impact of changes resulting out of *'the UK collapsed - business units were formed out of huge verticals and broken up'* (11.1) has led to my participants seeing differences at both an individual and at business level: *'varied - inevitably, depending on the business, I would get a different answer from everyone who works for me'* (17.7); *'it can vary function by function, I like to think it is better than it is'* (17.9).

In describing the effects of the balance of the relationship moving away from being employee centred, participants felt: *'the emphasis on changing the business has de-focused from the employee, so our drive for getting back to profitability ... has been to a large degree to the detriment of some of its employee relations'* (18.7); *'The relationship is growing more and more pressured, more contentious, we've cut headcount, great swathes through headcount, last year we had our biggest year ever for revenue, fewer people actually delivering more'* (17.11); *'if you won't do it there are lots of others who would'* (17.14); *'we are still in this, be glad you've got a job and focus on doing the particular job that you have'* (18.6).

Some participants thought that there were those who had not recognised the changes or the need to change: *'some of the people I've seen are more interested in managing their careers than they are managing the people that work for them, and they fail to recognise that'* (17.15); *'you get some people who are very focussed on their career and yet don't understand why you want the business results'* (18.6), which also reflects the 'old hands' view: *'on the part of employees I would think there is great cynicism, in some of the older hands ... there's an element of HAL owes them a living'* (17.11); *'I think other people in HAL would expect much more from their side of the contract ... which I think sometimes--- aren't realistic, the old values of 'job for life' have gone up in smoke'* (18.8). Only one participant also disagreed that things had changed fundamentally: *'I don't honestly think that it's changed an awful lot, it's very much down to the individual manager ... I think that management levels much higher up than the first level have had considerable changes in terms of how to manage individuals, but at the end of the day they are so far removed from the reality that I don't see it's honestly changed that much'* (18.4).

This theme of lack of recognition that changes had been needed was also taken up by a number of participants who had differing views about the calibre of the people the organisation employed then and now: *'I would say in 1990, the ones with the intelligence and the get up and go left, and left the dross behind'* (17.10) and what should happen to those they saw not pulling their weight: *'HAL should sack those who need to be sacked, the culture needs to differentiate more - management need to be better at being honest with people and help the people who are rubbish to go'* (18.13); *'HAL had never fired someone because they were not up to scratch and it is something we do now ... there are still cases where HAL shies away from getting rid of people who are patently not up to the job and will strive as hard as it can to find a niche ... I don't think that helps the organisation at all'* (17.6) and the downsizing would continue: *'there will be fewer and fewer people, who will be tasked to do more and more ... productivity tools generally serve to reduce productivity - fewer people, fewer admin. people so there are more administration errors, I now have to fix problems'* (18.11).

The Moral Issues

However despite being seen as a *'very results oriented company and we have to focus on that'* one participant illustrated a situation concerning an employee with an very ill child where *'personnel said, well we are still human beings here, ... so it still believes in those sorts of moral issues, which is good ... so from that point of view it's comforting and I think people recognise that and respond well to that'* (19.6), which was corroborated by *'there are some deep seated cultural good things which are balancing off some of the others - we are still not a 'hire and fire' organisation, we won't tolerate fools but we accept the deeper value of people's contribution'* despite the same participant suggesting *'a number of people within the organisation would say the organisation no longer values me - I don't have the level of security, I don't have the level of compensation'*(18.7), which is reinforced by another participant *'it's interesting doing this now, having gone through this year as a manager, this time last year I would have said the basic trust is there ... the environment that I would like is open and a degree of trust, but I would balance that with the recognition of the need to deliver the business results'* (18.16), however a further view on this suggests it is not deliberate *'I think a lot of employees would think that HAL doesn't look after them. My view is that if HAL doesn't look after them, it's not through not wanting to, it's through maybe not quite understanding what it's doing'* (17.5).

Onus on the Individual

My participants recognised that in career terms *'it has become a buyer's market, people will buy skills when needed ... the onus is on the individual to spot the trends and to make the investment to go whichever way the market goes'* (18.8) and that *'the relationship with your people has changed ... you start them off at a level when you are making sure they understand that careers and development are going to depend on 1) their ability, and 2) opportunity, and those opportunities will be less frequent'* (18.2). Part of taking responsibility was also expressed as: *'people recognise that they really need to continually be able to contribute at quite a high level at whatever role they're doing'* (17.6).

Relationships with the organisation

'I think there are two relationships between HAL and its employees,' my participant then went on *'there's a relationship between HAL and its professionals and there's a relationship between HAL and its managers, and they treat the two different types of employees very differently'* (17.5) and in explaining who they thought HAL was, another suggested *'I don't look at HAL as a big organisation, really to me HAL is your manager and your manager's manager'* (17.10) which also reflected my first participant's view *'because its managers are regarded as the delivery agents for everything to the professionals, I think it's fallen into the trap of thinking -well the managers are there as representatives of the company and therefore we don't have to worry about the managers themselves as people'* (17.5), and could also be considered in the light of the view expressed previously *'I think that management levels much higher up than the first level have had considerable changes in terms of how to manage individuals, but at the end of the day they are so far removed from the reality'* (18.4).

'I think the relationship between the employee is that I think a lot of employees would think that HAL doesn't look after them. My view is that if HAL doesn't look after them, it's not through not wanting to, it's through maybe not quite understanding what it's doing.' (17.5)

This view of the organisation relationship being represented by the manager is reflected by other participants *'all I really know about is my manager and that is the only person who knows about me'* (17.3); sometimes transposing words for the organisation with management *'the culture needs to differentiate more - management need to be better at being honest with people'* (18.13).

The manager - individual relationship

Managers saw their role in the relationship with individuals slightly differently, with one participant seeing *'my current relationship with team I manage is very much one of equal peers... I see myself as just someone to help them along in their career and in their day to day job'* (17.4), whereas another suggested *'the amount of influence as a manager you have, either because people want to be*

like you or because they like you or whatever, and therefore you will always become their mentor, role model, and rightly or wrongly you can negatively impact what they do' (17.15). Another saw it as 'a business relationship ... I think that I treat most of my people like mature adults' and was concerned that it remained so, 'don't ask me to take the top of this guy's head off then poke around inside, and then put the top back on, that's not what I'm trained to do and that's not what I want to do and I don't feel comfortable doing that' (17.2).

Generally they saw a similar role is helping individuals with their careers *'it is encouraging them that there is a reason and purpose for them to be developed, but not focus on a job in the business unit or even in HAL, let's think a bit broader than that' (18.2), 'we give people the tools they need to manage their careers ... what we have to do is to present opportunities, the company can present opportunities when they arise and facilitate people making the right decisions' (17.5); although with some caution 'not everybody can grasp it or understand it and work with it, so give them what their capacity can take and then encourage them to take smaller steps - we just go wallop and people drown' (18.15).*

Individual Perspectives

When I asked my participants their views on the relationship between HAL and its employees the discussion was mostly objective however a few subjective views emerged:

'I have to do a good job because I'm paid a fair amount of money to achieve, so if I'm not achieving, I am not delivering, so I guess I have a psychological contract to deliver whatever it is that HAL thinks it needs' (17.8)

'I'm committed I only made my first move for money' (17.9)

'I get security out of knowing that I am good at what I want to do' (18.3)

'I am seeing HAL taking an interest in careers but I still have to make things happen' (17.12)

Obligations and expectations - a matching process?

In the first half of the conversations with participants we discussed their expectations at different stages in their careers which would also reflect at what life stage they were (Schein, 1978), with the following questions we put these expectations more explicitly in the context of their current employment relationship.

- What do you think HAL's expectations of and obligations to its employees are?
- How well does HAL meet these?
- What do you think employees' expectations of and obligations to HAL are?
- How well do employees meet these?
- What are the actual events or symbols that you consider define the relationship between HAL and its employees?

General Aspects Of The Employment Relationship

Our conversations in the area of the expectations of either side of the employment relationship were often set against the backdrop of differing expectations *'the company itself has gone through a really traumatic time and I don't think the ground rules have been reset since that time, because if you talk to people who were around before all of the redundancies, they have a completely different set of expectations ... traditional HAL culture is that you give your all to the company and the company gives back, at the moment the company is not really giving back'* (19.5). The differences were expanded by other participants: *'sales people are more money oriented than the technical community, the commitments are different'* (19.9); but the flavour of the previous 'old hand', 'new hire' comparisons re-emerged: *'you see really enthusiastic people, contrasted by those waiting for retirement, happy to do the hours rather than achieving'* (19.12); *'people who were employed now ... basically get as much out of the company and move on'* (19.5).

My participants also used the notion of exchange, balance and partnership in the conversations: *'I think it's more evenly balanced than people realise ... people*

tend to get too comfortable in that they feel they've got more to bargain with in some situation and would choose perhaps to bargain a little too strongly ...but it's only on the back of HAL's continued success' (19.8); 'I think there is a partnership in that if you keep your employees happy you get more out of them' (19.10); 'I would certainly [consider], as to what level of personal commitment am I willing to trade for that move ... balancing the personal side of my life to my career, business life' (19.7).

Employee's Expectations of HAL

Participants suggested that *'expectations are actually very high of HAL, they really expect HAL to be significantly better than they would expect any other company in the same circumstances to be, and that's because it sets itself up to be better'*(21.6); *'I think most employees expect a lot from their company, packages, benefits ... they expect so much 'they are not giving me this - how dare they' (21.10). Another participant adds: 'I think that people expect HAL, HAL management to be mapping particularly people's careers and monitoring their contribution and looking for HAL to guide them and place where they want to be and where HAL wants them to be' (21.8), which is corroborated by a colleague seeing their role to advise 'This is your career - what do you want to do, where do you want to be in 10 years time - let's work on that' (21.2).*

As introduction to the next recurring theme other participants added *'They all have different expectations - I can't generalise - many want to get on, but understand it differently, driven by peer pressure, family pressures - lots of external things drive people' (21.1); 'we tend to get two of types of candidates, one who comes to us to build their UNIX skills if, so they are looking to us for education, and the other who comes to us looking for a career' (21.4).*

Old Hands - new hires

'You can divide employees into 2 groups - long-term and recent, because they have completely different sets of expectations' (21.5). My participant resurfaced the difference between these two groups of employees again in this part of the conversation.

The 'old hands' expectations were described by them in general terms *'The long-termers' expectations I believe are rather unreasonable in general. The long-termers' expectations are career for life, job progression, salary progression, always something interesting to do and there is always somebody looking after them. That's the long-termers view'*(21.5); *'to be in a secure / stable environment to work in, to be at the leading edge'* (21.9); *'The downside I guess, they feel if they don't do anything illegal they will still have a job, and on the upside if they do very well they will be very well rewarded for it'* (21.8); *'people expect to get a good pension, security and a job for life'* (21.13), but also in more specific terms: *'I would expect me to be recompensed for the work that I do and expect them to compensate me for being away so much above the costs that are actually incurred'* (21.14).

The participants' views of the expectations of the *'recent hire's view is opportunity to build up skills, opportunity to share in the success of the company, and I suppose an opportunity to stay with the company while the skills are current and while whatever they do adds value to the company'*(21.5); *'to build their UNIX skills if, so they are looking to us for education'* (21.4), the objective view is reinforced by another participant *'I get security out of knowing that I am good at what I do'*, who goes on to suggest an emphasis on extrinsic reward *'don't want to exchange bonus for permanent contract'* (21.3); *'if they do very well they will be very well rewarded for it'* (21.8), although recognition is another seen to be a factor: *'the buzz is the technology and the respect they get from customers'* (21.9) and the *'recognition and progression, security and stability especially for those with children'* (21.12).

HAL's Obligations to its employees

My participants continued with how they thought expectations on one side of the relationship, the employees, were translated into obligations on the other, the organisation, which were not seen as unique to HAL: *'I don't know about HAL, I think any company should have obligations'* (19.3) although this was not shared by everyone *'I don't think it has any obligations to them'* (19.10). The

obligations there were, were seen as falling into three areas, mostly at the personnel practices level.

Formal Exchange

- *'I would expect me to be recompensed for the work that I do and expect them to compensate me for being away so much above the costs that are actually incurred'* (19.14).
- *'it depends what this written contract, I mean its obligations to me are pretty minimal, really, to give me four weeks notice, to pay me the salary that is agreed my own view is that an organisation like HAL, sets out in law, works in a legal framework with a set of obligations, they are legal obligations, I think morally it owes a bit more, and over and above that'* (19.11).
- *'It certainly has obligations in terms of health and safety and agreed deliverables, the worth of agreed deliverables ... (there's a whole sort of package of welfare, cars, telephones, health insurance, plan for life, all of these kind of welfare aspects, probably the majority of, almost exclusively the contract that HAL has with its employees in a deliverable sense, they're from HAL rather than from your manager)'* (19.8).

Day To Day Management

The other main category of obligations came into the realm of the manager who, in the more tangible area, *'should make sure that you have the tools to do the job, the resources, there's enough people in your team or the equipment arrives at the right time'* (19.3); and that *'people get lots of training'* (19.9).

From the more supportive aspects of the management role the participants saw their obligations as: *'Trying to give them other things that might make the role more interesting.'* (19.4); *'obligations are to be fair and even handed - to look after them as far as they can and to be supportive in their goals'* (19.9); *'I will help you and then some, when it comes to you wanting something from me'* (19.4); *'managing their expectations down to a level that I can satisfy so that they are not going to come and bang on my door in 18 months and say "done that, what next?" Now previously you would do almost the opposite'* (19.2). Two

participants saw a wider context: *'To give them a fair hearing, to progress, to get the maximum out of that individual. I think to make them proud, I think people want to be proud of working for such a company'* (19.15), including beyond the organisation: *'it has a further set of obligations to society... which is moving more and more to short term contract type work, and that's increasing people's or decreasing people's ability to plan for the future ... and it's increasing job insecurity'* (19.11).

Progression

One participant thought the organisation had obligations to enable people to progress although not in the traditional, structured career sense : *'I think its obligations are to give somebody the opportunity to succeed in a job, so their obligation is to make sure you have the right person doing the right job and you give somebody a fair opportunity to do that and I think it does have an obligation to give people the opportunity to progress and have a career'* (19.6), whilst another saw *'its obligations to them are things like careers and opportunities and training and encouragement and coaching'* (19.16).

How well does it meet them?

Participants had mixed views on how well the organisation met their obligations:

It meets them very well

'I think to be fair it meets them very well. As I said to you earlier on in some ways it almost bends over backwards to make sure that if someone is not doing well in a job let's find something else they can do rather than sometimes saying look this person is not able to achieve in our environment, let's cut our losses' (20.6) *'in terms of what I expect it certainly meets them, meets my expectations. I think sometimes it attempts to change expectations which is almost the same thing'* (20.8); *'It meets them very well, I'm biased as a manager - as I am delivering those obligations as far as I can'* (20.9)

Patchy

Another group of my participants were not so positive, some saw it as dependent on who: *'I think it's very individualistic - it depends on the individual really'*

(20.16) and where you were: *'patchy. I think it depends on the business, I think it depends on timing, I think it depends on lots of things. I think it depends on economic climate'* (20.15). It was also dependent on attitude of both employees: *'you get employees who are pushing but don't feel they get anything from their management'* (20.16), and managers: *'or you get managers who want people to do things, and they don't'* (20.16); *'Some of the older managers in the centre are still very - This is the job, if you don't like it - tough'* (20.4).

Other participants were specific on their reasons for a 'patchy' response: *'are met - but have gone down for example - which hotel I stay in has changed'* (20.14) and *'I think HAL has got a bloody good deal - the contract is 37 and a half hours a week and I do at least a 10 hour day, the focus on the customer means, if I am away from home it is still not my own time, working time is when I am not at home'* (21.14) others were not: *'it doesn't really meet these'* (20.13).

As a manager I am delivering those obligations as far as I can ...

Managers among my participants recognised a responsibility for delivering obligations and having a sense of commitment to employees: *'That is not to say you can't counsel them and encourage them in a different way'* (20.2); *'You commit to me and I will commit to you having a career'* (20.1); *'people who we have taken on recently have accepted that we're paying to skill them up, build them up ... what we've actually done is to convert them early[to a permanent contract] ... so that they can see that there really is a commitment to them and their career within the company'* (20.4); *'there is a reason and a purpose for them to be developed'* (20.2); *'the better candidates, we convert them as early as possible and the ones that are not so good, give them more of an opportunity to shine at a later stage before we actually decide whether or not they should be converted'* (20.4) although *'sometimes it attempts to change expectations'* (20.8).

Expectations of the organisation

When looking at what they thought the organisation expected of its employees participants, their views fell into two areas.

Attributes

- *'I guess its expectations are always going to be honesty, integrity, I would say continual improvement. It's a difficult phrase this one, but I think they've got to be both customer focussed, and when I use the word customer it doesn't mean just external, it means internal, and I mean keep in mind holistic which is taking the big picture'* (19.15)
- *'It is expected that people will be flexible'* (22.9)

Application

- *'you do the job and then some'* (19.4).
- *'don't think that it has them [expectations] and it should - 'do the job and add value or go away''*(19.13).
- *'HAL expects its pound of flesh and its very demanding in that respect'* (19.7).
- *'I think its expectations are business results, our skills, in contribution, teamwork, although it's a bit of a cliché'* (19.16).
- *'In general, loyalty and working hard - I perceive that there is a good standard - fools don't last long, HAL expects a certain level of performance and get the benefits of it'* (19.9).
- *'at the moment employees are being expected to work all the hours that God sends for very little reward'* (20.7).
- *'I think it has a right to expect me to portray the organisation in the manner that it wishes to be portrayed. You know so to be in all senses of the word a good representative for the company. I think we have a duty of care. You know, we have a responsibility and it's right of the organisation to expect us to deliver upon that'*. (20.7).

Employee Obligations - Personal commitment

Several of my participants considered this from their own subjective perspective: *'to fulfil role to best of ability, I think that the organisation has the right to expect me to fulfil my role to the very best of my ability ... an organisation is paying you for your services and you should deliver those services, and I think there is a contract between us'* (21.7); *'I think you should be honourable to your*

company, I think you should treat them with respect. I believe that if you are working for HAL that you should promote HAL, don't slag them off, that's treating them with respect' (21.10); 'to work to the best of my ability with customers' (21.14); 'I owe it loyalty, honesty, decency not cheating expenses or doing sharp deals' (21.11)

Others' obligations

These views were reflected in what my participants expected of others, several of them talked about adding value and achieving results: *'The obligations are to add value- not just to do the job' (21.13); ' to add value and to put in the effort when required to' (21.12); 'I think the prime obligation is one has to be doing the job, very crudely, delivering the results, contributing, and I suppose I see contribution as a broad level rather than just do the job in isolation' (21.16); 'To add value to HAL, to do their job. Probably to go a little bit further than just doing their job as well' (21.5). Some participants added to the added value concept with loyalty and commitment: 'loyalty, to work hard, not to leave (in the local sense) part of loyalty is not leaving' (21.9); 'so we're looking at commitment that says before you move on you are going to spend three years with us as, we will invest in you, we will give you the skills you need to do the job, but if you want a career you have to put in three years before we move you on' (21.4); 'I think that most people recognise that they have to make a significant contribution in the role that they have' (21.6), although this was seen as inconsistent: 'some of them don't have such an intense commitment, some of them just do a job, they owe it nothing more than that and probably less if they can get away with it' (21.11).*

One participant saw it as a traditional exchange of goods and labour: *'I think from the point of view of their obligations is to do an honest day's work for honest day's pay' (21.15)*

Responsibilities

Another theme that emerged from my participants was that of taking responsibility either as an employee: *'I think really I also see them as taking*

responsibility for their own careers but I think a lot of them struggle with what does that really mean and how do you do it' (21.16); 'People frightened to say they would like new job until it's too late' (22.1); 'You have a duty of care to ensure that you deliver to the very best of your ability in accordance with that contract. I don't think that's different whether you're a manager or an employee or a contractor' or as my participant continued, as a manager: 'I guess there will be more expectations of me as a manager insofar as being an officer of the company, as people like to remind you occasionally [but not otherwise]' (21.7).

How well do employees meet their obligations?

Participants had differing views on how well they felt employees met their obligations to the organisation.

Sense Of Obligation

Some participants thought there was 'a very high sense of professionalism, there is a high work ethic, and I think on balance the work force at large deliver on those, there are clearly exceptions, but you know as a broad statement I think that would be true' (22.7); 'I think some people are very happy to meet their obligations' (22.8).

Very patchy

Another group of participants picked up on the extent of exceptions, seeing a 'very patchy' situation (22.15): *'In general pretty well. There are the odd whingers' (22.5); 'Some meet them very well, not everyone, they are the 'plodders' (22.12); this was attributed to two reasons: 'I think people who don't on the whole it's because, it would be two reasons, one is because they just don't have the capacity for the job that they're in so they're in the wrong job and there are very occasionally the people who are just not going to make it because they don't have the right level of commitment' (22.6).*

Old hands

One participant ascribed patchiness to the 'old hand' issue: *'There's a lot of people here who've been here for a long time, know how to hide and know how to play the system. Wouldn't survive in other organisations for 5 minutes' (22.15).*

Propensity To Break Contracts

In contrast, other participants described those who do not consider they have a long term contract: *'once with they have been with us x years they have this thing that says I've been here so long I now need to move on'* (22.4) *'others who are perhaps more ambitious or more selfish perhaps who are willing to break that contract and take advantage'* (22.8), or those who are more extrinsically motivated: *'the other people, who are just after the money, it's "thanks very much and goodbye". We can't pay the kind of money that the people are looking for out there, it's ridiculous'* whereas *'if they are career people with the company it will be "OK let's sit down and plan this, what are we going to do with your career and how are we going to move you on"'* (22.4).

Events And Symbols

My participants saw the events that symbolised the relationship for them in two main areas, one was the formal contract they had directly with organisation, and the other was related more to the contract they had with their manager.

Formal Contract

In identifying the different contracts, one participant identified *'there's a whole sort of package of welfare, cars, telephones, health insurance, plan for life, all of these kind of welfare aspects, probably the majority of, almost exclusively the contract that HAL has with its employees in a deliverable sense, they're from HAL rather than from your manager ... anything I guess human resources would get involved with, you know car, insurance, pensions'* (23.8).

Contract With The Organisation

Participants reinforced this emerging concept with their view of what constituted the formal relationship, from the compensation package: *'everything that makes up a caring employer - which goes beyond financial compensation, but things like, now I understand that the company was very good at things like family dinners for example, as an example of we value the individual'* (23.7); *'there are obvious things aren't there, like the package, the entire package, the car, salary ... office space, equipment that they have, environment'* (23.16) to pay as it

symbolises progression: *'pay rises, awards - recognition within the business'* (23.12); *'pay reviews, awards and recognition, some would prefer non monetary rewards'* (23.9); *'if people don't get pay rises and things like that I think they lose their trust in the company'* (23.10), some participants also appraisal in this way and linked it with pay: *'when saying how I have done and how you think you have done, pay - I am happy or not happy with it'* (23.13); *'Symbols - I suppose the formal things, you know appraisal comments'* (23.16).

Some participants described the times they thought about their contract and how it was working as: *'when I change my job - this has been good and I need more challenge'* (23.13); *'When we look at what are the catalysts that bring that forward, it tends to be the money, the market, the time, some people just spend two years with us, to build their skills and build and move on and then they go to be next manufacturer saying I've got skill in that area and the next give me some of your skills and they go'* (23.4); *'every time I get a head hunter on the phone I ask 'do HAL value me", most people wouldn't leave HAL for a bit more money plus the image of working for HAL'* (23.13)

One of my participants felt it was this area that was vulnerable: *'When the going gets tough it is always the employee relations side that falls first, when the going gets tough it is employees that have to work twice as hard to rescue a situation, while being gently trodden on'* (23.5).

Informal Contract

The concept of the informal contract emerged as that which was controlled by the manager rather than the organisation through the personnel function: *'As a manager I've got absolutely no influence whatever on the pension for instance, the pension policy is what it is, health and benefit the package is..'* the participant then went on, *'The informal contract, there's a bit more on that, you know assignments abroad, broadening your skills, experience, participating in different programmes on behalf of HAL, representing HAL at conferences, things like that which build people's skills and competencies, I suppose, which are by no means contractual.'* (23.8).

Managerial Involvement

Participants described the informal contract, although not necessarily in those words, as those areas managed through the manager: *'and then you have the more personal things, the reviews, almost every piece of communication that you have, individual reviews, unit meetings'* (23.16); *'It is determined through job allocation by the manager'* (23.14).

A major opportunity to develop the relationship with the manager came from appraisal and reviews: *'Appraisal tends to be the point where we do try, and use the appraisal to absolutely define the performance of an individual and try and understand what their expectations are and tell them what HAL's expectations are of them'* (23.6); *'appraisal, when saying how I have done and how you think you have done'* (23.13), and an interesting view emerged of the technical community: *'technical people are obviously motivated by different things, regular reviews with the manager, leapfrogs, - there's certainly a tendency in the technical community to think that anything that's going on at company level doesn't involve them, that really they're involved with their manager and maybe their manager's manager ...'* and particularly the 'recent hires': *'well if you take the principle that, certainly of recent employees, - they're there to do a job, to learn the skills, to gain more skills whatever, why would they be interested in the company at a higher level because they don't necessarily see themselves with the company long-term'* (23.5).

Some participants added the dimension of reciprocity:

'It is a business relationship, but that's not to say that we don't socialise and there aren't times when it can be fun, businesslike doesn't mean dull, do this, do that, it's not like that, but I think that I treat most of my people like mature adults, I probably believe that they are similar to me - I treat them how I would like to be treated and try to approach careers, or any issue as mature adults and not as a man manager or as a parent child or any of those' (23.2).

'What we are doing here is showing people that we are interested in them that is the whole point of doing this really, in fact if you show more interest in your employees they will show more interest back . Love and being loved isn't it . Things like bonuses and that, and your manager talking to you and something happening' (23.10).

Communication and Recognition

Another area symbolising the contract mentioned by my participants, was that of recognition: *'Proof from an independent manager "giving the blessing", public evidence and testimonials, physical proof that we value them, giving them stripes and medals' (23.1); 'It is weighted to HAL - what do we get? recognition, better budget, there are now fewer, bigger awards It could be better hotels or higher mileage' (23.14); 'I think HAL does try and do recognition events, where it recognises achievement over and above, so it does 100% clubs, it does golden circle or high achievers or something so the top few salesmen as opposed to the bulk who make the target, it also does things like national marketing excellence awards or simple things like dinner for two awards for people who've just done something, so it's an awards and recognition scheme' (23.6).*

There were also other areas outside the formal contract and the 'normal' work arrangement: *'there's nothing in the contract that says you'll go abroad for 2 weeks a year or something, it's when the opportunity arises, so we have study tours and that kind of thing which gives the opportunity to go abroad, which is not really a perk, it's not a holiday, but it's not 9 to 5 working back in [the office], it's different' (23.8); 'So the important things are those things that are very specific day to day - things like Christmas parties, like support meetings, like kick-off meetings...' (23.5).* Although another participant issued the following warning: *'the reviews, almost every piece of communication that you have, individual reviews, unit meetings, do you get a Christmas lunch? But it's so difficult because it would be so different to individuals won't it? Some people for example are very sensitive about reviews, and it's almost like every communication you have with them relates back to the annual appraisal' (23.16).*

Looking To The Future

My participants also saw that the informal contract also had assumptions about the future: *'with reduced levels, people can't see how they are getting on and making progress, they need a tangible career plan, career/career guidance and "visioning", which is separate from task management'* (23.1); *'sponsoring them through their career path e.g. through sales school, supporting people's realistic career plans'* (23.9); *'broadening skills and experiences, involvement in different programmes assignments abroad, broadening your skills, experience, participating in different programmes on behalf of HAL, representing HAL at conferences, things like that which build people's skills and confidence'* (23.8). Although for one participant, the organisational responsibility to help her further her career: *'when I ask about conversion I get asked when am I going to have kids- FTCs don't have maternity leave, yet there are lots of successful women in the [business]'* (23.12).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have set out to start the 'sensemaking' process (Weick, 1995) by providing the descriptive output of my conversations with my participants, letting them speak for themselves, without trying to interpret their words, beyond the initial simple clustering of ideas, within a chronological framework that was based on the interview process. This thick description therefore provides a database from which others can make their own interpretations and judgements on how similar the views of these individuals are to those in other organisations.

I have also followed Wolcott's (1994) advice to beginners that the emphasis should be on the description, although he suggests a ratio of 40:5:15, description to analysis to interpretation, for a qualitative research project. It is the job of the following chapters to provide that analysis and interpretation, maybe not in those ratios, by following the emergent themes of 'drifters', 'old hands', 'directedness' and others and their impact on the employment relationship that unfold as a result of that analysis.

Chapter 7 - Analysis and Interpretation: making the connections

"Live in fragments no longer. Only connect, and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation that is life to either, will die."

E. M. Forster (1879-1970)

Introduction

The thick description that provided the content of the previous chapter was the beginning point of the analysis phase of my research journey, providing the base from which I can move to through the making sense stage of this chapter to the communication of the emergent theory and synthesis with existing literature in the next discussion chapter. In this stage I am still mindful of Wolcott's (1994) formula of the ratio of description, analysis and interpretation in a phenomenological study, with the emphasis on the description and the interpretation.

This chapter also reflects the hermeneutic circle and Gummesson's (1993) cycle of understanding and pre-understanding as this phase of my journey has taken me on two of the three iterations through my transcriptions. The first iteration allowed me to produce my initial results and group them in a chronological framework so that the constructs could emerge; the second iteration came from reviewing and coding the transcripts with the constructs from the results in order to analyse them; the third provides an illustration of the nature of the phenomenon of the employment relationship through reconstructing my participants' views and experiences.

Initially the analysis describes an inductive, intuitive approach to processing and analysing the information, although it has been supported through statistical methods in the form of cluster analysis. This phase of the journey has had its share of the grind associated with processing but it has also had *'the truly analytical moments [that] will occur during brief bursts of insight or pattern recognition'* (Wolcott, 1994, p24).

The chapter will draw its structure initially from the major themes or constructs clustered into four contextual settings that reflect my research questions: the individual, the organisation, their relationship, and the factors that trigger change, that come from the obligations and expectations of both sides of the psychological contract, and the 'trigger events' that are part of that contracting process (Herriot and Pemberton, 1996; Schein, 1978; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). The first section, after an explanation of the methods for arriving at the themes, contains my reconstruction of how my participants interpret the constructs through the use of cluster analysis, which are referenced to the literature and theory already available in this area. The following section takes my interpretation of their experiences a step further, by constructing theoretical frameworks to explain the phenomenon of the employment relationship and how it changes, as it is interpreted in this particular context. Finally, I will illustrate the theory with four composite 'vignettes' drawn from my participants' experience as related to me. The detailed synthesis and discussion of the emergent themes and theories will be undertaken in the next chapter.

Methods for Analysis

Inductive Methods

A fuller description of the inductive methods I used to arrive at this stage of my analysis can be found in greater depth in the methodology chapter. The analysis and interpretation attempted here builds on the thick description developed in the previous chapter which formed the first level of analysis, developed directly from the ideas recorded on the hexagons, taken from the Pinpoint record of the conversations.

To reach a second order of analysis I used the emergent themes from the previous thick description to categorise the full transcripts, which led to a re-focused group of themes and constructs. Previously I had reclustered my original themes, to move away from the chronological approach that I had used to write the thick description, by pasting them onto post-its and clustering them intuitively.

However I found that my clustering at this stage still reflected the headings I had used in the 'thick description', producing contextual constructs rather than something more akin to the psychological ones I was seeking, perhaps because I was too close to it. It was at this point that I decided to revisit the themes of each paragraph in my description, relabel them as necessary and to cluster these revised themes anew, as described in the Grounded Theory section in Chapter 4, with the results forming the 135 headings that then became the forty six constructs listed below in Table 7.1 which can be taken to be the invariant constituents (Moustakas, 1994).

The credibility of my interpretation was checked through asking my second researcher, to repeat the exercise to ensure there were enough similarities in our respective groupings, to provide credibility for my constructs (see appendix 5 for supporting notes). Cristina found four overall concepts:

- the active and passive pursuers of careers;
- the different ways of securing respect and recognition - those who like a challenge and those looking for security
- the written contract, the informal contract
- the quality of the relationship with the manager - if it is very good it can get over any problems with the formal contract and vice versa

There seemed to be no major deviations from my own constructs and she had begun to group ideas a stage further, so I felt confident to proceed, developing a matrix of which of those themes and constructs each participant introduced into our conversations, shown at Table 7.1 below, in the same way that I had with my initial headings in the previous chapter. It had been the initial matrix that had been the catalyst for my next stage of analysis, when I realised that what I had was really a group of paragraph headings rather than constructs, whether contextual or psychological. My new matrix enabled me to easily identify which participants had raised which construct, which transcript to read in more depth for particular themes, and it also allowed me to check for saturation and redundancy (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I was also able to identify that no new construct

emerged after my seventh interview. Most importantly however, it was this matrix that I was able to use with the Hierarchical Cluster Analysis in SPSS to provide a different level of analysis, which led to a number of richer insights.

Constructs Raised by Participants

CONSTRUCT	Participants Contribution to Themes																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
Personal Factors																	
Achievement	*				*	*	*	*	*		*					*	*
Advancement	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
General Management	*	*			*					*	*						*
Autonomy							*										*
Challenge		*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*
Commitment	*			*	*	*			*		*	*	*				
New Hires	*	*	*	*	*	*				*	*						
Old Hands	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Differing Expectations	*				*		*	*								*	*
Development			*	*	*	*	*	*					*				*
Directedness	*							*	*	*	*					*	
Directedness - passive		*	*	*	*		*	*		*	*	*			*	*	
Directedness - active		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*				*
Independence	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Entrepreneur		*			*				*								
Anger					*												
Enjoyment	*	*					*			*	*		*			*	
Fear / Nervous		*		*	*		*	*		*	*	*				*	
Sad / disappointed			*		*		*	*									
Lifestyle					*		*	*				*		*			
Family and Careers		*			*	*	*			*	*						*
Gender						*						*					*
Motivation	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Extrinsic		*		*	*			*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	
Recognition	*	*	*		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Skills	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*		*		*	*
Technical Functional	*	*	*		*			*	*					*			
Triggers																	
Career Drivers (neg)	*		*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*			*	*
Career Drivers (pos)	*			*	*		*			*		*	*	*	*		*
Change Triggers	*				*	*		*			*	*	*			*	
External factors	*	*	*			*			*					*		*	*
Influencers			*	*	*					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
The Organisation																	
The Manager's Role																	
Manager's role in contract	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Manager's role in co.					*		*		*					*		*	*
co./ mgt responsibility	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	*		*		*
Personnel Practices					*	*	*									*	
The Relationship																	
Expectations un/met			*		*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	
Individual's Expectations						*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Individual's obligations				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Org's expectations			*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Organisation's obligations			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Relationships with co.		*	*		*			*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*
Formal /Informal Contract						*		*								*	*
Legal/Formal Contract					*			*			*			*	*		
Relationships - individ	*				*	*	*										
Symbols	*				*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*				*

Table 7.1: Constructs Contributed by Participants

In order to understand what each of my participants had told me about their career, I plotted their career journey against two emergent themes from the thick description, directedness or how active they are in their career moves, and the strength of their employment relationship, which will be described in greater depth in the course of this and the next chapter. To do this I assessed the extent to which they had been active or passive in determining their career direction against what they were seeking from their career in terms of the type of relationship with the organisation and their managers. This was an entirely intuitive approach which, however did reveal some clusters with some interesting linkages, which will be discussed in a later section of this chapter. It was from the further analysis of their narratives that I hoped to find common constructs or experiences emerging to help support the model that had started to emerge during the conversations with them. The initial matrix I developed, with my mapping of participants onto it, is shown at Figure 7.1.

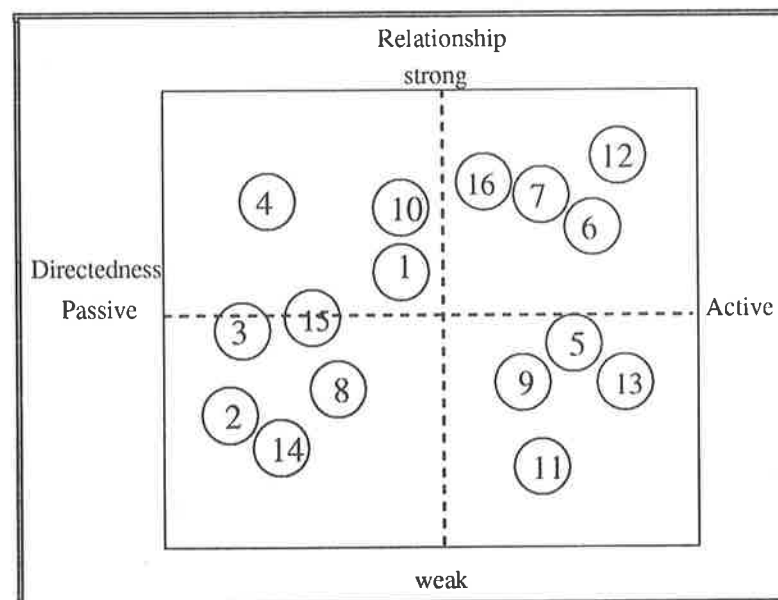


Figure 7.1: Participants Mapped onto Employment Relationship and Career Directedness

Computer aided methods

As I have stated in my methodology chapter, although I was sceptical whether I would gain any additional insight using more structured tools, my curiosity led me

to test my matrix of participant contribution to emergent themes, using the hierarchical cluster analysis facility on SPSS, which also allowed me to develop dendrograms, to illustrate the linkages visually. Although I had identified opposing poles of some of the emergent constructs, the matrix of participants contributions did not allow for the type of contribution made, the strength of feeling or the extent to which it was a passing comment or an 'in-depth' discussion.

From cluster analysis, I was looking for structure, for connections that I may have missed inductively and to elicit support for my intuitive, interpretive analysis, especially in developing my employment relationship and career directedness model. I also hoped to find connections that would actively support my placement of my participants on that model, and to ensure against the tendency that Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that qualitative researchers can have of overweighting facts they believe in or depend on. The final function was to provide stimulus and questioning to my thinking and interpretation in much the same way as my 'tabula rasa', Cristina, had provided earlier.

Cluster analysis is used to classify relatively homogeneous groups of cases or categories, based on their similarity to each other using a measure of distance. Each case is processed as a separate cluster and then combined sequentially until all the cases or categories have merged into a single overarching cluster. Standard outputs from this SPSS procedure include tables of clusters and dendrograms, which provide a more visual way of analysing the links.

Results of Cluster Analyses

The cluster analysis was used to examine both the rows and columns of the contribution matrix, so that links or distances between participants and emergent themes could be established. I tried using both just the 'personal factor' categories and the complete matrix and decided that for my participants, the most useful analysis came from using the personal factors information. I also tried different methods of pattern similarity such as 'furthest neighbour' and Ward's method, but found that the 'furthest neighbour' yielded the most visually

intelligible results, although the others confirmed some of the pairs held irrespective of method and variables used (shown in bold in Table 7.2).

The analysis yielded three main clusters, and initially I could see some parallel experiences of groups of people or discussion of similar issues, but few obvious linkages or much underlying support for my employment relationship and career directedness model. However as the personal factors did not include the relationship aspects, this was to be expected. When I, then looked at my participants' reported career anchors, which I had confirmed with them following our conversation, an explanation for the clusters began to emerge, as shown in Table 7.2 below. There were only two cases where I had to look to the second ranked career anchor to provide the explanation for membership of that cluster, although within the clusters some of the connections are not easily explained. The dendrogram at Figure 7.2 below better illustrates how career anchors provide an explanation for cluster membership.

Cluster	Partici- pants	Career Anchors	Flavour
1 - TF/LS/PC	1, 6 10, 11, 2 5, 14, 3	Technical/functional, Pure Challenge Lifestyle, Technical/functional Technical/functional, Lifestyle	mostly: - support function -transactional contract -passive directed
2 - EC/PC/GM	4, 12, 13 9 8, 15	General Managerial, Autonomy Entrepreneurial Creativity, Pure Challenge Pure Challenge, Entrepreneurial Creativity	mostly: -managers/aspiring ones -active directed -sales / aspiring sales -autonomy
3 - PC	7, 16	Pure Challenge	-active directed -relational contract

Table 7.2: Cluster Analysis on linkages between participants.

With this link to my participants' career anchors, I was able to feel more comfortable with my categorisation of the transcripts as the career anchors were giving me my participants' view of themselves, and the categorisation, my interpretation of our conversation.

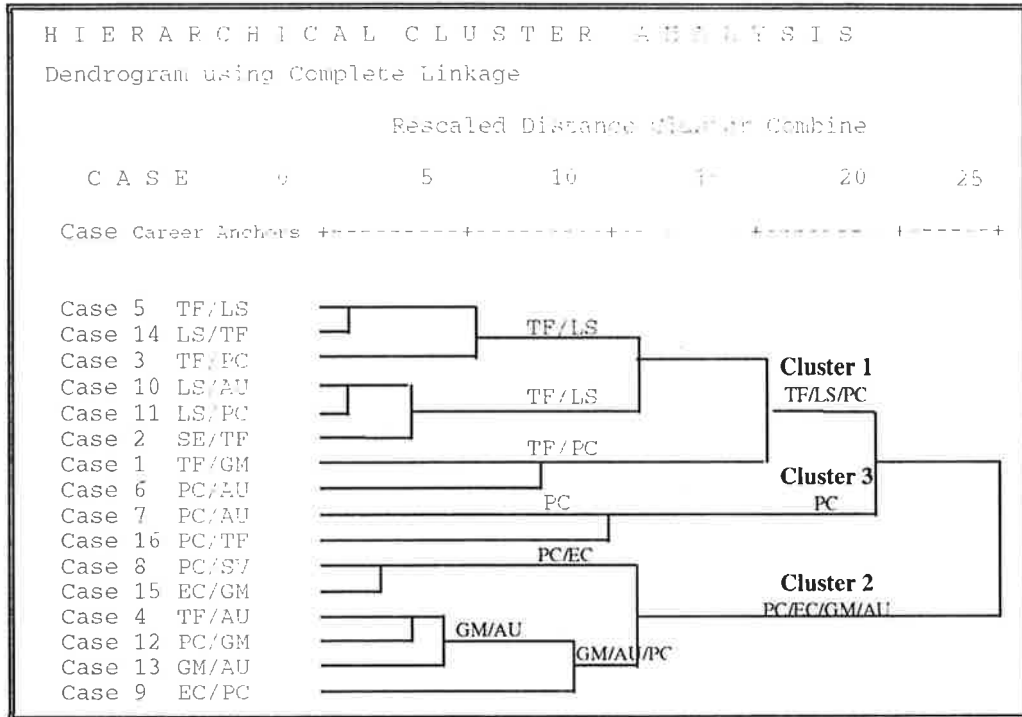


Figure 7.2: Dendrogram showing the linkages between participants

In analysing the negative cases, (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) I was able to find simple explanations for all but one. The negative cases here are those, who from their career anchor would seem logically to be better fitted to a different cluster. The Venn diagram shown at Figure 7.3 below demonstrates the four negative cases in the overlaps between clusters.

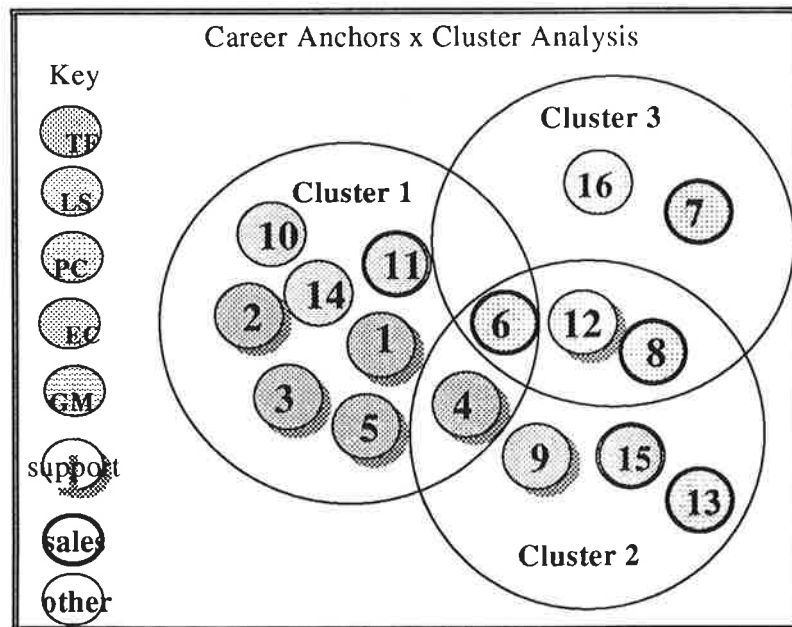


Figure 7.3: Cluster Analysis highlighting Negative Cases

Explanations for these negative cases can be found: in one case the participant had just been appointed a manager and still retained some identity with his previous function; the next is someone who with family commitments who perhaps in finding a way to integrate the two needs has drifted towards the lifestyle group although the career anchor remains pure challenge; my third participant is still in the early stages of a career and has aspirations to management, whilst also wants the challenge of trying out sales; the fourth participant is someone who has experience in sales, technical support and management and is *'looking ahead for ... an opportunity to combine sales and sales manager and technical management and create something really different'* (C8.149) so perhaps does not see a clear-cut base to use his main anchor in.

Cluster Analysis Part Two : The Constructs

Following the success of my initial exploration of cluster analysis, which demonstrated links between my participants' reported career anchors and the content of our conversations, I also felt it worthwhile to cluster the themes and categories. These emergent themes and categories were initially gathered into eight clusters, again using both methods, furthest neighbour and Ward's method, as I hoped for the larger categories to be broken down and the smallest ones to be amalgamated in some way. Both methods came up with large and small categories, even increasing the number of clusters to eleven still gave large clusters, and reducing the number of clusters down to four did not combine the smaller ones into anything meaningful at first sight, and I felt that some were possibly be a collection of outliers. However both methods provided different foci to their clusters and in turn provided a stimulus to my thinking, even though in most cases, due to the nature of the original categories, the clusters contained what seemed at first glance unrelated themes. The comparison of clusters across the methods found that there were some apparent linkages that surfaced in both methods which supported my intuitive matrix and the emerging theme of the importance of the management relationship, shown in bold in Table 7.3 below.

The clusters from the Furthest Neighbour method seemed to provide a better basis for structuring the following interpretation of my participants constructs for two reasons: firstly, cluster two in the Ward's method clusters contained all the most popular themes that most people contributed to, which made me question how much they will stimulate this stage of the process and secondly, the Furthest Neighbour method seemed to originate more promising clusters, with some linkages that better reflected my participants conversations with me.

	Ward's Method	Furthest Neighbour Method
1:	Achievement, Directedness , Commitment, Change Triggers, organisation / management responsibility for careers, legal contract;	Achievement, Directedness ,Enjoyment
2:	Challenge, Skills, Directedness-active, Advancement , Old Hands, Motivation, Recognition, Manager's role in contract ;	Advancement , Personnel Practices, Expectations un/met, differing expectations, Development, Independence, Manager's role in contract , Organisation's obligations, Relational /Informal Contract, Relationships with individuals, Symbols
3:	General Management, New Hires , Enjoyment, Family & Careers;	General Management, New Hires , Entrepreneur, Skills, Technical Functional, External factors
4:	Autonomy , Entrepreneur, Anger, Sad /disappointed, Lifestyle, Manager's role in organisation ;	Autonomy , Challenge, Lifestyle , Career Drivers (positive), Manager's role in organisation , Organisation's expectations
5:	Differing Expectations, Development, Gender, Personnel Practices, Relational /Informal Contract, Relationships with individual;	Commitment, Old Hands, Career Drivers (negative), Change Triggers, organisation / management responsibility for careers
6:	Independence, Expectations un/met, Individual's Expectations, Individual's obligations, Organisation's expectations, Organisation's obligations, Relationships with the organisation, Symbols, Career Drivers, Influencers;	Directedness-active, Sad /disappointed, Family & Careers, Recognition
7:	Directedness-passive, Fear / Nervous, Extrinsic ;	Directedness passive, Fear / Nervous, Extrinsic , Anger, Motivation, Influencers, Relationships with the organisation , Legal contract
8:	Technical Functional, External factors;	Gender, Individual's Expectations, Individual's obligations

Table 7.3: Cluster Analysis of Categories

I was aware of the warning in the SPSS documentation, that hierarchical cluster analysis is an exploratory method, and they suggest that results should be treated as tentative until they are 'confirmed with an independent sample'. As I was looking to it for support, I was comfortable with the decision to use what seemed

to be sensible groupings and then work it through as a comparative framework for my previous inductive analysis. It is to these clusters that I have turned to provide the structure for this second part of the chapter, which I initially tried to keep to my original individual, organisation, triggers and employment relationship structure to reflect my original research questions, although I found that the triggers have been melted into several clusters with different foci, and the organisation and relationship clusters combined into one.

Individual

Cluster 1 - These three elements combine with cluster 5, here they are all individual factors which suggest that enjoyment comes as a result of achieving goals although the direction had been initially set by someone else.

Cluster 3 - this cluster is centred on individual factors with the flavour of those who focused on building their technical or managerial skills rather than the organisation they are a part of, prepared to move organisations to pursue their career or set up on their own.

Cluster 6 - again centred on the individual, the main theme here would appear to be around those who have been active in pursuing their career, they are concerned about being recognised for their efforts and the impact that balancing a family life with a career can have.

Cluster 8 - this is combined with clusters 4 and 6 at a higher level. The feeling here is about what the individual is expecting to contribute and receive in the employment relationship.

Cluster 7 - this cluster begins to introduce the relationship with the organisation. Here the flavour is of those who are motivated more by the extrinsic elements of money and security of a well known organisation, allowing themselves to be pushed along by circumstances.

Triggers

Cluster 4- This cluster contains a mix of individual and organisational related themes. Here there is a much more positive feel of positively looking for challenge, being in control, not wanting to compromise on lifestyle issues.

Cluster 5- This cluster again is a mix of types of theme, with the feel of inertia, long service in the organisation, making career decisions on the basis of avoidance, expecting the organisation or the line manager to take responsibility for career.

Employment Relationship

Cluster 2- This cluster includes many of the elements of the employment relationship from the individual's expectation of advancement, self development and progression although taking individual responsibility for the career, expedited through personnel and symbolised by many of their practices, through development of the relationship with the organisation through the manager.

The Essences Of Participants' Constructions

The Individual

This next section takes each of the clusters above and illustrates the potential construct or theme behind it, using my participants' interpretations. Unlike the 'thick description' in the previous chapter, here I start to try to construct some meaning from their interpretations, not only from the cluster analysis and my inductive analysis, but also by relating their thoughts to the theory and literature, discussed in chapter two. As I have worked through the clusters I have found that the data naturally forms five clusters and I have therefore combined clusters one and five, and four, six and eight (as shown in dendrogram at Appendix 9). As the emphasis is on discovering meaning, where I have used illustrations from my participants, they have come from the full transcripts, and the attribution is slightly differently referenced from the previous chapter, C1-C16 are the

participants and the number following relates to the particular 'unit', therefore statement 3 from participant 6 is C6.3.

'it's not broke so don't fix it'

Cluster one and five combined is about the traditional large company relationship with its employees, based on the exchange of commitment for career paths, also seen as the relational contract (Herriot and Pemberton, 1996; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994; Rousseau, 1995), although debatable as to whether this is determined by the length of the employment relationship (Robinson, Kratz and Rousseau, 1994). The cluster's key elements involve the feeling of inertia about individuals' careers, while everything is going well and they are enjoying their jobs, expecting their career to be managed for them, and it is not until something goes wrong, or is offered them, do they assess the extent to which their psychological contract is being fulfilled. Here any 'trigger events' (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994) have led to a positive feeling that the psychological contract was still intact and without the impact on commitment that the violation literature outlines (Brockner et al, 1992; Morrison, 1994; Parks and Kidder, 1994).

The first part of the cluster includes achievement, enjoyment and directedness which give it the flavour of fulfilling the potential of the skills and knowledge in an individual's particular field '*doing a job well and being seen to be good*' (C6.172), there is the personal success element and focus on self, that includes the sense of fulfilment, which some would sacrifice financial gain for '*achievement is the main, it's not the money, it's not the responsibility, it's the achievement of whatever it is*' (C8.133); '*a matter of self respect*' (C11.16). Much of this reflects early need theories and the recognition of a sense of achievement as a motivator by researchers such as McClelland (Makin *et al*, 1996) and Herzberg (1966) and career stage reached (Levinson, in Makin *et al*, 1996; Schein, 1978). Although one of my participants observes that he sees people in the organisation traditionally taking the approach '*it's not broke so don't fix it, and all these other things that they don't see as problems but they are, because people don't have the experience of looking out*' (C15.164). The link to enjoyment is well illustrated by my participants '*I've enjoyed my time here and the first two years in my own*

company, very fulfilling, very enjoyable' (C7.22) and also turning it around '*I have enjoyed all my jobs - it's only when I've not been enhancing the value of my CV have I got bored'* (C1.23). Part of the enjoyment would appear related to the job satisfaction and tenure in the job that Betz, Fitzgerald, and Hill (1986) see as related to the congruence of interests with career choice.

Directedness is about having some sense of direction, but not taking an active role in pursuing their career '*to join the most successful company in my industry'* (C1.2), '*to be a very successful woman'* (C10.4), '*it was influence from the parents or something'* (C15.53). The achievement, enjoyment and directedness combines well with cluster 5 as illustrated with the notion of making career moves in response to negative situations: '*pleased, pleased to be going from somewhere I didn't want to be, I was with a group of people I didn't want to be with, I was going to somebody else who would value me for something'* (C11.33). There is still the link with the feeling of achievement and recognition through using skills coming through from the negative reasons that participants gave for making moves '*that was another string to my bow that was not being used'* (C5.126), '*I had absolutely nothing to do and I had a lot of experience and skills'* (C6.106) and self respect '*this is not for me, then I had better go and find someone that does think I am good'* (C9.27), '*I hated that year, I hate it when I am treated like a child'* (C10.34) and the focus on self '*I was just keen to get another job and get out of what I was doing, I think keen is probably an understatement, desperate would probably be a better word'* (C11.35), '*I missed my friends, it was very straight and conservative'* (C12.21). However Guzzo and Noonan (1994) suggest that employees with strong relational contracts will be more tolerant and flexible to the extent to which they feel their psychological contract has been breached before being triggered into making moves.

From the change trigger responses, the feeling of reacting to change still emerges reflecting the negative career drivers: '*I had had approaches, so was beginning to feel I needed to make a change'* (C1.10); '*I was poached by one of our dealers'* (C5.88); '*my manager decided he wanted to move'* (C8.108); '*every time I get a head-hunter on the phone I ask, do HAL value me?'* (C13.64). The views of

commitment (Mowday *et al*, 1982; Oliver, 1990; Angle and Perry, 1983) expressed have been from the behavioural aspects, *'if you want a career you have to put in three years before we move you on'* (C4.73), *'they have a view of possibly where their next job will be and they don't look any further forward than that'* (C5.44); *'people have a commitment to the job as opposed to a commitment to the organisation'* (C6.78) as well as the attitudinal: *'some of them don't have such an intense commitment, some them just do a job, they owe it nothing more than that and probably less if they can get away with it'* (C11.8); and normative aspects (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Allen and Meyer, 1990) *'they're committed to doing well in HAL and therefore they recognise that they need to do things outside of their normal day to day job to be seen to be a contributor'* (C6.176).

There is also an intimation of the nature of the relationship with the manager beginning to emerge, and the cluster is beginning to shape one of the dimensions of the psychological contract with the exchange of commitment on the part of the individual for a career and seeing this as part of the organisation's responsibility: *'you commit to me and I will commit to you having a career'* (C1.36); *'so that they can see there really is a commitment to them and their career within the company'* (C4.74); *'the higher up you get in the organisation, the more you own the responsibility lower down the organisation ... they are huge assets, they cost huge amounts ... we have a responsibility to construct their career, or someone else will'* (C1.34); *'I would look to the organisation to do whatever is within its powers to assist in the development of my career'* (C7.45); *'it should be a corporate responsibility to make sure the right opportunities are created for the right candidates'* (C8.170). Although current practice has led to *'we've been hiring people who are fit for doing the job ... but don't necessarily have the potential to progress and consequently we're rather lacking in higher flying people'* (C5.190) there is the view that *'there are still people who are on the classic track in HAL'* (C6.120) which raises the area of how much 'old hands' perceived things had changed. *'The long termers' expectations I believe are rather unreasonable in general. The long termers' expectations are career for life, job progression, salary progression, always something interesting to do and there is always somebody looking after them.'* (C5.298); *'it was very much the case of if*

you put the effort in, you will get rewarded and that's what I have been doing and so far it has worked' (C4.12); 'they really expected - I've worked in HAL for 20 years, and therefore of course I should have this job at this level earning this much money and they weren't looking in terms of their actual contribution to the organisation' (C6.213). This reflects Meyer and Allen's (1997) view that normative commitment may also contain the element of investments the organisation has made that should result in a form of reciprocity.

“I know what I am talking about”

Cluster three has the overall flavour of self-reliance through constantly developing a skill base that enables movement between companies. What seems to come through strongly in this cluster is the key role of having appropriate skills and being able to use them: *'make sure that next move is more appropriate and builds on the skills I've already got' (C4.53), that reflects the technical functional career anchor and career stage (Schein, 1978). The interest in skills reflects a feeling that part of the ability to pursue a career is tied in to having those skills: 'I like being the specialist, you need the expertise for confidence' (C14.42); 'I will always make sure my skills are marketable' (C1.27); 'I wanted to develop a skill, develop a portfolio of skills' (C8.52); 'a buyers market, people will buy skills as and when they need them' (C8.186); 'the only way I am going to stay valuable to HAL is to improve the skills I have got' (C11.24); 'I want to build my skills to make me more commercial through a more technical route' (C12.62).*

In this context the skills involved are almost exclusively technical and sales skills to reflect the area that my participants were drawn from and they are at the heart of their work identity: *'I get security out of being good at what I do' (C3.44); 'I joined HAL as a specialist - I was employed specifically for my knowledge of the channel' (C5.114); 'I was nervous and uncomfortable because I was going to be faced with situations where I didn't understand some of the technology' (C2.45) 'the real work is being involved in the issues, and the issues are technical' (C5.224). For some these skills have given them the basis to set up on their own, as reflected in the entrepreneurial creativity career anchor (Schein, 1978): 'I suppose my personal goal at one point, again quite seriously, was our own*

business' (C2.39); *'I always had some idea that I would like my own business or something like that at some point in the future, and this was a way of learning'* (C5.39) and this is linked with external factors which impact people's lives, despite their skill base *'the franchisor ran off with money from the bank'* (C2.34); *'didn't bring out new products so the group disappeared'* (C14.43); *'they decided to disinvest'* (C16.100). Hallier and Lyon (1996) warn of the impact that redundancy has on the future relationships the victims have with organisations, not wanting to trust again in much the same as Parks and Kidder's (1994) finding that following violation contracts become more transactional.

One of the ways the technical functional category and general management are linked in this context, is that management is seen by my participants as more an alternative to using their technical skills, almost *'something to do when I am not using my core skills'* and therefore more a part of describing the technical functional construct: *'I have a technical bent and this plays a major part in why I am not a general manager'* (C1.26); *'I enjoy working with people and through people and I was getting a bigger kick out of managing people ... than I was out of fixing computers'* (C2.27); *'actually I don't enjoy being 100% technical, so what it means is that I don't have some of the background to go off and do things like general management'* (C5.30)

The link with *'new hires'* is the view that people come to HAL to build their skills but not necessarily their careers: *'all they are after is technical knowledge, the skills and training and then they will move on somewhere else and get paid considerably more'* (C4.64); *'recent employees, they're there to do a job, to learn the skills, to gain more skills whatever, why would they be more interested in the company at the higher level'* (C5.308); *'who will see HAL as a stepping stone, it's a thing to have on your CV, they'll do a very good job for the time they are here ... when their contracts are coming to an end they'll look outside as much as look inside'* (C6.178), giving them the freedom to enter new contracts and the low commitment of Rousseau's transactional contract model (1995).

“A desire to get on”

Clusters six and eight have been combined to provide the notion that actively managing and being in control of the career means operating at a higher level in the employment relationship, in the relational or balanced psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995). The concept of active directedness comes from those who knew what they wanted to do *‘I have always had a pretty clear idea of what I wanted to do and where I wanted to be’* (C5.58) and those who recognised a need to plan *‘I am starting to plan my career a bit more now ... I have always been one of those people who had to be good at something’* (C9.26); *‘I am looking ahead, from ambition and competition, I want to be better than everyone else’* (C12.94); *‘I was good at what I was doing but I’d been doing it for a period of time and I had a desire to move on. Everyone has a boredom threshold’* (C6.126). The link with sadness and disappointment appears when things go wrong and being in control disappears: *‘a shame because I had seen the old company grow’* (C9.44), *‘I didn’t give up easily - it was dreadful, I had a terrible sense of failure’* (7.17).

Recognition and feedback underpin this proactivity in the career, partly as it is needed to be considered for the moves and also to provide the confidence that they are possible, much as in cluster three security comes from having skills. *‘I’ve probably got a good idea of what I think about things and how I am anyway, but it’s always nice to have some sort of corroboration’* (C5.324); *‘I went to my boss and convinced him that it was a good thing for him’* (C11.20), *‘it is important to shout loudly about yourself all the time’* (C12.88); *‘I’ve started to think where I want to be organisationally, I would rather be singled out than seeking it out’* (C7.27).

The undercurrent of ‘being in control’ provides the link into being able to move the career to the point where a balance can be achieved with family life, echoing the Lifestyle career anchor (Schein, 1978): *‘families and whatever might happen ... so to a certain extent I’m tied in a little bit by salaries’* (C5.234); *‘so I have to actually set my sights on being able to do something that continues to be slightly*

different, whilst being able to keep up my commitments at home' (C6.184); *'I have got married and have children so the goals have changed, income is still important because income allows you to pay the mortgage*' (C11.23); *'I have now got children, my idea of career is different now*' (C10.9) Related to family and career, for women, gender links to active career and recognition with the notion of having to overcome additional hurdles to prove oneself - *'gated by being seen as young and female*' (C6.94), *'they did it [play politics] in the playground when they were four, and girls didn't because they were doing different things at four, maybe that's why females are more cautious about it, they have to play men at their own games*' (C16.153); *'I have been asked three times when am I going to have kids ... I get asked when I ask about conversion*' (C12.91).

The individual's obligations and expectations are related to active career management through understanding the employment relationship beyond the straight monetary exchange for labour, by contributing and being loyal to the organisation at a higher level in order to receive back the means to actively manage their career, with links to Meyer and Allen's (1997) normative commitment. *'I think their expectations are actually very high ... I think most people recognise that they have to make a significant contribution in the role that they have*' (C6.241); *'you do the job and then some, and I will help you and then some*' (C4.68); *'for me it is recognition and progression ... to add value and put the effort in*' (C12.84); *'an organisation is paying you for your services ... you have a duty of care to ensure that you deliver to the very best of your ability in accordance with that contract*' (C7.77); *'I think people expect HAL management to be mapping particularly people's careers and monitoring their contribution and looking for HAL to guide them and place where they want to be and where HAL wants them to be ... there are[not] many people out there who have an idea which roles they want to be doing*' (C8.214). It is the issue of the assumptions about the future that lies at the heart of Schein's view of the psychological contract (1978).

“In control”

Cluster four also has been combined into the previous cluster and all three provide the feel of being in control and having direction. Challenge is a strong career anchor, (Schein, 1978) for this group and the feeling of wanting to take on challenge would be likely to be supported by feeling of being in control: *‘I have just taken on a new challenge - I love what I do’* (C7.26); *‘I want more challenge and more motivation’* (C12.17); *‘we were way behind and we won it’* (C10.30); *‘it means fulfilment, self-fulfilment, challenging stretching’* (C13.8); *‘I still don’t have my clear area, not a total control, but quite a large amount of freedom in terms of how you go to the marketplace’* (C16.142).

Being in control and looking out for themselves (Schein, 1996) enables people to feel able to make decisions on the basis of lifestyle and what they feel is important in their lives, which is linked to the family and career construct in the earlier part of the combined cluster. *‘what level of personal commitment am I willing to trade for that move’* (C7.67); *‘this idea of giving your all to get up through the organisation, now we tend to think that perhaps a middle management position would be the goal.’* (C9.64), *‘there was a lot of soul searching as it meant a drop in salary for a while but the lifestyle is better’* (C14.39) *‘they were based in Basingstoke and I thought I don’t want to drive from London down to Basingstoke every day’* (C5.201); *‘part of the reason was geographic’* (C12.28). These lifestyle issues also link into positive career drivers, where the driver was a moving forward rather than away from a situation; *‘the next move was because I had moved to [a different region]’* (C10.21); *‘to get into HAL’* (C1.7; C14.34); *‘you use the opportunity to re-invent yourself slightly and leave some of the baggage behind’* (C5.178). Being in control is a key part of autonomy and links to career drivers *‘the drive was probably autonomy and being a capitalist’* (C7.12) *‘now I realise you cannot ever actually achieve it, there’s always something else that impinges on it, so it’s always freedom within degrees of freedom really’* (C16.125).

The links into what the organisation expects of them are informed by the drive for challenge and the active choice to join a demanding organisation that: *'expects its pound of flesh at the end of the day, and more and more so'* (C7.62); *'ever increasing, the company at the end of the day wants us to create a company where the share price is rising'* (C11.69); *'it is expected that people will be flexible'* (C9.99); *'would expect somebody to work until midnight if there was a situation that required it. I would equally not expect them to get in until midday the next day'* (C5.289). Suggestive of the relational psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994) and relationship between challenge and affective commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990), these organisational expectations can also be viewed by the role of the manager within that: *'there will be more expectations of me as a manager insofar as being an officer of the company'* (C7.76) *'the managers are there as representatives of the company'* (C5.249); *'the bit where the rubber hits the road is actually the first line manager'* (C16.176); *'the role of the first line manager is very demanding and they do put a lot of demands on us'* (C7.109); *'managers manage people, managers don't manage the business'* (C15.260).

'I come to work to get money'

Cluster seven contains the trappings of the traditional basic exchange relationship 'a fair day's work for a fair day's pay', where the basic motivation is the extrinsic rewards of pay and benefits and the security of a large organisation, and the career is something that happens, with the individual taking a passive role in it, particularly at the beginning of the career which Van Maanen (1977) would see as typified by lack of directional clarity: *'it is very little at my instigation, it is usually somebody else's, something will come along, if you miss this there will be something else'* (C2.38); *'waiting for the next thing to happen I suppose, and see what it is'* (C8.149); *'I suppose everyone has their own way of managing their moves and their lives and even though I've been in a planning role, I can't do that with my own life'* (C4.50); *'I don't quite know where I am going anymore - I'm tootling along doing this job and I'm enjoying it and then I'll have to tootle along and do another'* (C10.37); *'they contacted me, that's how it started'* (C15.123).

Other people play a key role in career moves especially for the passive group : *'I've had a couple of managers which have been particularly good and have helped me make decisions which have had quite an impact'* (C4.14); *'two people rang me about this job that I'm doing now'* (C10.43); *'you have to convince somebody that you are good enough to get through that'* (C11.18); *'My manager was moving into sales himself, he knew I was ready to move'* (C13.28). Part of leaving the career to someone else could leave people in situations that they would not otherwise have sought: *'that initial move was daunting because suddenly you had a learning curve that was so steep'* (C2.4); *'it was worrying to start with'* (C9.43); *I lost my confidence a bit'* (C10.18), *'feeling lost and at the bottom'* (C12.37).

The passive career mode suggests that there is no pursuit of specific career goals which leaves extrinsic rewards as the main driver, unless they have had someone else enabling their career to progress. *'They offered me what was a very attractive salary at the time, a company car, and the ability to use all of the skills I had built up'* (C5.38) *'you see more money through advancement'* (C2.20), *'I wanted to earn a fair amount of money fairly quickly'* (C8.44); *'the view that I would have of any big company now is to put it coldly, is almost an insurance policy'* (C9.37); *'people are extraordinarily avaricious if there is a monetary incentive'* (C11.93); *'it's not the increase in responsibility I would be after, it's the rewards really, although I'm quite happy to take on increased responsibility and accept that you have to do that to get more'* (C14.27). *'The key is whether you want to be a multi-millionaire or whether you want to live the lifestyle of a millionaire'* (C15.130).

The focus on extrinsic rewards is also linked to motivation, which here focuses on the issues of security as well, the intrinsic elements are covered earlier through challenge and achievement. The focus on the 'monetizable' elements is in contrast to the concept of the relational contract (Rousseau and Parks, 1993; Rousseau, 1995), but is explained by Guzzo and Noonan's (1994) concept of life space and gradual inclusion of other 'intrinsic' elements over time, such as job

security and the other benefits of a corporate career. In a passive career, security becomes another driver: *'as long as I know the future is going to be secure in some way'* (C3.9); *'there's security, there's the pension scheme, which is very good, the life assurance, the medical care and so forth'* (C4.28); *'need balance and security as get older and a sense of perspective'* (C7.4); *'looking at the totality of stability, rewards etc.'* (C9.62); *'I thought there was more to life than company cars'* (C16.86). What starts to emerge is the view of the relationship with the organisation and what is the contract that underpins it, in the same way as the transactional contract, (Rousseau, 1995) and the legal contract (Leighton and Welch, 1995). At the minimum is it seen as: *'it depends on what's in this written contract, I mean it's obligations are pretty minimal really, to give me four weeks notice, to pay me the salary that's agreed'* (C11.72); *'to be an officer of the company, what your legal obligations are, you've got to do health and safety, you've got to check expenses'* (C5.266), *'anything I guess human resources would get involved with, you know, car, insurance, pensions ... as a manager I've got absolutely no influence whatever on the pension for instance, the pension policy is what it is, health and benefit ...'* (C8.234). Outside the legal contract, the relationship with the organisation at the minimum is one of *'pay and benefits on the basis of delivery'* (C8.178); *'it is a business relationship'* (C2.58).

This theme also starts to address the role of the manager in the contract which is part of cluster 2 below: *'I think there are two relationships between HAL and its employees : there's a relationship between HAL and its professionals and there's a relationship between HAL and its managers and they treat the two different types of employees very differently'* (C5.240); *'HAL is your manager and your manager's manager'* (C10.46); *'you have that core of people which is HAL and fairly safe and secure in it's job ... the organisation is those people in the very narrow set of people in the managers role'* (C11.82).

This was the only cluster where there was some commonality in all the key contributors who were in the 30 - 39 age range, but as more than half of the group were also in this range, this could be co-incidental. However the 30s is the

time when this group are likely to have young families and have concerns about security - it is also the time when career pressures are the greatest (Schein, 1978).

Building the Relationship

The final cluster, cluster 2 is more of a processual one, addressing how the relationship, beyond the formal/legal contract, develops and the responsibilities within it and could be seen more as the organisational side of the relationship . On one side of the employment relationship is the individual who frequently still sees the career in terms of progression and advancement: *'definitely increased responsibility and influence'* (C4.7); *'in line with increasing rewards and responsibility'* (C1.4); *'working up the grades in the computing profession'* (C8.26); *'it's seen as a progression rightly or wrongly'* (C9.55), *'I want my boss's job and as soon as I felt that I had mastered that, I'd want his boss's job'* (C11.27); *'doing the same thing with more responsibility and scope'* (C14.78); *'progression of both responsibilities, I guess, self-importance ... the want to change and make a difference to things'* (C15.57); *'I see career as a series of mountain climbs, you go out there and then you might plateau and then you go up and then you plateau'* (C16.138).

The feeling that expectations are met suggests that both sides of the relationship fulfilled the requirements of each other: *'in terms of what I expect it certainly meets them'* (C8.208); *'I think to be fair it meets them very well, as I said to you earlier on in some ways it almost bends over backwards'* (C6.237); *'some meet them very well, not everyone, the plodders'* (C12.87); *'across the board I think they meet them very well ... there is a high work ethic, and I think on balance the workforce at large deliver on those'* (C7.53); *'the psychological contract is healthy cynicism, doesn't mean it's bad until it steps over the mark, or his perception is that it isn't loyal to him'* (C9.98); *'patchy, I think it depends on the business, I think it depends on the timing, I think it depends on lots of things'* (C15.228). The lack consistency across the business may be attributed in some part to *'effectively we don't have an HR department'* (C5.239) as *'we've delegated the HR function to a line management level ... so I just wonder whether the delegation of things has gone too far'* (C7.47), this then reflects back

to the role of the manager as representative of the company, whereas in the past the personnel function could be said to represent the organisation to the employee, before moving from the tactical to the strategic arena as HRM (Legge, 1995; Guest, 1989).

In terms of the obligations that the organisation has to the other side of the relationship, they are seen to be beyond the '*obligations in terms of health and safety and agreed deliverables*' (C8.200), to be more of a '*partnership in that if you keep your employees happy, you get more out of them, it does HAL better if you keep them motivated and give them a career*' (C10.52) by '*the opportunity to build up skills, to share in the success of the company*' (C5.299); '*the opportunity to succeed in a job .. the opportunity to progress and have a career*' (C6.235); '*to motivate and use employees to their full potential*' (C12.79), that is seen as a key outcome from commitment (Walton, 1985; Beer, Spector et al, 1984). Part of this links to individuals' need to continue to grow and develop, once the basic extrinsic level of the contract is fulfilled, as demonstrated by the need theories of Herzberg, Maslow and Alderfer (Kakabadse et al, 1987; Makin et al, 1996). '*I need to be learning, I feel that I start to stagnate*' (C3.49); '*I think the peaks have been when you're in learning environments so when you're using your skills to their limit and you're also learning in new areas*' (C6.150); '*I think the learning piece is actually very, is tremendously important*' (C16.78).

The above operation at a higher level of needs relates to the concept of the relational or informal contract (Rousseau, 1995; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994; Parks and Kidder, 1994) that operates beyond the monetary exchange: '*things like that which build people's skills and confidence which are by no means contractual*' (C8.236); '*doing other things than just doing their job well*' (C6.181); '*the company has an obligation to look at people in an individual way*' (C15.226); '*you get tensions, you get employees who are pushing but don't feel they get anything from their management, or you get managers who want people to do things, and they don't*' (C16.182). Whereas the basic legal contract is between personnel and the individual, the informal or relational contract is more likely to be managed by the line manager and therefore subject to the different styles and

beliefs of the manager. *'it's a business relationship .. don't ask me to take the top of this guy's head off, then poke around inside and then put the top back on, that's not what I'm trained to do'* (C2.57); *'he was very good, he gave me a whole host of opportunities'* (C4.15); *'my current relationship with the team I manage is very much of equal peers'* (C4.63); *'your manager is expected to cope with any issues that you have'* (C6.148), *'we have to be mindful and respectful of the fact that some of the people who report to us may not like us, may not value us at a personal level'* (C7.143).

With the change of role for personnel *'my career is delegated to my boss. So we've delegated at a functional level, but not only that, if you separate functional HR issues from career, and I do see them as being separate, they've both been bundled together under the direction of a line manager'* (C7.48) and the changing structures, that means more people working in different ways, different tensions are put on the relationship: *'in the old days you used to sit outside your manager's office, now you go all over the country ... there is no idea that you can know what your people are doing. My manager knew me, he used to come out of his office and say shall we all go out for a drink this lunch time ... and that's how you learn about people, my manager now doesn't know me from Adam, he sees me now for an hour every month'* (C10.69); *'it was all very close, now I've got four people here and the rest are spread around the UK, so what do they think of me, how much do they see me? I try and do it by some symbols like I go and have a review at their office ... you are trying to make the effort to have the relationship a bit on their terms'* (C16.211).

The role of the manager is seen as highly influential in the quality of the employment relationship, as *'the delivery agents for everything to the professionals'* (C5.248): *'they don't realise the amount of influence as a manager you have, either because people want to be you or because they like you or whatever, and therefore you will always become their mentor, role model, and rightly or wrongly you can negatively influence what they do'* (C15.202). With the differing expectations of individuals *'they have completely different sets of expectations'* (C5.297), it becomes more important for the manager to build a

relationship and get to know the individuals that work for them: *'you've got to find out what you don't know ... I think you've got to be careful not to characterise people'* (C15.264) in order to manage the relationship through *'gut feel, you have to go by whether you feel they're doing all the things they should be doing, whether they are working at home or in the office'* (C6.194).

The opportunities to build the relationship come from the events that are seen to define it and the areas mentioned are consistent with the events, such as salary increase and positive appraisal that Schein identified as symbolising organisational acceptance (1978), and Guzzo and Noonan, (1994) as the HR practices that communicated the terms of the psychological contract: *'the formal things like appraisal comments and then you have the more personal things, the reviews, almost every piece of communication that you have, individual reviews, unit meetings'* (C16.203); *'if they don't get pay rises and things like that, I think they lose their trust in the company'* (C10.59); *'supporting people's realistic career paths'* (C9.101); *'the level of expectation compared with the level of compensation'* (C7.83); *'recognition events, where it recognises achievement over and above'* (C6.249).

In actually taking responsibility for the career the manager and the organisation play a supporting but crucial role: *'career development is very much something the individual should be responsible for ... however I also believe as a manager and therefore my manager should have a responsibility to make sure he's helping me progress in the organisation.'* (C6.211); *'I've always seen myself as the instigator of any moves and I would look to my manager to assist me with advice and guidance'* (C4.62); *'a lot of people forget that career management is as much the responsibility of the employee as it is the company'* (C5.137); *'it's my career, my life. I think the organisation has some responsibility to me and I guess that comes back to the psychological contract'* (C7.43). The above 'typologies' have been summarised in the Table 7.4 below.

Cluster	Career Quest	Personal Factors	Career Influences	Required Contract	Attitude
1 and 5 It's not broken	Achievement	Directedness Commitment Old Hands	Career Drivers (negative) Change Triggers	organisation / management responsibility for careers	Enjoyment
4,6,8 Desire to get on	Challenge Recognition	Autonomy Lifestyle Directedness-active Family & Careers, Gender	Career Drivers (positive)	Manager's role in organisation Organisation's expectations Individual's obligations Individual's Expectations	Sad / disappointed
7 I come to work to get money	Extrinsic	Directedness passive Motivation	Influencers	Relationships with the organisation , Legal contract	Fear / Nervous
3 I know what I'm talking about	Skills	New Hires General Management Technical Functional Entrepreneur	External factors		
2 Organisational view	Advancement Development	differing expectations	Independence Expectations met/not met Organisation's obligations	Manager's role in contract, Relational /Informal Contract Relationships with individuals Personnel Practices, Symbols	
Informed by	motivation and career theory	commitment, career anchors and motivation theory	Trigger events Career theory behavioural commitment	psychological contract & commitment theory	social construction theory

Table 7.4: Summary of Clusters by Categories with related theory areas

Analyses of Action and Reaction in Careers

The next part of the analysis came from considering how to judge how active my participants were in managing their careers. An early exercise was to read all the transcripts to pick out what they were looking for in their career, what appeared to be driving it and what type of contract they sought, this was to support placing them on my employment relationship model. I then turned to the prelude to our conversation, which I looked on as their opportunity to provide themselves with a synopsis of their recent career by describing their career 'time line' in terms of increase in influence or responsibilities over time. Each of my participants time lines were very different, reflecting the way they view their careers, their personalities, and their experiences, reflecting Van Maanen's (1977) view of the 'internal' career, as people perceive it in terms of direction and time, as aspiration, expectations and evaluations. The way they chose to depict those histories reflected this, as Barley viewed it '*subjective careers evidenced themselves in the tales people told to lend coherence to the strands of their lives*' (1989, p49). It also affected how much information they put into their drawings, some wanting to include their whole career and others the minimum, some explaining each move and others giving an overall outline.

My initial approach was to cluster the 'time lines' visually, pasting each drawing on a 'post it' and looking for similarities and differences. Most of the group started with 1990 as their base point for starting their 'recent' careers, except where a significant change had happened slightly earlier that date was advanced, or if they wanted to span their entire career. 1990 was significant in that it was when a large number of 'experienced hires' were employed, *'the 1990 intake, that it was from other companies - it was a case of absorbing these people, understand how the market works because HAL wasn't in that market before'* (C9.6).

My immediate observation was that all but one of my participants' drawings showed a current feeling of moving forward and upwards in influence or responsibility, example 3 in Figure 7.4. The only negative case was the newest into the organisation and admitted to finding the organisation a 'culture shock' to the previous company. Those that had been in the organisation a long time were the ones most likely to see their careers as a steady increase in influence and responsibility, see example 4 in Figure 7.4 below.

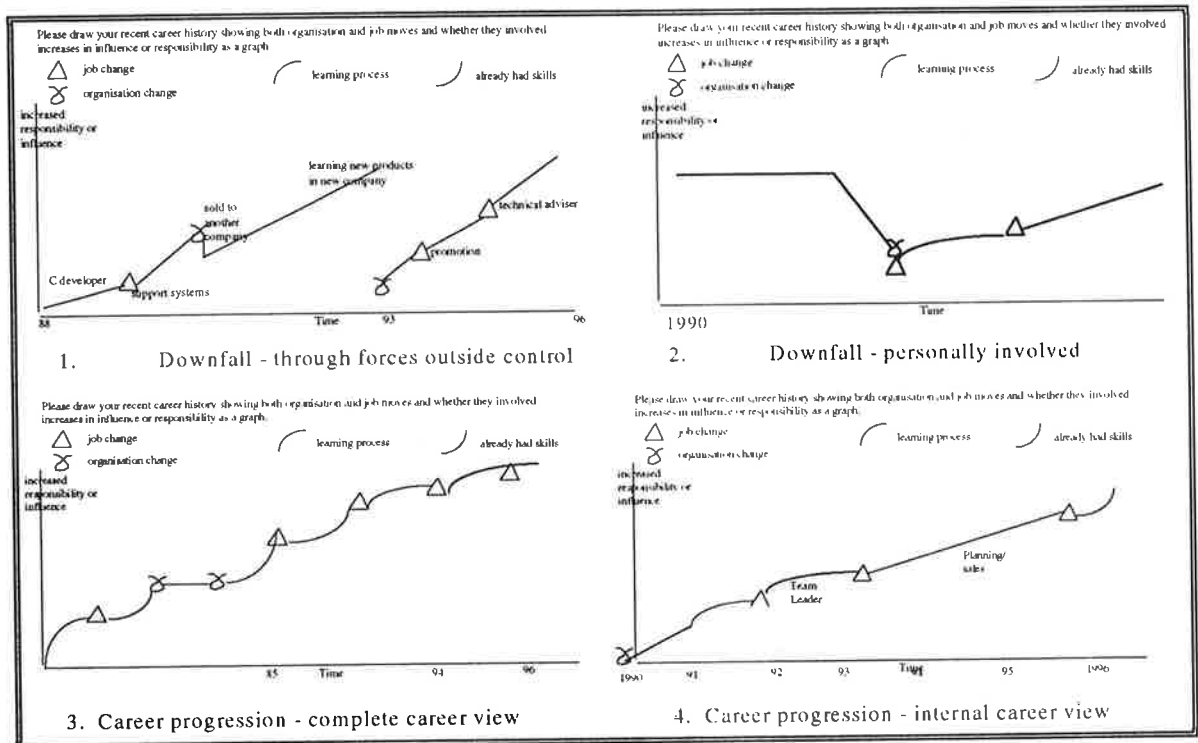


Figure 7.4: Participants' views of their career histories

Looking at the number of job or organisation changes did not help inform how active or passive people were in pursuing their careers as there were other factors involved, such as organisation changes forcing moves or whether people viewed promotion as a change. However it did give an insight into the behavioural commitment of the group (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Fenton-O'Creivy *et al*, 1997), participants who would consider moving organisations in the future had made more than one organisation change in the last five years, which could also reflect feeling let down following a contract 'violation' (Hallier and Lyon, 1996; Parkes and Kidder, 1994).

One area that the career histories highlighted was the visual impact that a major negative experience or 'downfall' had on participants, as shown in examples 1 and 2 in Figure 7.4. For the group who were personally involved in the situation and felt some responsibility for their downfall, this could suggest a reaction by becoming more active in their careers to avoid a similar experience. Those whose downfall had come as the result of organisation changes out of their control had appeared passive in our conversations about managing their careers and more

focussed on the extrinsic elements of the relationship, although the examples would give a contrary view. This is partly explained by Parks and Kidder's (1994) suggestion that people distance themselves once they have suffered from a violation of the employment contract by taking more transactional contracts, and also the lack of opportunity given to re-negotiate the psychological contract when the organisation's needs changed (Herriot and Pemberton, 1995). *'It's difficult making a job move, but you have to pick your self up and do it but I'm really thinking about contracting'* (C3.35).

One of the most important roles that the career histories played were to provide my participants with their synopsis for our subsequent conversation and to provide a consistency check. There were incidents where issues were obfuscated in the career history that then emerged in our fuller conversation with phrases like *'I am being very frank with you'* and *'I'll tell you the truth'*, which helped to demonstrate a relationship of trust was developing between myself and my participants;

C I left the company

A Oh right, it all comes out doesn't it . . .

C It does, yes. I didn't think that it was going to be like this, but never mind.

Identifying the Plot

I later recognised that a more rewarding means of analysing the storylines existed, with Riessman's (1993, p33) comment *'analysis of plot structures across interviews is a promising approach and could be adapted'*. In many ways the storylines provided a visual representation of such a plot structure. As I had been writing the thick description, I was often struck by the elements of the heroic epic and romance of my participants' stories and annotated the text as I wrote, finding analogies to the dragon slaying, overcoming trials, being in the 'Slough of Despond' especially when my participants were talking about the peaks and troughs in their careers, that form part of the genres that have been used to interpret other studies (Downing, 1997; Barry and Elmes, 1997; Jeffcutt, 1994). By regrouping the storylines visually I was able to identify three main types, and one

that was unlike any other in that they saw their career in terms of a downward trend and perhaps in terms of an ironic plot (Downing, 1997).

The most striking group were those who had suffered a downfall as described in more detail above, which reminded me of Barry and Elmes' (1997) romanticist plot for those who had been personally involved in the fall, followed by the rediscovery of the purer self, *'you use the opportunity to sort of re-invent yourself slightly and leave some of the baggage behind'* (C5.178); *'So there's a kind of personal fulfilment thing there that keeps niggling away'* (C7.33).

The other groups enjoyed more of the epic form, setting out on a quest and overcoming enemies and obstacles on their way that they could vanquish: *'he was aggressive'* (C9.40); *'I had been thrown in at the deep end'* (C4.51), but from the ever upward trend of their storyline expecting to achieve their goals and 'live happy ever after': *'going to work, being happy and getting on'* (C10.8). Within this there were two groups, those that had a steadily upward path and seen as long term employees by the organisation, with the occasional period of learning but often having found 'trustworthy companions' or 'mentors' on the way: *'My first manager was just one long peak'* (C10.28); *'I've a couple of managers which have been particularly good and have helped me'* (C4.14). The other group were those who felt they were constantly learning and preparing for the next challenge in their quest for knowledge: *'using new skills and learning new ones as well'* (C6.150); *'learning piece is actually very, is tremendously important'* (C16.56).

It was not until I had looked at correspondence analysis, described later in depth, that the significance of the story lines in supporting the dimension of 'directedness' or career activity became apparent. It was through understanding the storylines as plot structures and then mapping who seemed to be in which plot on the column plot from correspondence analysis as shown in Figure 7.5 below, that it was then possible to see this dimension emerge.

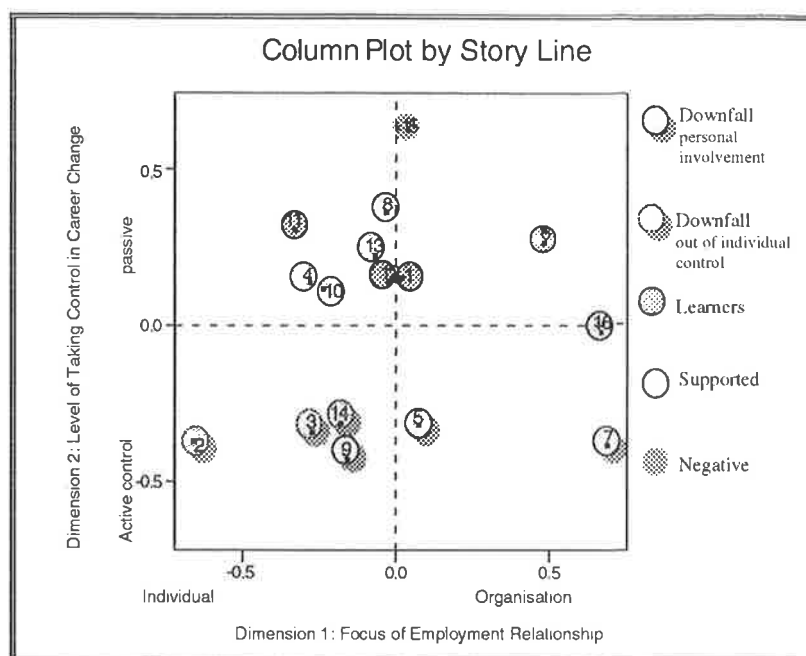


Figure 7.5: Plots, storyline and the career control dimension

Using the generic plots as a framework provided an opportunity to understand the importance of the 'downfall' for this group in how they then took steps to be in control of their future careers. This is also related closely to the literature on the 'violation' of the psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995; Parks and Kidder, 1994) potentially linking the 'passive' dimension with those who felt their psychological contract was intact.

Emergent theory

From the major themes that have emerged, confirmed by other researchers, the hierarchical cluster analysis and therefore my participants, I have been able to reconstruct my participants' themes to suggest possible models to explain and understand what was happening at that point of time in their organisation. These themes consist of:

- the formal contract managed through personnel, the informal through the line manager
- role of manager in how the relationship with organisation is viewed
- the dimension of activity and passivity in how people manage their careers
- separate cultures with differing views on career expectations
 - old hands - confidence in company to deliver

- new hires - building skills just in case
- clear responsibility for own career

Whilst the emergent models are described below, it is left to the following chapter to provide a fuller description and synthesis between my participants view of the world and existing theory and literature.

Developing a Model to Understand the 'Subjective Terrain'

The Formal And Informal Contract Dimension

The formal/informal contract, this is similar in many ways to Rousseau's (1995) transactional and relational contracts, except that the opposite ends of the continuum are not separated by time. What emerged from this inquiry was the question of who is involved in determining that contract and the shift of managing what are seen as HR practices from personnel to line management, which are those practices that are seen as instrumental in determining the mutual acceptance of the psychological contract between the organisation and the individual (Schein, 1978; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). The process of building the relationship is partly described by my participants in the Cluster 2 - Building the Relationship above, but it can also be illustrated by the model at Figure 7.6 below.

In the model, the formal contract is that which employees traditionally have with their organisation covering the tangible aspects of work such as hours to be worked in exchange for pay and benefits, and working conditions. This is the contract that was usually managed by the traditional personnel role, which in large organisations applied across large groups of people, determined by grade, function or business unit. Now that in many organisations many of the traditional functions of personnel have been delegated to line management, an increasing emphasis on the relationship between the individual and their line manager has developed, as highlighted in the pilot study. The other aspect of changing work practices, where people work in a different time zone, or location to their manager has also emphasised the need for the importance of that relationship to be recognised. Those working in other ways such as on projects or fixed term

contracts, are also included in the increasing likelihood that they would see themselves identifying with and working not for the organisation but for their manager, team, or project.

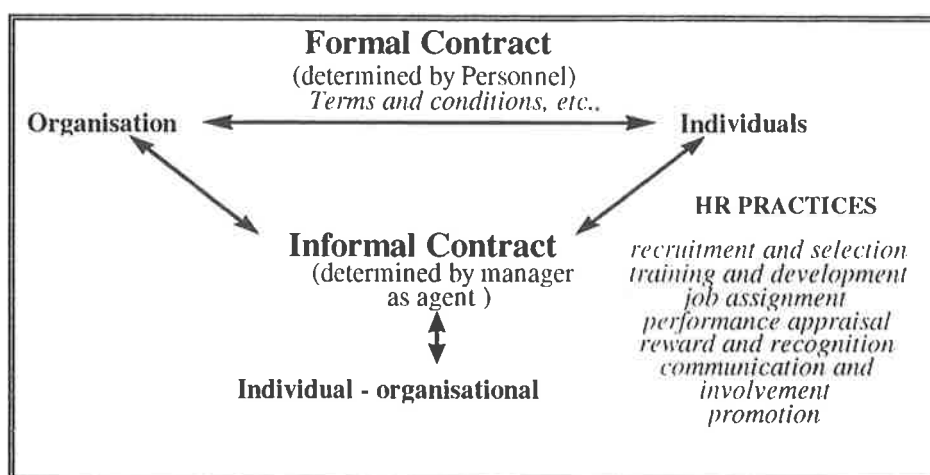


Figure 7.6: The Formal and Informal Contract

Active and Passive Career Direction Dimension

The second key theme that emerged from my conversations with my participants was that of the level of management of their own careers they were involved in, which I have called directedness. When seen as a continuum it ranges from allowing life and organisational experience to influence the career in whatever direction it takes by reacting to events, and at the opposite end being proactive in ensuring that opportunities are made to pursue career goals, and that skills are constantly honed and developed so that the individual is in control, rather than allowing the organisation and events to take it.

When the two dimensions are combined to form a matrix of four cells, see Table 7.5 below, the descriptions from the participants clusters can be seen to describe each of the cells to '*map the subjective terrain of the psychological contract*' (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994, p461), thus providing a reconstruction of how they saw their experience of career and the employment relationship at the time of the study.

Contract Sought	Career Directedness	
	Passive	Active
informal	<i>It's not broken</i>	<i>desire to get on</i>
formal	<i>I come to work to get money</i>	<i>I know what I'm talking about</i>

Table 7.5 : Development of the Employment Relationship Model

Initially it seemed disappointing that my cluster analyses only supported my relationship model in the description of the four quadrants in the constructs dimension and the cluster analysis on cases was unable to support the intuitive placing of my participants into it. In retrospect this was not surprising given that the computer model relied on binary data, whether there was a response on a particular area, rather than the nature of the response, which I was privy to in developing the placing. However once I realised that I was looking at different dimensions as the case analysis was based on the personal factors, it was clear they were not compatible, and the Career Anchors provided the better explanation. The first analysis has also provided a better than expected framework and understanding for the description for each of the above quadrants, as interpreted more fully in the previous pages. However I was later able to give some support to my career 'directedness' concept through the use of plot structure analysis and participants' storylines, once I had understood why the subsequent correspondence analysis had placed my participants in different positions in the 'Employment Relationship' model.

The outline of this employment relationship model had begun to emerge during the fieldwork stage, from the conversations I had been having with my participants and by developing it before I finished the analysis, I had ended up in danger of trying to fit my data to the model. It was a useful lesson in the need for coherence between epistemology and methodology, I had begun to lose sight of

what my participants were telling me. The more appropriate time to try placing my participants on my model would have been after confirming the bases for the axes and the contents of the quadrants, so that I could more accurately perform this exercise with fresh insight, and to test the efficacy of the model with those that created it. In preparation for the next part of my analysis to provide the reader with illustration of the implication of the model through 'vignettes' seen through the eyes of those contained within each quadrant, and as a contribution to interpretation of my participants' views, I took a slightly different path. I could still not be certain of whether there were linkages between the clusters that would form the axes of a matrix and provide the neat model and endings that Jeffcutt (1994) suggests often eludes post modernist research.

Five Vignettes to Illustrate the theory

The vignettes that follow are for illustrative purposes only and are fictitious, following the example of Clifford described by Miles and Huberman (1994), who created Edyth Astrid Ferris, an educational researcher as an historical composite. My characters are composites of the views of the main contributors to each quadrant, with the narrative used based on the transcripts of the same group of participants. The characters and names therefore bear no relation to any individual person that I am aware of, they exist as my attempt to portray the constructions of my participants in the setting of this research inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and '*not meant to model a factual chain of events, but to weave a pattern of truth ... not meant to imitate life, but more to create a world that rings true to individuals who live in more or less similar worlds*' (Phillips, 1995, p634), who also suggests a role for such 'vignettes' in validating theories.

Creating composite characters, giving these accounts of my interpretation of how my participants may represent the particular quadrants, has been a deliberate strategy to use writing as a means of analysis (Richardson, 1994; Denzin, 1994). Already demonstrated earlier in this chapter, this would contribute to making sense of and perhaps identifying the linkages between the quadrants, which in effect form my '*map [of] the subjective terrain of the psychological contract*'. A map of the major contributors to the clusters is included below as Figure 7.7 :

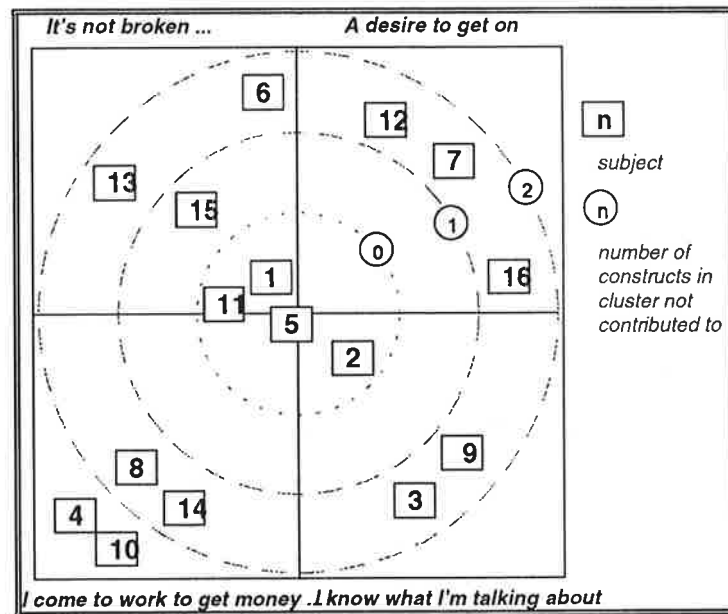


Figure 7.7: Map of major contributors to clusters

Once I had worked out from my original matrix who the participants were that had contributed to the cluster overall, having something to say on all or all but one or two constructs in the cluster, I prepared the mini cases in line with naturalistic inquiry methodology (Erlandson, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This involved taking all the 'units' related to the constructs from the identified participants and using the outline developed from Table 7.4 (summary of clusters by categories) to write the composite accounts contained in the 'vignettes' that follow. I was later able to confirm they were the appropriate participants to work from when I was able to map the clusters onto a correspondence analysis plot of the constructs and the pattern of the participants from the same analysis provided a good fit (attached at Appendix 10). The other role of the vignettes is to provide the case reports that Lincoln and Guba (1985) see as a central part of a naturalistic inquiry, as a complement to my previous thick description. I was also influenced by how effective short cases had been in enabling Fineman and Gabriel (1996) to provide an insight to experiences of individuals in organisations.

Kim's Story - I come to work to earn money

"I was going to have a brand new BMW by the time I was 21 and be a millionaire when I am 35", Kim remembered when reflecting on starting out on the career

journey with no goals, not having a clue what to do, but no doubts that wanting to earn money was the prime driver. After university the choice of job was driven more by money than other considerations, "first job? That was remuneration, I would have done just about anything anywhere. I wanted to make as much money as fast as possible". The job had come easily too, falling into it just like most of the other moves, "very little at my instigation, usually somebody else's".

In many respects after what seemed a brilliant start with the next job including an attractive salary and a company car, and while "they kept paying me more and more money", Kim found it difficult to make radical moves, explaining this as "I couldn't afford to take whatever pay drop that would come" and saw any career progression just in terms of earning more money. Getting married made Kim consider the security, pension and the other benefits as well, recognising that moving jobs would lose the total package, part of which was working for a well known company. Eventually the ambition to be a millionaire was rationalised, "the key is whether you want to be a multi-millionaire or whether you want to live the lifestyle of a millionaire". Kim went on to muse "if I won the lottery I wouldn't work, I work because I need to, not because that is my life".

Kim wasn't a great one for career planning, happy to 'tootle along' in the job while it was enjoyable, preferring to wait for the next thing to happen or for someone to make contact, "I suppose everyone has their own way of managing their moves and their lives, I'd rather just keep my options open really". Most of the time, job moves had come from other people making suggestions, particularly one or two good managers, who had also helped in making decisions which now also needed the family taking into consideration. Making changes hadn't been easy, that last time Kim had found the move a bit of a culture shock, feeling nervous to start with, which might have been worry at the prospect of failure, however within a few months everything fell into place, although it had been painful at the time.

Reflecting on the relationship the current organisation had with it's employees, Kim considered what the legal obligations of the firm were and how that was what management training seemed to be about, the legal obligations of being an

officer of the company, the health and safety, the checking expenses and "they are the very things that I as a manager, I've got absolutely no influence whatever - the terms and conditions of taking on a fixed term contractor, I couldn't even tell you what they are. At the end of the day the company tends to regard managers as sort of a necessary evil". Kim took this a stage further, "I believe that the company tries very hard with it's professionals. I think that a lot of employees would think that the company doesn't look after them, they are cut off and not very loved with fewer and fewer people tasked to do more and more, but I also think it is more evenly balanced than people realise. My view is that if the company doesn't look after them, it's not through not wanting to, we are trying to build a lot of things that got chopped away."

Considering the nature of organisations further, Kim concluded 'I don't look at the company as a big organisation really, to me the company is your manager and your manager's manager, the organisation is those people, the very narrow set of people in the manager's role and the contract between them and the organisation is very different to that between it and me.' It was this difference that reminded Kim of the recent phone call that had started these reflections. An ex-colleague was offering an exciting opportunity, that could be the stepping stone to that dream of being a millionaire, being one of that narrow set, but it was not without its risks, perhaps years of taking home less than now, or the security of the other benefits, possibly some work abroad. Kim picked up the phone and dialled.

Sam's story - 'a desire to get on'

"Did I really want to be a successful pop star?", Sam laughed when thinking about starting out on a varied career, "I still want to make that difference and do something important, and I certainly value the recognition, being well thought of and having the respect of others, so perhaps not much has changed". Sam had always been ambitious, needing stimulation and challenge which had been the driving force behind any career changes. Once the challenge had gone, if nothing was in the offing, there had always seemed to be the opportunity to create a new one. 'I'm not interested in just keeping things as they are', others may have expected the organisation to do it all for them, to provide their career ladder, but

Sam was always ready to initiate change and enjoyed doing it, that would even extend to leaving if necessary, should there no longer be the opportunity to add value to the situation. However this didn't mean giving up easily as Sam had found failure very tough and stressful and had no intention of going through that dreadful time again.

As a strategy for ensuring that there would always be career opportunities, Sam had added the practical management degree to provide a broader base and an insurance policy. Looking back this seemed to be part of an overall strategy to remain in control of life and career decisions, as was considering what was needed to get on, "how good am I at reading the situation and responding? Is part of getting on how comfortable one is about being able to play the politics? If I were a thirty something woman, how cautious would I feel about having to play men at their own games" were all questions that needed an answer.

Being in control was not just in terms of progressing and wanting to run a business, Sam wanted to be able to get the balance right with career and a personal life, recognising there seemed to be lot of confusion on what was now acceptable, "if I'm a thirty something man with a wife and two children, how ambitious am I supposed to be these days? Could one expect organisations to provide security and stability any more, especially for those with children? For me the family may be the key influence, but I guess my career dominates, but I think there's a responsibility that the organisation does have, not putting people in the position of having to choose, we should not be responsible for divorcing couples."

Remembering the earlier phone call, Sam thought about this organisation that expected business results, skills that contributed and added value, in fact it's pound of flesh, but that was right. "The organisation is paying me for my services and delivering them is my part of the contract, I should be fulfilling that role to the best of my ability and delivering results. As a manager I am where the rubber hits the road and the role is demanding, it's my manager who has the luxury of being able to not really get that involved, but is that what I want ...?"

Jo's Story - 'it's not broke'

As Jo replaced the receiver a mix of thoughts intruded into the normally calm exterior. "I like doing a job well and being seen to be good", and reflecting on the achievements of a successful career so far, raising the profit from nil to £3 million in three years, knowing that you were a net contributor to the organisation was no mean feat for someone who did not start out with particular career goals. Since then Jo had recognised that achievement was important, wanting to be able to point to something and say - 'yes I am a success', working for the most successful company in the industry was a part of that.

'Of course people nowadays don't see the organisation I did, ten years ago it was very different, people were almost certain of job security, life was a little more leisurely, now if they are committed to doing well, they need to do things outside of their normal day to day job to be seen to be a contributor'. Jo continued 'now it's a case of if you commit to me, I will commit to you having a career', reflecting on this, it didn't seem so very different from the traditional 'you give your all to the company and the company gives back'. With every expectation of still doing the job in five years time, although recognising in this day and age nothing was certain, Jo could see that those with shorter tenure didn't look any further forward than the job they were doing now, to which they were committed but often not to the same extent as the 'older hands'.

Looking back, all the career moves so far had come as a result of feeling either things were not working out or through not being able to achieve, "remember that time when I had absolutely nothing to do and I had a lot of experience and skills - they were unaware of the needs of the individual to be involved in something. I was just keen to get another job and out of what I was doing, desperate would probably be a better word, but it did make me question more clearly what I was going to be doing in a job, as opposed to looking at where it might lead in the future", Jo thought back, "the other times were when the job had become boring and approaches had come at the right time, although sometimes they had had to be instigated.

In the past these changes had been enjoyable, especially the one riskier move, "it fell into place, so I was quite excited about that, and then finding I loved it, it was really good fun", and also earlier when rescued from not being in a position to achieve, Jo recalled, "I was going to somebody else who would value me, so I was quite pleased".

Jo firmly believes that the organisation should take some responsibility for managing peoples' careers, "they are huge assets, they cost huge amounts, so the organisation should be deploying its people to best advantage, moving those which are in the wrong job", with only a few still on the classic career track, most of the newer people have been hired to do just the job they will be doing. Now when head-hunters call, Jo usually thinks "does the company value me? Is someone still thinking about me?" before politely ending the conversation and putting the phone down.

Alex's Story - 'I know what I'm talking about'

There hadn't been a time when Alex couldn't remember being interested in technical things, which had led to studying computing at university, and from then onto the technical grounding that had been at the core of the career. Most moves had had the need to keep those skills marketable and taking opportunities to fill in the gaps was a priority over which company those were gained in. Thinking back, Alex reflected "I would still recommend that if someone was going to go into computing that they get a really good technical grounding, you can always move out of it if you are good enough but there are always jobs for programmers and system administrators."

There had been times in the past when Alex had felt exposed, coming into a new area, there was every possibility of being faced with not knowing the technology. Until the situation had become familiar and it was possible to have a technical conversation about it, that feeling of nervousness and discomfort had not been dispelled.

"It's interesting how you don't always take your own good advice", Alex mused, "I really want to avoid technical obsolescence, so if I need to I'll start to do some work on my own to build my technical skills up again." It was a dilemma, the management job had seemed a good move at the time, not wanting to be 100% technical, and particularly with the previous company being restructured and then sold around you. There really was a kick from seeing the end result achieved through somebody else and managing the operation, but not the thought of getting involved in the more 'psychological' aspects of managing people - who needs to know about transactional analysis and that sort of thing, it certainly wasn't the kind of thing to be assessed on.

Coming late into this organisation meant it was difficult to see where the next career move would be. Many people, secure in their skill base, only looked to get two maybe three years out of the company and then move on to the next to gain more skills, not believing this culture where it seemed okay to say you wanted a new job. "Then again I have always had some idea that I would like my own business some day, so perhaps ...", Alex stopped dreaming interrupted by the telephone.

A few days later.

Gerry's Story - 'building the relationship'

As the door closed, Gerry poured a coffee and thought about the preceding conversation and what it meant for the organisational view of its relationship with employees, and as an 'officer', the role of the manager within that. "Although I have always known people were individuals, with different sets of expectations, as an organisation, perhaps we manage them as if they had the same career goals. We consider that people see their career as progression of both responsibility and self importance in getting to a certain status position. One colleague had described the career as a series of mountain climbs where you go up and then you plateau and then you go up once more." However since becoming a manager, Gerry had found it more difficult to see the mechanisms to progress one's own

career in those same terms, and had recognised that some of the most enjoyable times had been when in a learning environment, growing with the organisation. In the future it would be more likely the career would be finding opportunities to fill in gaps in experience.

Employees now recognised their careers as their own responsibility, and Gerry agreed that people should make some investment to move whichever way the requirement went, but also recognised that many of them struggled with what that entailed. As a manager there was still a guidance role, helping people progress in the organisation, Gerry realised there was more to it, the manager could encourage, support and coach but the organisation had a responsibility to ensure the opportunities were there for people to succeed in a job, to build up skills, to progress and to be proud of the organisation. This was beyond the legal responsibilities of things like health and safety.

Gerry remembered the conversation with a colleague a few days ago when they thought back to the relationship they had had with their bosses when they first started work and how much it had changed. Nowadays managers were regarded as the delivery agent to the professionals, especially now that HR seemed to have delegated much of its work to the line manager. 'I am now expected to be responsible for the career development for the people who work for me, coach them, mentoring and things like that as well, I am sure there are people better qualified than I am. I have to cope with any of the issues that my people may have.'

'The organisation needs me to have a good relationship with my people', Gerry reflected, 'as they often don't want or have the opportunity to be involved at a higher level with the organisation. And anyway working all over the place, like we do today, with people not having set desks, I am happy for people to work from home; which means I have to go by whether I feel they're doing all the things they should be doing, and those I feel less comfortable about, I check up on. I spend quite a bit of time going to see my scattered group, rather than getting them to come to me. It's a far cry from when I started work, did my first

manager ever worry about whether I was achieving a balance between my private life and keeping working hard in perspective, or worry about whether meetings were of value to us? I can only hope that my influence and the role model I provide doesn't ever have the same impact as some horror stories you hear'.

It was quite difficult to get the balance right between urging some people to achieve more than they think they can and get more out of them, and to support those that keep pushing, wanting to get involved in projects beyond their role, who perhaps feel you don't give them enough attention. How could you tell how well that relationship was working? Gerry pondered, 'of course there are things like recognition events to show how well you thought of people and the annual get-togethers such as the Christmas dinner to build the team. I suppose really the main opportunity to gauge the effectiveness of how well that relationship was working was in the annual appraisal round and as someone had put it, how the level of compensation compared with expectation.'

On the whole Gerry reflected, the company had a good set of people, with a high sense of professionalism and the company itself often seemed to bend over backwards for its employees, although like any organisation this varied depending on the department, the timing, the manager, so in many ways the mutual expectations of each other were met. But, thinking back to the bombshell that had just been dropped, how could they have predicted the potential loss of such a key member of the team, what was it that would make them change their mind?

Confirmation by Correspondence Analysis

My final piece of analysis to confirm both my intuitive model and the clusters described above, was through correspondence analysis, performed using Minitab version 11. Initially I examined the plots to confirm the cluster analysis, both for the constructs and for the contribution to those clusters made by my participants, as illustrated by the vignettes above. The clusters were relatively easy to see on the plot outputs from the correspondence analysis as illustrated in Figure 7.8 below. The number of overlapping constructs meant that each quadrant has been

printed separately and the outlying constructs have been omitted in order to bring the scales in line for illustrative purposes.

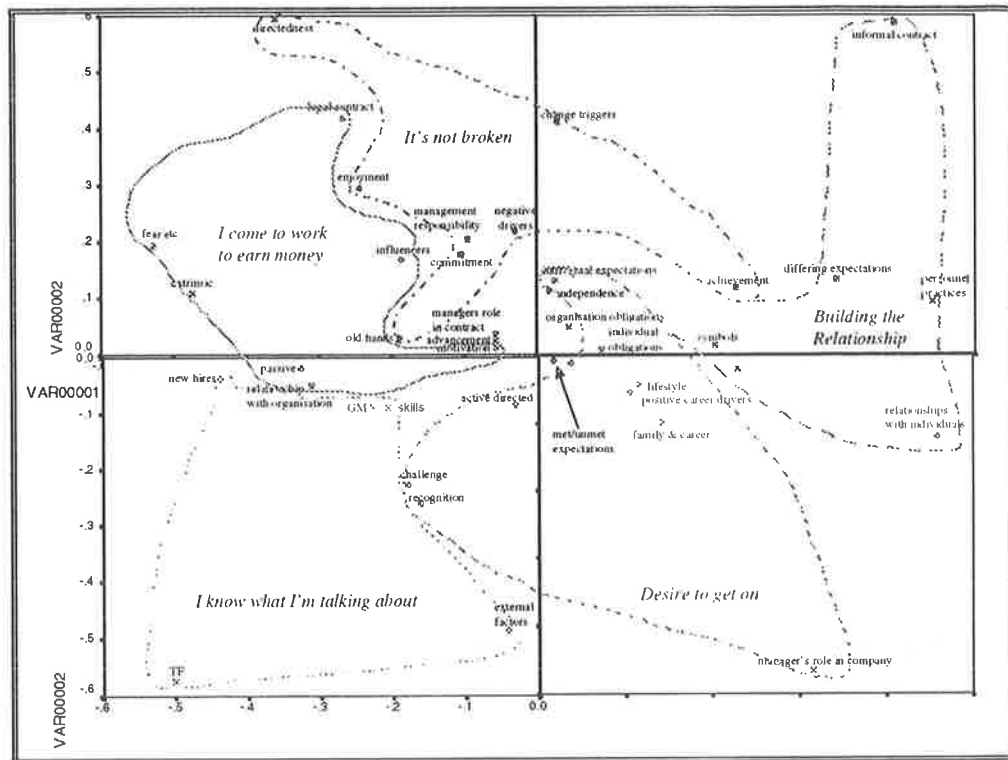


Figure 7.8: Correspondence Analysis showing fit with Cluster Analysis

Once the cluster analysis had been confirmed I turned my attention to naming the dimensions of the two dimensional plot from the correspondence analysis. Following the method used by Greenacre (1984) as described in Houldsworth (1995) and Nuttall (1998), I established that the constructs that gave the best representation in the two dimensions were those in Figure 7.9 below, which then allowed me to consider their respective natures.

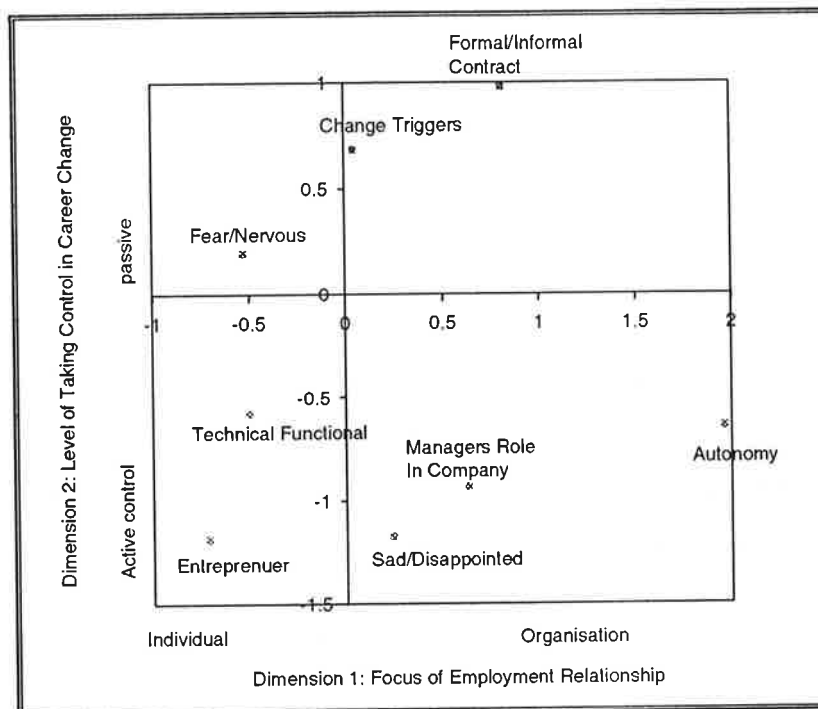


Figure 7.9: Naming the Dimensions

The completion of Gerry's story led me to recognise that the key contributors to the 'building the relationship' cluster were all managers falling on the right hand side of the 'participants' plot (included in Appendix 10), this led me to recognise a similar organisational / individual dimension in this plot. This would put 'manager's role in the organisation' and 'informal contract' as the positive side of the dimension and 'technical/functional' and 'extrinsic' (the tenth best represented construct), as the negative ones. This dimension seems to be about identity and focus on organisation versus focus on self, which has parallels with my earlier intuitive model which used the strength of relationship with the organisation against just wanting a straight formal, 'a fair day's work for a fair day's pay' contract, with their identity tied up in being a technician or functionary rather than wanting more commitment and involvement in the organisation. This was further supported by the constructs of entrepreneur and autonomy falling either side of dimension 1, but on the same side of dimension 2, the distinction between the two in terms of Career Anchors (Schein, 1990) suggests that where the entrepreneur often seeks their fortune outside organisations, the autonomy anchored person works mostly within organisations although both need to be able to be in control of their situation.

In the other dimension I recognised the aspect of reaction to change and 'being in control' with the constructs of 'autonomy', 'entrepreneur', and 'lifestyle' (ninth best represented construct) being about making choices and being sad/disappointed when they didn't work out on the negative side of the dimension. The opposite side seems to be represented by 'change triggers' and 'fear/nervous' where people may be pushed into making changes and letting the organisation or others take control and being nervous about making those changes. This dimension also has parallels with my intuitive model's other axis of the extent of activity or 'directedness' in pursuing career choices. I was thus finally able to support my intuitive analysis of the thick description of the previous chapter, although the further insights contributed by my later analysis to the possible meaning of the dimensions, would lead to a different positioning of my participants on the employment model.

As a final step I went back to the earlier cluster analysis looking at my participants, where career anchors had seemed to be the basis of the three clusters, and superimposed them on the column plot from the correspondence analysis, see Figure 7.10 below. This analysis had been performed using only the 'personal' constructs, to reflect my original thinking when positioning my participants on my initial model, not including the organisation and relationship ones. Again there were no obvious patterns apart from cluster two appearing at the centre of the plot but crossing all the quadrants, and the same pairs of participants that had appeared in the different methods of cluster analyses (1,6; 10,11; 4,12; 8,15; 7,16) were in the same quadrants in the correspondence plot. These 'robust' pairs seem to have either a vertical or horizontal orientation and their pairing could be explained in relation to the appropriate dimension. Participants 8 and 15 both expressed an interest in the more extrinsic element of their contract as well identifying with the organisation and both professed to have drifted into their careers. Participants 6 and 1 both had an element of allowing the organisation to influence their career whilst 6 identified more with the organisation than self. Participants 10 and 11 were both more focussed on their individual lifestyle needs, while participants 4 and 12 were expecting more input

from the organisation in managing their careers. Their identity with the organisation and the psychological contract was the key dimension for participants 7 and 16. It is likely that the same applies to the remaining participants in cluster one, who all have a similar position on dimension 2, and 13 and 9 with similar positions on dimension 1.

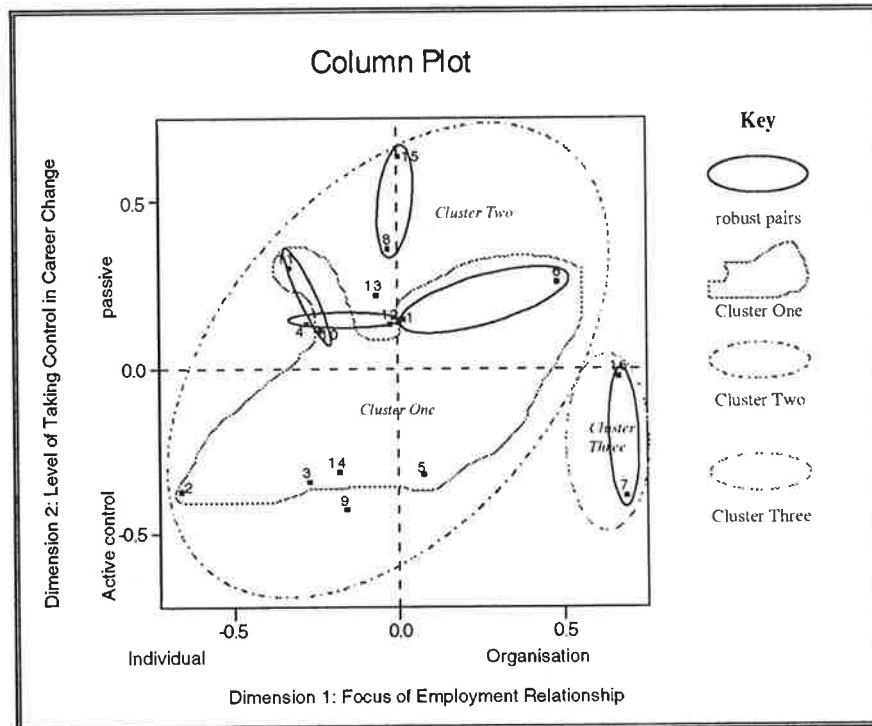


Figure 7.10: Original Cluster Analysis superimposed on correspondence plot

When later adding all the constructs into a cluster analysis by 'case', it was still not very satisfactory in that cluster two contained the bulk of my participants, although the fit with the correspondence analysis plot was better, as demonstrated in Figure 7.11. However the constituents of cluster one, three and four were all managers and cluster two contained all the professionals and included managers from the technical areas. This pattern would suggest that the clusters were based on dimension one, the individual / organisation dimension, with the members of cluster two more concerned about their identity with their technical and functional skills even if they were managers. It was more likely that managers would be oriented to the organisation, especially from sales where part of the role includes representing the organisation to customers.

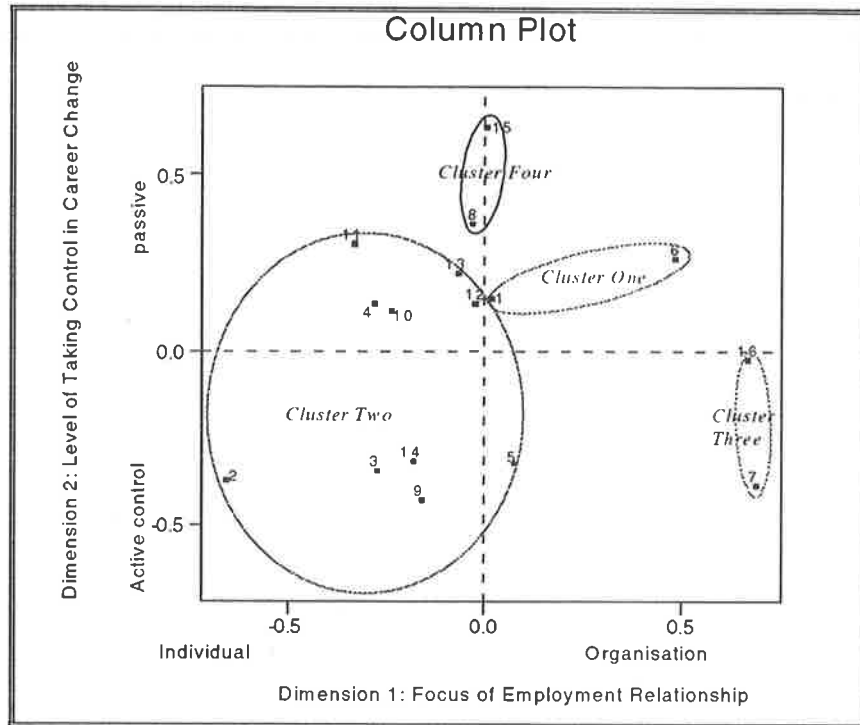


Figure 7.11 Clusters from all constructs with correspondence analysis

The previous clusters seemed to have some links with the participants' career anchors, and when career anchors were added, there again appeared to be similarities of contribution from those with links between their anchors, see figure 7.12 below. The grouping of those with a technical/functional career anchor supports the previous description of the dimension as having an individual flavour with that pole suggesting an identity with technical skills that are personal and portable rather than the organisational skills, which also with the personal focus of those with lifestyle as their anchor. On the opposite pole most of those with pure challenge or general managerial anchors were in sales or management roles, which require more of an identity and involvement with the organisation as representatives of it to either customers or employees.

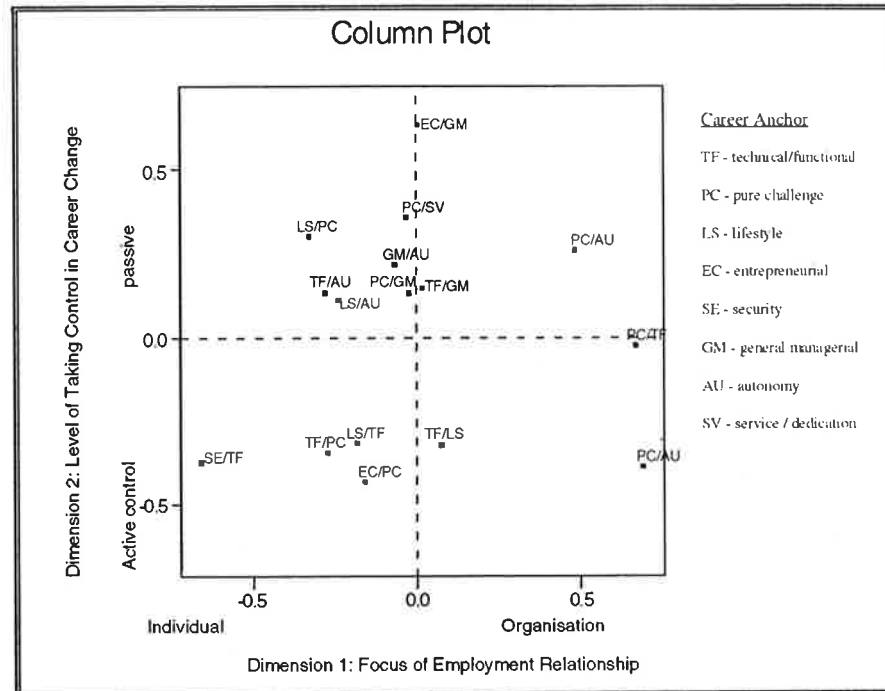


Figure 7.12: Column Plot with Participants' Career Anchors

Both computer aided methods have used information which has only reflected the contribution that my participants made to the constructs, and although it has provided support for my intuitive model and the basis for my interpretation, it does not necessarily reflect where each of my participants would see themselves on my employment relationship model. Through how I have interpreted what they told me, I can now understand why my participants appear where they do in the column plots above. Now that I have found support for my initial inductive approach through plot, cluster and correspondence analysis, it no longer seems appropriate to reposition my participants on the 'employment relationship' model. They themselves may see themselves differently, and without these views it would add little direct value to the insights already gained.

Conclusions

This phase of my journey was one of the most frustrating but also one of the most rewarding as the chronicle contained here reflects. From the purely interpretive approach to thick description, contained in the last chapter, I tested the efficacy of more structured methods, which enabled me to break out of the constraints of my own clusterings and look at my participants' meanings anew. Rewarded by these fresh interpretations, the chapter has proceeded to show the rest of my journey

through my interpretations to the rudiments of a model of the employment relationship and a typology of different views of the psychological contract that were operating in the business at the time of the research inquiry. Illustrated by the vignettes, the chapter has enabled me to further the work suggested by Guzzo and Noonan (1994) in mapping the subjective terrain of the psychological contract. Finally I was able to use correspondence analysis to support my initial, intuitive interpretation which is summarised in the model of the employment relationship.

All through this chapter, working with the constructs and the themes that emerged from the 'thick description', has provided the major insights to my interpretation of the conversations with my participants. Working with how the computer aided analysis has helped me interpret my participants, themselves, through placing them in both clusters and correspondence analysis plots has been more problematic. At times it has been easy to forget that all the software has had to work with was whether someone had contributed to a construct or not. However it is significant that there is not always a neat solution and clear links, as this suggests that it is not easy to assign individuals to the four quadrants of the employment relationship model according to job role, gender, skill base or career anchor. What they have said does not automatically assign a participant to a particular type as described by the quadrants in my employment model. Any employee could potentially be in any one of the quadrants, with differing expectations and requirements of the employment relationship and therefore needs to be managed accordingly.

This and the emergent themes will be more formally presented, with tentative applications and further areas for research in the next, discussion and synthesis, chapter.

Chapter 8 - Discussion and Implications of This Naturalistic Inquiry

*“He in a new confusion of his understanding;
I in a new understanding of my confusion.”*

Robert Graves - from *In Broken Images*

Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to build on the analysis of previous chapters, pulling the various strands together to discuss my final framework or subjective maps of how my research participants saw their world, in terms of the relationship or psychological contract, they perceived they had with their employing organisation. This will also be set in context of existing theory and literature so that the contribution this inquiry has made can emerge, as well as the understanding of the extent to which my original research questions have been addressed. The previous chapters contain both the database and the different analysis techniques, with their findings, on which this discussion is based. Where the reference to literature and theory in the last chapter related to specific constructs, it is my intention here to provide a more holistic view via my interpretation of the findings and provide the synthesis at a wider level.

Much of the literature relating to organisational commitment and the psychological contract referenced in this chapter has been already been discussed as theoretical sensitivity in my second chapter, providing the context of what is known of the phenomenon. However due to the constructivist nature of this inquiry, until the constructions had emerged it was not certain what other sources of literature I would need to draw on during interpretation to inform my findings. Therefore this chapter also draws on other salient literature, often from other disciplines, not included in the earlier chapter.

The first part will discuss the emergent findings, which have been developed into a model or map of the employment relationship, and how they relate to existing

theory. It contains five elements, starting with the two major dimensional themes, followed by other main interlinking themes:

1. the employment relationship and psychological contract dimension;
2. the career quest and level of activity dimension;
3. triggers events;
4. the role of the manager
5. cultural aspects.

The second part outlines how well the original research questions relate to what I have found and what this inquiry has added to the existing body of knowledge in this area. The third part of this discussion looks at the potential application of what has emerged leaving it to my concluding chapter to provide suggestions for further research, and a review of both the research strategy, and personal learning from the whole doctoral research process.

Emergent Findings

If this research inquiry could be summarised in one diagram, it would be the model of the employment relationship, Figure 8.1 below. I set out to understand how the nature of the employment relationship is changing and the forces that shape it. In developing that understanding, I have been able to respond to Guzzo and Noonan's (1994, p491) further research suggestion of the need to expand the understanding of the essence of the psychological contract by establishing what is and is not a part of it '*we need to better map the subjective terrain of the psychological contract as a prelude to an improved appreciation of it.*' The profiles and vignettes from my model provide a subjective view of the terrain in my research organisation, for that group of participants, at that time. The inquiry aims at exposing 'the unique shaping forces' so that others may be able to identify matching elements that would enable the findings to be applied in other situations.

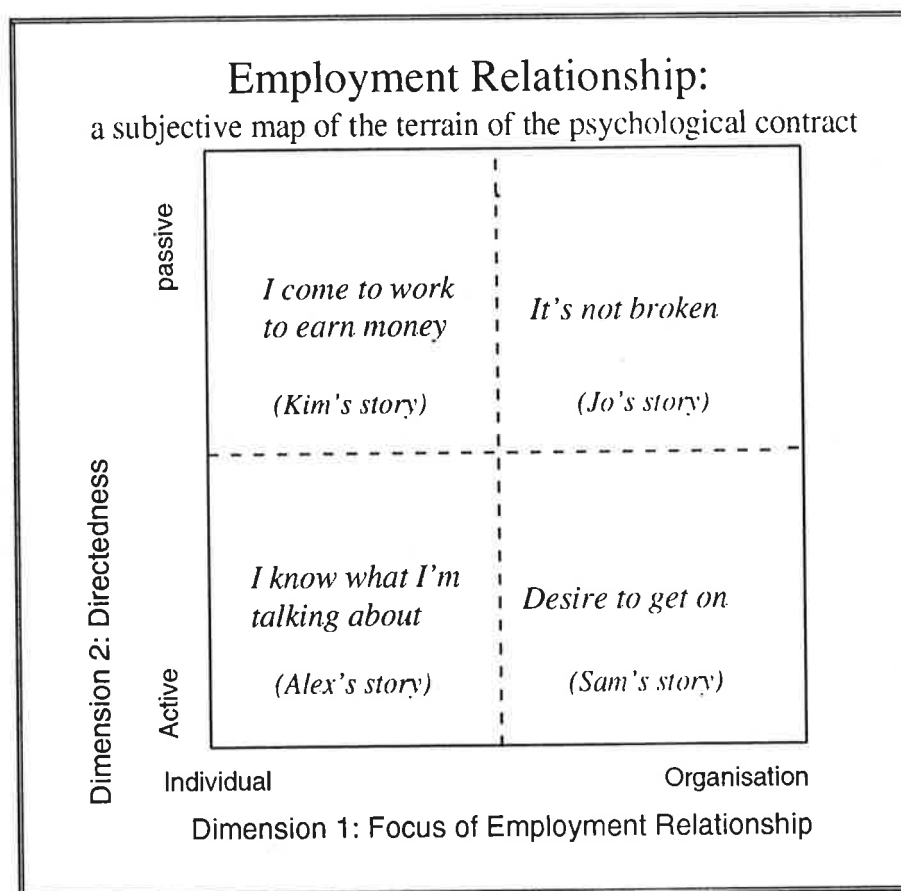


Figure 8.1 : A model of the Employment Relationship

The two major dimensions of this model, that provide the focus for the ensuing discussion, emerged as the key themes both inductively from the 'thick description' and plot analysis, and via the seductive processes of hierarchical cluster analysis and correspondence analysis. The previous chapter provided a brief prelude by outlining the themes and some of the issues, but it is the work of this chapter to put them into context both amongst themselves and with existing theory.

The Employment Relationship and the Psychological Contract

The preliminary interpretation that was first put on this dimension came from my understanding of Rousseau's (1995) continuum of relational and transactional contracts, especially as a result of my earlier study. In the pilot (Parkinson, 1996) I had been able to understand the contrast between different models of flexible working and how they were viewed, using Rousseau's (1995) continuum of relational and transactional contracts. This allowed me to explain that where

the contract appeared to work well from both the organisation and individual point of view, there had been an opportunity to re-negotiate the contract in view of changed circumstances (Herriot and Pemberton, 1995, 1996) rather than change being imposed. The issues are outlined in Table 5.1 in chapter 5 which were developed from Rousseau's model for the study of managing flexibility (Parkinson, 1996) but retains relevance for this inquiry.

In her model Rousseau also considers the relational contract to include elements of emotional involvement, open ended time frames, written and unwritten terms, remaining dynamic and including the whole person (1995). It is the transactional end that is problematic as a comparator in this inquiry, as the participant group were all skilled professionals or managers and only two did not have permanent, full-time contracts, (one fixed term 4 year contract, one part time), and therefore had little in common. Both Rousseau and the pilot focussed the transactional contract dimension on the low skilled, part-time workforce or those with short term contracts, who felt they had little choice, rather than the 'knowledge workers' with greater bargaining powers through their specialist skills in this inquiry. In many ways her relational and balanced contracts combined provide an overall theoretical explanation for the positive end of relationship dimension. The one element in her continuum model that is common to this one, is what she terms 'formality' to separate the written and the unwritten terms of the contract. This is the term that I have decided to use for the main dimension, partly as it has a link into existing theory through Rousseau and partly as it also emerged as a description during my research conversations.

In looking for an overall theoretical confirmation for the opposite formal pole, part can be found in Hiltrop's description of the 'old contract' shown in Table 8.1., in that it provides the traditional 'fair day's work for a fair day's pay'. His 'new' contract dimension however is a different concept from the formal pole in this inquiry as the elements that make up the dimension are different.

	Old	New
<i>Focus</i>	Security	Employability
<i>Duration</i>	Permanent	Variable
<i>Scope</i>	Broad	Narrow
<i>Underlying Principle</i>	Tradition	Market Forces
<i>Intended Output</i>	Loyalty and Commitment	Value added
<i>Employer's responsibility</i>	Fair pay for good work	High pay for high performance
<i>Employee's responsibility</i>	Good performance in present job	Making a difference
<i>Employer's input</i>	Stable income and career advancement	Opportunities for self-development
<i>Employee's input</i>	Time and effort	Knowledge and skills

adapted from Jean-Marie Hiltrop, 1995

Table 8.1 : Changing Psychological Contract

However as Hall and Moss (1998) point out, the old contract was almost a myth, only offered in the few large corporations who had had a relatively stable marketplace. They suggest that Rousseau's (1995) transactional contract can be extended by people's need to know what they will be doing over a set time frame and wanting their contract to be more explicit, which perhaps provides the addition to understanding the need for a 'formal' contract, or clarity.

The Formal and Informal Dimension

The analysis in chapter 7, and the preceding thick description in chapter 6 provided the common elements from which to develop a summary of the distinguishing features of the main emergent dimension, which was initially seen to have an organisational and individual quality to it. Table 8.2 contains those elements that were common to the two quadrants at either end of the dimension.

Formal	Informal
basic level of needs	higher level of needs
security and 'monetizable' elements from organisation	respect and recognition from organisation
offers delivery	offers commitment
offering skills	offering 'whole' self
legal/business relationship	supportive relationship
managing the task	managing the people
managed through HR function	managed through line manager

Table 8.2: Elements of the Relationship Dimension

Level of psychological needs

At the most basic level, the two poles can be viewed through the lens of the psychological need theories of Maslow, Alderfer, McClelland and Herzberg, which Schein (1980) sees as useful but inadequate to understand individual differences through their generality. The second element of expectation from the organisation can also be viewed through the same motivation theories, although Hall and Moss' (1998) perspective that many people are looking for a more tangible contract so that they know where they are on the more formal contract end. The 'knowledge worker' nature of my sample is likely to explain this discrepancy, as their skill base is seen by them as their source of security, and by the organisation as skills they would rather not lose. The other end of the continuum identifies the psychological success needs that signal the notion of the 'protean' or 'boundaryless' career (Hall, 1996, Mirvis and Hall, 1994), although, with only a one dimensional view, they equate it more with the 'transactional' contract for the tangible reasons above, than the relational. It would seem with the second dimension of control or 'directedness', the protean career '*driven by the person, not the organization, and that will be reinvented by the person from time to time as the person and the environment change*' (Hall, 1996, p8) could be encompassed in my typology.

There are other perspectives that might also provide explanations of the focus on self or the self in the organisation and where the focus of attachment is, these include Reisman's inner and other directed, and Merton's local and cosmopolitan types (in Van Maanen, 1997). Although when Trompenaars (1993, p47) uses

Parsons and Shils' notion of collectivism and individualism as 'prime orientation to common goals and objectives' and 'prime orientation to self', respectively this is not quite the same concept, in that seeking to identify with the organisation could be based on individualistic goals. These are areas that could be pursued in further research into describing the dimensions themselves.

Delivery and commitment

In many ways the third element of the table brings my research inquiry round the full circle in identifying that those who are looking for more than the formal contractual relationship from the organisation, are those who are offering the different dimensions of commitment (Porter et al, 1974; Walton, 1985; Reichers, 1986; Meyer and Allen, 1997) in terms of 'willing to go the extra mile', expecting to make a significant contribution and to remain at least long enough to see the results of their work, while there is a match between individual and organisational needs and expectations. This is a similar to concept to the dimension of Tsui et al's (1997) notion of the balanced contract where each party put in similar investments to the contract whether it be at the formal or informal level which results in high core task productivity and organisation citizenship respectively. It is interesting to note whilst recalling that there has been little firm evidence that performance and commitment are related (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Mottaz, 1988; Mowday *et al*, 1982), that McKendall and Margulis, (1995) go a stage further in suggesting that decrease in commitment and organisational loyalty should be welcomed as a sign that people are thinking more realistically, and both sides are now released from unachievable expectations.

Skills and 'Self'

The fourth element has links back to the previous aspects of seeking psychological success in suggesting the whole 'self' is involved, rather than the Taylorist view of seeing workers as 'hands' and separating them from their brains (Morgan, 1997; Cox and Parkinson, 1998) and has been recognised for many years. Argyris (1960) recognised this incongruity of relatively mature human beings, predisposed to independence and activity, being expected to use a few shallow abilities with little control. This was followed by Schein's (1978)

suggestion that the work, family and self concerns of people interacted strongly and could not be ignored and link with what he called the 'total life space', which is reiterated by Guzzo and Noonan, when looking at the size of relational and transactional psychological contract within the life space. *'a purely transactional contract includes specific, monetizable terms that touch on limited aspects of the employee's work life and few-to-no areas of the person's private life'* (1994, p450), whereas the more life space the psychological contract occupies the more important the organisation, or work, is to the individual. Trompenaars (1993) also builds on the concept of life space with his adaptation of Lewin's similar concept, demonstrating how different people keep different amounts of their private and public 'life space' separate, which he describes as diffuse and specific.

Also relevant is the concept of self as seen by Rogers (McKenna, 1987) as the perception, attitudes, values and feelings that a person sees as unique to themselves, which if threatened the individual would make changes to bring it back into balance. This would also impact on how well the individual felt they had a 'fit' with their environment, and the extent to which the organisation matched their self image, which is also seen in the literature labelled the person-environment fit by Lofquist & Dawis (in Cooper, 1979). Another key area of values fit can be seen as the background to Schein's Career Anchors (1990), values image (Lee and Mitchell, 1994), the hierarchy of personal values seen by Allport and Graves (in Robbins, 1989), and the changes that are emerging with 'Generation X' (Cox and Parkinson, 1998; Brousseau *et al*, 1996).

These can be seen to be linking back to Schein's (1978) matching process, Herriot and Pemberton's (1996) psychological contracting model and in the organisation identity literature used by Caldwell *et al*. (1990) and Becker (1992) to confirm the importance of strong organisational value systems in developing normative commitment as well as the different foci of commitment in terms of the manager and team. Becker and Billings' (1993) typology has some links into the typology resulting from this inquiry in terms of the identity with organisation, work group and manager in their uncommitted, committed, globally and locally committed model.

Although the lifestyle issue is relevant here judging by Schein's comments about the interaction of work, family and self. This can also signal a move to identifying with the more formal end of the contract continuum, perhaps in terms of competing commitments as identified by Reichers (1986), but also in terms of individuals wanting a more formal contract in order to either ensure some security and stability for the family, the ability to be able to fit with home needs, or in not being prepared to relinquish or compromise their private lives for the organisation (Beckhard, 1977; Scandura and Lankau, 1997).

Management Style

The next elements concern management style and the type of relationship that the individual enjoys with their manager and the subsequent impact it has on how they view their psychological contract. This appears to be an area where the literature is focussed more on the mechanics of management such as performance appraisal, managing employee relations than the quality of the relationship, and there is little in the areas of the psychological contract and organisational commitment.

Writers on the role of the manager such as Mintzberg (1988) and Stewart (1986) mention related issues such as their role as figurehead and leader and the potential conflict that arises between human relations and getting the task done respectively, but these are not well developed despite concerns expressed in the 1970s that management education had failed to help managers learn how to gain the willing co-operation of other people (Livingston, 1988). The other literature that the task, people management element could be related to, and may provide a way of viewing this typology is that of Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (1985) and Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership model (Kakabadse *et al*, 1988) or Fiedler's Contingent Leadership model (Makin *et al*, 1996) all contingent on the manager and the situation. The debate on the role of the manager, and what is wanted or expected of the manager in the contract, is linked inextricably to the individual's view of organisations be it from a traditional functionalist paradigm (Burrell and Morgan, 1979), the symbolic interactionist view that it's the individuals in the organisation that create and sustain beliefs

(Van Maanen and Schein, 1979), Senge's learning organisations or Preston's jazz band (1986), and therefore the role of the manager within them.

The role of the manager has traditionally been seen through the eyes of the functionalist school (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) and with most of the research in this area coming from the same objective paradigm, it possibly provides an explanation of why there has been little written on the quality of the relationship. Hearn (1993) suggests that this may also be bound up with the predominant male notion of control and self control especially in the arena of expressing any kind of emotion in an organisational setting. In the individual / management relationship this can be seen where management systems such as performance management are designed and promoted as objective, fair and rational processes but the appraising and ensuing feedback can only be carried out subjectively (Parkin, 1993). Also from a similar paradigm, Trompenaars (1993, p118) provides the synchronous culture as another way of viewing the relationship where the *'employee may be favourably assessed and promoted for the positive relationship established with supervisors, who see that relationship developing over time and accumulating knowledge and mutuality'*.

However this can also be seen in one of the quantitative studies where the positive impact of the quality of the individual-manager relationship is demonstrated in performance ratings, Duarte *et al* (1994), giving an indicator of how likely an individual was to be promoted or make other career moves and how supported they were in these moves. The experience and confidence gained through having tasks delegated, which was seen as a key pivotal variable in determining how well the relationship was working (Bauer and Green, 1996), might also affect future career opportunities. There is also a recognition in this LMX (leader member exchange) literature that there are different distinct exchange relationships between each member of a work group and their manager. This contrasts with the recent careers literature which has focussed more on self-reliance and wanting a more defined contract (Hall and Moss, 1998; McKendall and Margulis, 1995).

Managed by HR or the Line

Different people may have different views on who they have negotiated their psychological contract with in the past. Schein and Rousseau recognise a role for the line manager almost in passing, not developing it beyond a warning on the importance of the first appraisal in shaping attitudes (Schein, 1978) and as one of the contract makers (Rousseau, 1995). Mumford (1995) suggests that what we have seen is the transition from the personnel manager as guardian of the psychological contract through the personnel practices that demonstrate acceptance of the individual into the organisation, to the new style of human resources function, where the human resources department act in an advisory capacity to line management (Guest, 1989; Legge, 1995). This suggests support for viewing the legal contract as the domain of human resources, which is usually negotiated on entry to the organisation, while the line manager is responsible for managing the psychological contract, which is dynamic and requires renegotiating at various intervals.

Summary

In summary, I would not wish to define this formal - informal relationship dimension more narrowly, as to do so would be falling into the trap that I have criticised other studies for, in reducing the concept to its constituent parts rather than seeing it as a whole. This first dimension has many of the characteristics of the concept of organisational commitment. It seems to encompass the extent to which people wish to identify themselves with the more abstract aspects of the psychological contract, or their preference for the more formal pole with its tangibility, focus on own needs and being able to separate work from the other aspects of life. It is bound up with their sense of identity and self image; where their commitment lies, organisation, job, self and family; their focus on themselves or the wider world; how they separate their life space; and the extent to which they want the involvement with the organisation or their manager. This last element possibly also would determine the management style they would best respond to.

Directedness - Taking Control in Career Change

It was the dimension of control that emerged strongly from the pilot and from that an understanding of the links between this dimension and the formal / informal contract emerged. The aspect that the pilot contributed was that of who was in control of the 'psychological contract', was it the individual or the organisation? The 'directedness' dimension of the 'employment relationship' model seems to describe the level to which the individual takes active control of their career. With this in mind and the analyses from chapters six and seven, table 8.3 below summarises the main elements of the dimension.

Passive	Active
Not able / expecting to re-negotiate contract	Feeling in control of career
career moves in response to negative situations or at others' behest	career moves to build skills and for self development
influenced by others, parents, managers	working to achieve balance, lifestyle
company responsibility to provide opportunities	individual responsibility to retain employability
nervous about making change	confidence built on expertise

Table 8.3: Elements of the Career Control Dimension

Feeling in control of career

One major area of literature that illuminates the first element of feeling in control is 'locus of control', first described by Rotter (1954, in McKenna, 1987). Seen as a continuum of a dimension of personality, with those with an internal locus viewing control as related to their own efforts and talents, feeling confident that they can bring the changes needed in their environment, they are more likely to be seen as independent, achieving and dominant. Bell and Staw (1989, p241) considered that "*dominance and the need for power are almost by definition related to attempts at personal control. People with high needs for power are concerned with control over their environment and with influencing others*". At the other end are those with an external locus who by contrast feel powerless to bring about change, controlled by forces outside their control, chance, fate, other people (Hingley and Cooper, 1986), sometimes referred to by Bell and Staw (op.cit.) as learned helplessness. Leong, Furnham and Cooper (1996) found the

internal locus of control related to job satisfaction, with those with an external locus of control more likely to quit and feel stressed. Kinicki and Vecchio's (1994) findings were able to demonstrate that the internal locus of control correlated positively with the quality of the management relationship, and also that organisation commitment could be predicted by the quality of the relationship.

A separate but linked aspect of the first element contains Herriot and Pemberton's (1996) notion of psychological contracting from the aspect of not feeling in a position to re-negotiate the contract following an imposed change. Herriot, Manning and Kidd (1997) and Sparrow (1995) re-iterate Rousseau and Parks' (1993) suggestion that if the organisation has been perceived to have broken their side of the contract then employees will limit their commitment or effort in return as a form of reciprocity. This research inquiry suggests that participants who have experienced a 'downfall' in their career fall into the active half of this dimension, and where it has been out of their control, they have demonstrated a focus on the formal part of the contract and potentially lacked in behavioural commitment. Argyris (1985) provides a possible explanation for why people move from one quadrant to another, moving to a more transactional contract following a 'downfall' (Parks and Kidder, 1994; Hallier and Lyons, 1996) or in my model became more active in their career, in that when threatened, people move to the opposite of their normal 'theories in use' originally formed from their governing values. This would also help explain Morris *et al*'s (1993) finding that individuals that demonstrated lack of behavioural commitment by leaving organisations, had been no less attitudinally committed than those who stayed.

Locus of control can also be a factor in explaining the second element especially in seeing it in terms of a reactive or proactive approach to careers. The more negative pole of this continuum suggests there are those who may only move when something dramatic happens to them, as informed by Guzzo and Noonan's (1994) change triggers, such as a violent breach of their psychological contract as discussed above, organisational restructuring for instance; or that they are offered a job opportunity which they see as destiny; or a change in their personal

circumstances leads them to reassess their aspirations. There also remains in this element those who have not made moves and whose contract could be seen as static, this could be explained by the possibility that although breaches of the contract had occurred they had appeared small enough for the individual to either voice their concerns and save or renegotiate the contract (Shore and Tetrick, 1994; Carson and Carson; 1996), or that the trust in the organisation was such that the individual had not recognised the breach (Robinson, 1996).

At the other end of this element is the aspect of those who may move for development in terms of skills or self, partly explained by the motivation theories of earlier, but also by theories such as social identity (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Dutton *et al*, 1994), and group value theory where the individual makes moves in the search for their own sense of self-identity through identification with and interaction with particular social groups, such as a particular organisation or profession, or for a fit with their values. *'People value their relationships with social entities, be they individuals, groups, organisations or even social institutions. Relationships give people the opportunity to validate the correctness of their beliefs and behaviours and to feel accepted, respected, and valued'* (Festinger, 1954, in Brockner *et al*, 1992, p245). Social identity would also contribute to the informal relationship pole of the focus of the relationship dimension in my employment relationship model, once the individual had found the appropriate organisation or profession to identify with. However Ashforth and Mael distinguish between commitment and identification, with identification as specific to a particular organisation and would see it as an antecedent for commitment. Taking the theory to its limit, it may be that the psychological contract 'types' of this inquiry may also be examples of social groups that individuals may come to identify with across formal groups. Saks and Ashforth (1997) also provide the link with locus of control by the suggestion that the level of an individual's self esteem also impacts on their perception of their fit with organisations.

Asynchronicity

This third element combines some of the issues that arise from locus of control and the asynchronicity of the career and life cycles (Sekaran and Hall, 1989; Schein, 1978), changing values around work and family as increasingly evident from Beckhard's (1977) to Schein's (1996) more recent observations on the increasing role of his Life Style career anchor and Sparrow's domination of contracts by lifestyle and personal motivation factors (1995).

The pilot initially raised the issues of individuals wanting to achieve a balance and more control over their working lives, which they felt were restored through flexibility (Parkinson, 1996; Handy, 1989) and renegotiating their psychological contract. This reflects one end of the continuum, which is also supported by Derr & Laurent's (1989) 'getting balanced' career success maps looking to find an equilibrium between personal and professional life. Dual career families highlight the dilemmas that multiple roles and role overload bring to determining the boundary or interface between home and work (Sekaran and Hall, 1989), which may also be supported through social identity to explain the search for balance for different life roles. This would also be expected of those with an inner locus of control and also characterised by Driver's spiral career concept (1979). However this would not only just be in the phase of early to mid career, but also in the following stage in response to personal or organisational changes in post corporate careers (Beckhard, *ibid.*; Peiperl and Baruch, 1997).

The opposite pole could be explained by the Leader-Member Exchange literature for those willing to be influenced by or with a good supportive relationship with their manager (Duarte *et al*, *ibid.*), or an external locus of control especially when combined with the following factors. In common with the other pole, the explanation could lie in career and life stages at the entry career stage, when most open to organisational influence or still subject to the strong force of pre-entry talents, prior attitudes, values, ambitions and expectations from schooling and socialisation (Bell and Staw, 1989 ; Schein; 1978). Cytrynbaum and Crites (1989) cite Gould's phases suggesting the influence of parents and upbringing in early career, before the individual's self identity in adult world has been

established, *'getting a job is a critical step in the establishment of a sense of self or personal identity'* (Dalton, 1989, p100) and also cites the sociological literature that supports the relationship between the individual's environment and social class with occupational attainment. This can also be seen through Super's emergence of self-concept with the 'reality testing' that characterises the early career (Dalton, *ibid.*; Schein, 1988; Cytrynbaum and Crites, *ibid.*). A related perspective is that of adult socialisation and rites of passage (Barley, 1989), the externally oriented locus of control may find change stressful (Hingley and Cooper, *ibid.*) but when helped by colleagues and superiors in learning a new role, the individual would be provided with a feeling of success and accomplishment - or failure and incompetence (Van Maanen and Schein; 1979).

Organisational Dependence and Independence

One pole of the fourth element reflects the more traditional view of corporate career management where the organisation assumed control over most aspects of the manager's professional life, (Allred *et al*, 1996, Whyte, 1960), whereas now Allred *et al* would see that the responsibility for managing a career is often shared by the individual and the organisation as Schein (1996, p83) suggests *'organizations will become less paternalistic and individuals more self-reliant'*. Arthur and Rousseau (1996, p31) had also recognised that *'many people are locked into the notion that resembles the people-movers at the airport - hop on and you move forward'*, demonstrating a perception that they were dependent on the organisation, which Nicholson and West (1989) would only expect in a large organisation that could provide traditional career patterns.

Allred *et al* (*ibid.*) go on to discuss the direction in which organisational careers are moving, which refers to employability (Kanter, 1989; Nicholson, 1996), with it's reliance on development of self and the opportunity to build up 'human capital', and Hall's Protean Career (1996) that can quickly adapt and change shape. Their 'cellular' organisations would require individuals to be involved in personal learning and recognition of career opportunities that this pole suggests as well as acting ethically, balancing work and family life in addition to the technical, commercial, and collaborative skills needed to work with more traditional

organisations. There is the recognition in the future too that there would be an increasing pressure for individuals to take responsibility for their own careers as traditional organisations change (Allred, op.cit, MacDougall and Vaughan, 1996).

These aspects of personal learning, balancing work and family life are also common to one pole of the second and third elements, where the spiral career concept of Driver (1979) updated in Brousseau et al (1996), and the achievement oriented careers of Zabusky and Barley (1996) also provide support to these views of the relationship the individual may have with their organisation.

MacDougall and Vaughan (1996) also found that family commitments were now perceived as a barrier to their career by more male managers than female, perhaps reflecting a change in values, as more men want to become more involved in family life.

Confidence in Change

The final element also has its explanation through locus of control, as described by Hingley and Cooper (1986), who suggest that those with an inner locus of control through feeling unable to take effective action would be more likely to have higher levels of anxiety when making changes, unlike their 'inner' counterparts who are likely to be more achieving, dominant and independent, confident in being able to effect change, which is supported by Phillips and Gully's (1997) link of internal locus of control to self-efficacy. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) also suggest that some may find making changes in organisations stressful, especially if changing between functional, hierarchical or inclusionary boundaries. This would probably be more difficult if individuals had an external locus of control, although this is refuted by Nicholson and West (1989), who suggest it is more likely to be disenchantment especially in career entry stages, linking to 'trigger events' and 'reality shock' (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994; Dalton, 1989). Nicholson and West (ibid., p186) also cite Fineman (1983) and Hartley (1981) who were able to find positive outcomes in job change that illustrate the opposite, confident pole: *'They epitomize people's capacity to turn crises into opportunities and to undertake challenges with the sense of self-directedness that*

yields future fulfilment', and in so doing provide an insight needed into what triggers individuals from passive to active directedness.

The other supporting concept is that of Driver's spiral and expert careers (Driver, 1979; Brousseau *et al*, 1996). The expert career concept and Schein's technical functional career anchor (1990) have several parallels in that the most desirable aspect of their career is expertise or technical competence in their chosen field and it is where they would seem to draw their confidence from. Advancement for this group is more likely to be a lateral move to become more proficient in their specialism, which is an integral part of their self-identity and linked to Zabusky and Barley's (1996) career of achievement concept. Confidence also comes from what can be seen as another aspect of the career of achievement concept, the spiral career where individuals are willing to move to a new field that draws on knowledge and skills developed in the old one, but which throws open the door to the development of an entirely new set of knowledge and skills.

Summary

It is this second dimension of directedness, that seems to bring the different insight into 'what is going on' in the psychological contract. Based on the concept of locus of control, this dimension helps explain the first, for instance it helps clarify whether the formal contract pole is about self reliance, independence with self image and identity tied up with being the expert in the field, and therefore deriving security from that expertise. Alternatively, it could be about letting someone else take control or abdicating responsibility, either through circumstances, not feeling in a position to, or not knowing how. As a knowledge worker with scarce skills, some have never had the need to take control of their careers and change.

The dimension is bound up in confidence or lack of it, in self and own abilities; the feeling of dependence or independence; looking for and being in an environment to achieve or not being able to do anything about imposed change, possibly being left having to compromise important values; getting satisfaction out of doing a good job as opposed to being content to let others manage as they are better at it;

and being willing to voice concerns early to change a potential 'breach' of contract rather than waiting until the situation becomes a violation to be 'triggered' out of passivity.

Other Central Themes

This section will explore the three other core elements that draw the dimensions together and demonstrate the dynamic nature of the concept: the role of the manager; trigger events and culture.

Who Manages the Psychological Contract ? - The Role of the Manager

It has been difficult to find much in the direct psychological contract literature on the nature of the relationship between the individual and the manager and the impact that might have, as discussed earlier in the chapter, and yet from this inquiry and the pilot, it would seem a vital ingredient in the relationship.

Rousseau (1995) recognises the role of the manager as the psychological contract maker, but does not take it beyond making the point of the impact they have in determining the implied contract terms, and the likelihood of a perception of contract violation occurring when they move on. It is the nature of the relationship required and how people identify with the organisation stemming from it, that seems to drive the first dimension of how they see their psychological contract with the organisation.

The relationship with the manager seems to be pivotal in providing the links between the two dimensions of the employment relationship model. Taking a view of the relationship as a social construction suggests that the manager, and the organisation's HR practices as delivered by the line, represent the organisation as far as the employee is concerned. Indeed Rousseau and Greller (1994) agree that the nature of the relationship is shaped by these practices, but see it as the role of the HR function to foster the appropriate contract, which they suggest is the individual's system of beliefs as formed by the organisation. It is also against the culture and values that the manager expresses, that the individual will gauge whether there is sufficient match with their own to stay (Lee and Mitchell, 1994). The common concepts in both previous dimensions in the literature of social

identity, leader-member exchange and locus of control also demonstrate those links. The quality of the relationship with the manager is also critical in the first two decision points of the model of the decisions process in reassessing the psychological contract, shown later at Figure 8.2. This suggests that the manager individual relationship provides the element that attaches one dimension to the other.

The main body of psychological literature that appears to address the relationship between individuals and their managers, seems to fall into the Leader Member eXchange (LMX) field, which despite a twenty five year history, has yielded little agreement on what it is (Gertstner and Day, 1997). One of the difficulties may lie in the confusion between leadership and management, especially in relationship to the management task, *'there is nothing inherent in the management function that requires the same strong interpersonal skills that seem so necessary for leadership'* (Kotter, 1988, p32), although his research demonstrated that organisations with 'better-than-average' management retained and motivated their employees. Gertstner and Day's (1997) meta-analysis highlights the lack of agreement on how both parties see the exchange relationship, but that it is probably better assessed from the member perspective as the manager's view is more complex, possibly due to it being bound up in their different roles and self-images within an organisational and societal context. However their analysis reveals the pivotal role of the individual-manager relationship in that *'high-quality exchanges are consistently related to favourable individual outcomes ... we view the relationship with one's supervisor as a lens through which the entire work relationship is viewed'* (Gertstner and Day, *ibid.*, p839-40).

Increasingly it would seem that an individual's 'expectations of career development' rest with their manager as a result of devolvement of traditional HR practices to the line. However Kinicki and Vecchio's (1994), impact of the management relationship with locus of control may also demonstrate the evolutionary path that takes the individual from the passive to active directedness. McDougall and Vaughan's (1996) research, also in a large UK organisation, suggests that most managers were seen by their staff, and group personnel, to be

ill equipped to understand their needs and aspirations, and they themselves felt insecure and inadequate to the task. That managers are not instrumental in aiding individuals in career development through developing realistic goals, expectations and plans for the future, is supported by Giles and West's (1995) not being able to find evidence that the quality of supervisory support influenced whether or not a person attempts to assume responsibility for their career development.

Summary

It would seem that the manager has a central role to play in how the relationship develops. The quality of the relationship impacts on the same elements that are found in my two dimensional employment model. This would, in turn, suggest that this may support Gerstner and Day (*ibid.*) in that how the quality of the employment relationship, or psychological contract is viewed is contingent on the quality of the relationship with the boss.

Brockner *et al.*, (1992) point out that there has been little formal research into cases where the contract has been kept. They also suggest that future research should identify the conditions for optimal relationships between organisations and their employees' perhaps demonstrating the nomothetic ideal of finding the 'law' or as Jeffcutt (1994) suggests the search for 'harmony and unity'. In looking for the optimal relationship, Robinson's (1996) research into the relationship of the psychological contract with trust, provides an aspect which would seem contradictory to Brockner *et al.* (*ibid.*), as she found that in relationships where there was a high degree of trust, breaches were assimilated into the positive attitude, due to individuals' tendency to only focus on information that confirms their prior beliefs whilst ignoring the negative. However Shore and Tetrick (1994) could explain it by the extent of the breach, suggesting that individuals would be likely to discuss small discrepancies with a view to patching up, or renegotiating the psychological contract (Herriot and Pemberton, 1995), whereas large discrepancies may lead to silence, retreat or exit from the contract.

My research inquiry and the literature suggest that there is no single factor or combination of factors that provide Brockner *et al.*'s (*ibid.*) optimal relationship or

psychological contract. It would seem that the model that has evolved from the inquiry is a contingency model (Morgan, 1997), dependent on factors such as a good relationship with the manager, the feeling of being in control, the perceived opportunities for personal development, whereas the fixed element for the group in this inquiry, with the exception of the one 'fixed term contractor', was that their formal contract was the same. The element that was different on the organisational dimension was the manager and the possible difference in the quality of relationship with that individual, which was determined by the interaction between the individual and manager or the informal contract.

Trigger Events

As the second research question trigger events was one of the areas I had hoped to be able to contribute to through my inquiry. Triggers (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994) or 'shocks to the system' (Lee and Mitchell, 1994) set off the train of events that lead either the individual or the organisation to reconsider their needs and expectations of the other and if they find a mismatch, make changes. My principal findings appeared to be in two areas: making changes within the organisation which tended to be within the individual's control and triggered by them, and moving between organisations, which often appeared to be triggered by events outside their control. Reflecting Guzzo and Noonan's (1994, p454) view of triggering events as *'loosely arrayed along a continuum that, at one end, is anchored by highly visible, public happenings that are accessible to all members of the organisation. The other end of the continuum is anchored by circumstances and conditions that are the private matters of individuals.'* Table 8.4 below summarises the related findings to trigger events from the inquiry as a reference point for the following discussion. In discussing these events that trigger change, a critical element is the role of the manager in organisational change as representing the organisation to the individual.

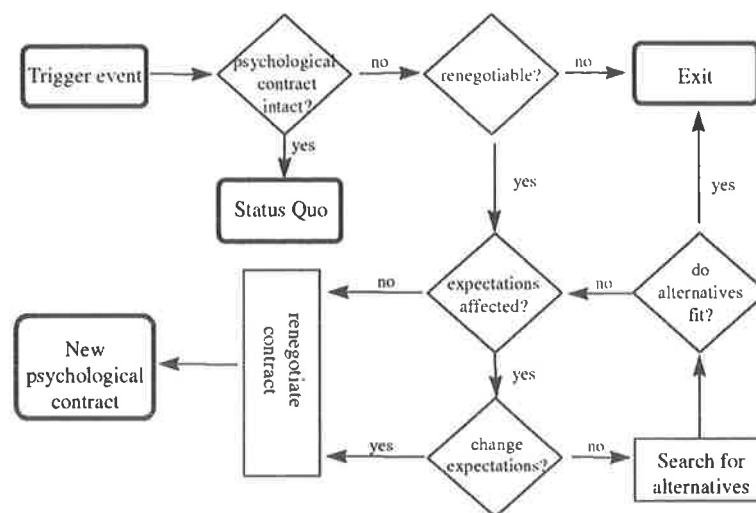
	Change Organisation	Change Job
Instigated by	organisation (negative) recruiter (positive) individual (either)	individual - development or advancement (positive) manager/org - (positive)
Positive drivers	new job/opportunity set up own business personal situation <i>individual needs changed</i>	linear move - promotion lateral move - development personal situation <i>organisation and individual needs change</i>
Negative drivers	organisation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restructuring • redundancy personally unhappy <i>organisation offer changed</i>	family situation personal situation manager mismatch job mismatch <i>individual needs and expectations not met</i>
Contract view of negative change	contract violation	contract breach
Holding factors	'side bets', 'cognitive consistency'	nervousness, fear of failure

Table 8.4 : Summary of types of trigger events

Organisational Trigger Events

The events that trigger negative organisational outcomes, such as societal changes leading to economic downturn with subsequent restructuring and downsizing, therefore forcing a change of the psychological contract, can be seen to have influenced the findings of this inquiry and can be viewed through the growing body of psychological contract violation literature (Rousseau, 1995; Robinson and Rousseau, 1994; Brockner et al, 1992, Parks and Kidder, 1994; Morrison, 1994). From this inquiry it would seem that organisation restructuring, or changes beyond the individual control move them from a passive career mode into an active one, which partly reflects the already noted move from a relational contract to a more transactional one (Parks and Kidder, 1994; Hallier and Lyons, 1996), and the loss of commitment (Brockner *et al*, 1992; Krackhardt and Porter, 1985) which may be more of a change of focus of commitment from organisation to career or job. Building on Herriot and Pemberton, (1995), this may also reflect that those who had the opportunity to renegotiate their psychological contract at that time continued with a relational contract.

A more satisfactory explanation of this phenomenon may come from Lee and Michell's (1994) use of Beach's image theory in two differing ways. The first suggests that once an individual has been through the process of having to consider the meaning of an event in relation to their job, following a 'shock' bringing different domain images into conflict, then the script or frame of reference exists to enable them to interpret a similar experience, or make 'a script driven decision'. The second reason is linked to the first and person-organisation, person-job fit (Saks and Ashforth, 1997), and relates to the process by which the individual came to the original decision, by assessing the options against their different domain images and may decide to change that image to take account of the 'event' or 'shock', although they suggest that images related to values and principles are the least likely to be changed and those related to strategies to attain personal goals, the most. This process has been summarised below in Figure 8.2 below, and provides a model of the decisions that people may go through when faced with a 'shock' or a 'trigger event', where they reassess the match of their needs and expectations to that of the organisation (Herriot and Pemberton, 1996; Lee and Mitchell, 1994; Dutton *et al*, 1994).



Process to rebalance the psychological contract following a trigger event.

Figure 8.2 : Rebalancing the Psychological Contract

There are also the opposite positive events at an organisation level, such as establishing a new business, creating opportunities to attract new people or to move existing ones for development or advancement, which were also present in my inquiry. Individuals offering themselves to match opportunities are likely to be 'triggered' by organisational, personal or those events which define the interface between the organisation and the individual, that constitute Guzzo and Noonan's (1994) HR practices and contribute to Schein's symbols of mutual acceptance (1978), such as positive performance appraisal. A positive relationship with the manager also impacts on HR practices such as appraisal or the level of delegation to build up skills and experience (Duarte *et al*, 1994; Bauer and Green, 1996) and thus could be seen to influence outcomes. It is at these points that the informal contract is established and negotiated or renegotiated (Schein, *ibid.*; Herriot and Pemberton, 1995) which sets the expectations to be met in the future.

Personal Trigger Events

In the same way that environmental changes impact on organisations, they impact on individuals, changing their needs and expectations, or within the organisation as their organisational environment changes. Major downsizing or restructuring leads some to reassess their values and to the extent to which they still identify with the organisation (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Saks and Ashforth, 1997; Lee and Mitchell, 1994; Dutton *et al*, 1994), see figure 8.2. It can also lead individuals to find themselves in changed situations where the job, manager or colleagues have changed where the decision has been out of their control and may affect the sources of satisfaction with the job or organisation, such as the relationship with the manager, or office location. The way the changes were managed would also impact in areas such as commitment (Brockner *et al*, 1992).

The individual also undergoes major life events that affect how they view their relationship with the work organisation, such as marriage, children and divorce. *'Situational considerations may also alter an individual's perception of available career options. Major life crises, such as losses in family relationships or failing health, frequently stimulate career change. In contrast, interpersonal obligations*

required in dual career marriages may limit career mobility' (Carson and Carson, 1997, p69). Their life and career stage (Schein, 1978; Sekaran and Hall, 1989; Derr and Laurent, 1989) impact on their needs and wants from their psychological contract, depending on the strength of the self image in that domain (Lee and Mitchell, *ibid.*). The combination of Herriot and Pemberton's (*ibid.*) psychological contracting process with Lee and Mitchell's (*ibid.*) 'unfolding model' to explain the process behind whether to stay and possibly renegotiate, provides a comprehensive flow of the decision path when needs and wants change following an 'event' or 'shock to the system', see figure 8.2 above.

The positive trigger events such as advancement or lateral moves usually include a form of negotiation or renegotiation of the psychological contract as a part of new formal terms and conditions, or the informal negotiations that take place during the selection interview or induction phase with a new manager and colleagues, as the individual builds new assumptions and adjusts their self image to take account of a new set of circumstances (Schein, *ibid.*; Lee and Mitchell, *ibid.*).

Nature of change

The question that the area of event triggers raises and why it is of interest in this inquiry, is the point at which the employment relationship breaks down. The key factor would appear to be the extent of the event, or 'size of the discrepancy' between the old and new psychological contract (Shore and Tetrick, 1994). If the 'event' engenders a precipitous change that leads either the organisation, or the individual, to redefine the formal pole of contract terms, due to restructuring or a major life event, then it could be seen as psychological contract violation if it triggers voice or exit reactions (Carson and Carson, 1997; Robinson, 1996; Shore and Tetrick, *ibid.*) and renegotiation or exit level decisions (Herriot and Pemberton, *ibid.*; Lee and Mitchell, *ibid.*). The depth of reaction is likely to be visible to the organisation (Shore and Tetrick, *ibid.*) and if handled inappropriately may lead to the loss of commitment of those unaffected through perceived unfairness (Brockner et al, 1992; Krackhardt and Porter, 1985). Morris *et al's* (1993) research suggests that behavioural commitment was the most likely to be

affected and is driven by HR practices, although attitudinal commitment is not necessarily different between those leaving or staying. A further indicator of the impact on behavioural commitment is possibly shown by 'career entrenchment' or entrapment and psychological preservation (Carson and Carson, 1997), reflecting the classic behavioural theories of Becker's 'side bets' and Salancik's 'cognitive consistency' (Lydka, 1991).

At the other end of this aspect is gradual change, which may constitute more of the breach of psychological contract and is potentially more difficult to redress due to its more invisible nature. Changes may be accommodated and expectations adjusted, without either party being conscious of their implications or feeling the need to make changes, until the point that they are triggered by an event to recognise the lack of fit with image, identity or 'referent other' (Saks and Ashforth, *ibid.*; Lee and Mitchell, *ibid.*; Aquino *et al*, 1997). These changes are more likely to be to the informal contract and may include changes such as that of the manager with its subsequent impact on that relationship (Duarte *et al*, 1994; Bauer and Green, 1996). The further complication is that of the interpretation that the manager may put on events or changes so that consistent messages about wider organisation changes may be compromised (Guzzo and Noonan, *ibid.*) unwittingly. However it may be that the impact is that of a major violation but is subject to a loyalty or silence response (Robinson, 1996; Shore and Tetrick, 1994, Carson and Carson, 1997), so that the individual view of the psychological contract may have changed but the organisation will not be aware until there is a problem.

In the same way that the view of the psychological contract is different, contingent on such aspects discussed earlier as socialisation, social identity, and concept of self, aspirations of the individual, how they react to trigger events are also determined in a similar way as can be explained by theories such as Lee and Mitchell's unfolding model, (1994). It also depends on where they are in their career or life cycle, Morris *et al* (1993), and Lydka's (1992) research suggests that their 'leavers' had lower pre-entry expectations, suggesting they had little intention of staying long term, although their attitudinal commitment was no less,

but they seemed to be more focussed on their career prospects, possibly because they were still in the early stage, or 'reality shock' phase of their career (Schein, *ibid.*, Cyrynbaum and Crites, 1989). The research of Jones and Defillippi (1996) also suggested that in order to balance family and career individuals scaled back on career aspirations, providing support for the view that they took a backward step in career progression and how they viewed the employment relationship.

Locus of control would also seem to be a critical factor in determining whether a violation or breach of contract would result in exit depending on how much control the individual saw they had in their career (Bell and Staw, 1989), it also determined how they felt about change (Hingley and Cooper, 1986). Carson and Carson (1997, p64) suggest that people do not move as often as the research or rhetoric on employee turnover might imply *'only one in ten workers actually changes vocations each year. Furthermore, those who change careers tend to do so frequently - meaning that the one who changes careers may have also changed careers before'*. Shore and Tetrick (*ibid.*) also reinforce the view that the psychological contract stays stable until something happens and the violence of the reaction depends on: whether contract is transactional or relational; the size of the discrepancy, a small discrepancy will lead to the employee trying to restore the contract, where a large one would lead to a focus on emotional results; and accountability, the injustice is seen as greater if the organisation is seen as fully responsible, but not if the organisation tries to partially fulfil the contract.

Two Cultures

The final clear theme that stands out in this inquiry, is that of the cultural dimensions of 'old hands, new hires' and also less explicitly, although it can be seen in the analysis of career anchors, that of professionals and managers, which has its roots in the technical/functional anchor, in which the 'professional' salesperson would be included. These 'sub-cultures' are not mutually exclusive, one being based on 'time served' and the other on role in the organisation, although it is likely that a professional has been recruited more recently to provide what had been scarce skills within the organisation traditionally.

Like most large organisations, the research site had been through a period of extensive downsizing some six years earlier, which was the time that the business unit within which the inquiry took place was established as a new venture in response to rapidly a changing technology and marketplace. The 'old hands, new hires' theme is reminiscent of Gabriel's forms of organisational nostalgia, (1993, p122): *'employees who experienced the change from old to new see themselves as radically different from those who joined later, and at times they see themselves as 'survivors' from an earlier age'*. As they are still in the organisation, they are likely to have an external locus of control, their identity and self image may still be caught up in the old organisation, possibly demonstrating a reluctance to relinquish the past (Morgan, 1997), and this is further corroborated by the view that *'contracts can become deeply rooted mind-sets intertwined with past commitments and visions of the future'* (Rousseau, 1995, p27). Gabriel goes on to suggest that they are tied up with the need to be seen as someone of value, the opposite can also be said to be true of the 'new hires'.

In parallel to Morris *et al's* (1993) finding that 'stayers' were no more attitudinally committed than 'leavers', Gabriel (*ibid.*) makes the proposition that 'old hands' may not 'buy into' the new organisational ideal for a number of reasons including age, and use nostalgia to create an alternative. An explanation may also be that their perception of a violation or breach of their psychological contract is attributed more to the new company ideal, to which the anger, insecurity, stress that characterises the 'survivor' literature (Doherty *et al*, 1995; Noer, 1993) is then directed, as well as the loss of commitment and trust associated with the violation literature (Brockner, 1992; Krackhardt and Porter, 1994; Robinson, 1996). However it may also be that for some, they have not perceived any change in the organisation or violation or breach of the psychological contract, therefore suggesting that the concept is driven by the views of the 'new hires'.

The two cultures are also likely to reflect career theory from both career stage (Schein, 1978) and Driver's and Brousseau *et al's* (1979; 1996) career concepts. By the nature of length of service it is likely that 'old hands' are in the later stages

of their careers, past the dream and reality shock and in mid-career crisis or beyond, assessing progress against early aspirations and ambitions (Schein, 1978). 'Old hands' would seem most likely to occur in the in the passive dimension as they are less likely to move organisation, or in Driver's linear, steady state, or internal spiral concepts (1979), with 'new hires' mostly likely to be those with less attachment to the organisation and active in their careers, or Driver's transitory, external spiral and what was later called expert concept. The concept of expert also provides support to the culture stemming from the technical/ functional career anchor (Schein, 1990). In this knowledge worker culture, individual careers are likely to centre on their area of expertise as opposed to a more generalist management career, which have different self images (Lee and Mitchell, 1994) or social identities (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). '*Professionals have a knowledge base and a set of values which distinguish them from other groups of employees*' (Carnall, 1990, p25), which Keen (1977) attributed to a mutually reinforcing pattern of specialised studies and a specialised cognitive style.

A final observation on these cultural aspects is that they form two of the three cultures that Schein identified as making sense of organisational data and providing a profound influence on many situations (1996a). They also have a major contribution to this inquiry in terms of how self image and social identity may influence the view that individuals have of their employment relationship. 'New hires', as the technical experts brought into the organisation for their specialist skills, would equate to Schein's 'engineers', whereas 'old hands' are more likely to be those with knowledge of the operational aspects, who equate with his 'operators'. Their different viewpoints will affect their own expectations and needs, and if an operator is managing an engineer or vice versa, will set the scene for differing interpretations of that relationship, without taking into account all the other potential contributions to difference.

The cultural aspects take on a wider dimension in this study if one takes the view that the organisation is the culture, metaphorically (Morgan, 1997). This reflects the suggestion that it is made up of the people in it, in terms of their assumptions, beliefs, values, and history which contextualises the organisation (Pettigrew,

1990). It is therefore, also possible to see HR practices as the manifestation of the culture. This then provides the basis for viewing the formal contract that the individual has with organisation, as managed by the HR function in the form of terms and conditions. Whereas the HR practices and the culture they transmit have now been delegated to the line manager (Mumford, 1995) and form the organisational side of the informal contract.

However as Morgan (ibid., p141) points out culture can be '*understood as an active, living phenomenon through which people jointly create and recreate the worlds in which they live*', which leads to its evolution as individuals and managers within the organisation interact to evolve the culture and continue to create 'shared meaning'. This shared meaning contributes to how people see their future in the organisation and therefore their psychological contract. An explanation for the multiplicity of types of contract, can be found in Schein's (1996a) three cultures. This demonstrates the differences between occupational communities that Morgan (ibid.) supports by suggesting this is compounded by developing their own language and norms to construct a different set of meanings, as well as divided loyalties. This in turn supports Schein's observations. Therefore a psychological contract in one 'community of practice' will be different from another, before the contribution that different meaning that the individual will impart to it through their own make up.

Culture, shared meaning, and ultimately the concept of the psychological contract are all bound up in the social construction of reality (Berger and Luckman, 1967; Pfeffer, 1982; Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Lincoln and Guba, 1985), culture is defined here as the '*ongoing, proactive process of reality construction*', (Morgan, ibid. p141). It would seem that if the psychological contract is derived from the interaction of the organisation and the individual with their different needs and wants, then it would follow that the 'psychological contract' is a socially constructed phenomenon, therefore justifying the 'constructivist' approach to this inquiry, and the difficulty that others have found in researching it through quantitative methods (Shore and Tetrick, 1994). However I am also aware of Morgan's (ibid., p350) dictate that '*reality has a tendency to reveal itself in*

accordance with the perspectives through which it is engaged', which reflects the value bound nature of a naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, *ibid.*).

The Role of the Original Research Questions

1. *How is the nature of the relationship between organisations and their employees changing?*

- *change in expectations*
- *change in obligations*

2. *What are the 'trigger events' that define it?*

This section attempts to summarise the extent to which my original research questions were appropriate and addressed in my inquiry. This interpretive part of the thesis may seem to have left the areas of the first research question into how is the nature of the employment relationship changing unanswered, as what emerged from my conversations with my participants from asking them the question, has been reconstructed to provide a more holistic view. With hindsight, by taking a constructivist and grounded approach this was inevitable, however the responses are implicit in the preceding description, analysis and discussion. That the responses are implicit in no way diminishes the role of the questions, they formed the basis of understanding what I wanted to explore, how I designed the inquiry and gave me the probe for the analysis stage 'what is this telling me about ...?'.

Perspectives on the second question emerged during the conversations and have been covered extensively earlier in the discussion and this area has also stimulated my thinking on the dynamics of the emergent model which will be discussed in the implications section.

My initial research question was to understand how the nature of the employment relationship was changing, partly through changes in expectations and obligations, which Table 8.5 formally summarises. In this summary, obligations have been taken to be addressed through the opposite party's expectations. Like career theory, with its dialectical nature unifying the subjective and objective (Derr & Laurent, 1989), the individual's view of the employment relationship could

equally be seen to be located at the interface between their aspirations and their view of organisation and work realities. The nature, which is defined as the '*inherent or essential quality*' (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary) has been used to signal that this inquiry has followed a constructivist path based on the phenomenological thinking that the '*nature and meaning of phenomena, and hence their real and ultimate significance, can only be apprehended subjectively*' (SOED, 1997).

Cluster	Individual's needs and expectations	Organisation needs and expectations
it's not broke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • company manages career • provide opportunities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – enjoyment – achievement – fulfilment – skills utilised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate commitment to organisation • doing the extra • contribution
Desire to get on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • challenge, being stretched • recognition • control over life, balance, autonomy • guidance in career by company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant contribution • loyalty • pound of flesh • managers represent company
I know what I'm talking about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build skills • able to utilise specialist skills • a stepping stone to next job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate commitment to job • provide specialist skills
I come to work to get money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • money, extrinsic rewards • security • career moves 'happen' • written contract <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 4 weeks notice – salary – health & safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business relationship • delivery of results
Building the Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advancement • responsibility • written contract terms • opportunity to use and build skills • career development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high work ethic • doing the things they ought • manage own careers • managers to deliver to professionals

Table 8.5 : Summary of Needs and Expectations

The area of change in the original question can be interpreted in several ways. Changing from the individual perspective could be taken to have emerged in the more general descriptions provided by my participants of their perceptions of how their situation is different now from when they started out on their career journey. It can be looked at from the organisational and cultural perspective, particularly

seen by the managers and described in the 'old hands, new hires' observations and discussion. Within the analysis and discussion, factors that have driven change in this area have also emerged, such as the developing importance of 'life style' issues to discussion of the trigger events that cause individual changes. The issue of change will be further developed in the implications of the inquiry section, as the dynamics of the employment model became apparent from developing the summary table of expectations above.

What emerges from the summary above is the extent to which an individual's view of what the organisation expects of them is driven by themselves, which reflects the discussion in the previous section about the organisation as culture evolved from the interaction between organisational actors, (Schein, 1985; Morgan, 1997) and as a 'socially constructed reality'. The summary suggests that the psychological contract could also be seen beyond exchange theory, through the notion of reciprocity which Arthur and Kram (1989) take from March and Simon's inducement-contribution model. In the model an effective enduring individual - organisation relationship depends on the outcomes of individual contributions to the organisation and the organisational inducement to the individual, which they see as changing depending on career stage, which supports matching process models of organisation and individual needs (Schein, 1978; Herriot and Pemberton, 1995).

The second areas of trigger events that define the relationship, has been extensively covered by the earlier discussion in this chapter. The trigger events are inextricably linked into the psychological contract as seen in the wider dimension of directedness. It is the trigger events that demonstrate the dynamic nature of the employment relationship, for many it is not a static concept as shown by Figure 8.2 earlier.

Summary of the Parallels with Existing Literature Typologies

This section has drawn the parallels and the synthesis with existing knowledge in the area of the psychological contract and related fields. In the same way that Arthur, Hall and Lawrence (1989) recognised the value of taking an

interdisciplinary view of career theory, this inquiry has drawn from a variety of disciplines as Mitroff and Kilmann (1978, in Arthur et al, 1989, p10) put it '*taking us beyond the limitations and confines of disciplines as we currently conceive them*'. Table 8.6 below summarises some of the relevant typologies that have been developed in related areas, that seem to provide a level of explanation and fit for different aspects of the employment relationship typology evolved from this inquiry. However they are not a complete fit as each of the models have different dimensions, but they provide an insight into how the relationship with the organisation is viewed by the individual, and perform the task that Eisenhardt (1989) identifies of tying my emergent theory to the existing literature which has enabled me to enhance the credibility, transferability and theoretical level of my theory building.

<p>This inquiry:</p> <p>Rousseau (1995) Carson & Carson (1997) Becker & Billings (1993) Brousseau & Driver (1996) Derr & Laurent (1989) Zabusky & Barley (1996)</p>	<p>I come to work to get money</p> <p>Transitional contract Coping Strategy-Neglect Locally committed Transitional career concept Success = getting secure Advancement oriented</p>	<p>It's not broke</p> <p>Relational contract Coping Strategy-Loyalty Committed Linear career concept Success = getting ahead Advancement oriented</p>
<p>some characteristics: This inquiry</p> <p>Rousseau</p> <p>Brousseau and Driver</p> <p>Carson & Carson</p> <p>Becker & Billings</p> <p>Derr & Laurent Zabusky & Barley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extrinsic rewards, formal contract • high turnover, uncertainty • short time perspective, variety of experiences • refocus energy toward non-career activities • committed to boss and team • sense of belonging • entry path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commitment, company manages career • high commitment, identification, stability • upward mobility, power & achievement • organisational citizenship behaviour • committed to all foci • upward mobility • vertical mobility
<p>This inquiry:</p> <p>Rousseau (1995) Carson & Carson (1997) Becker & Billings (1993) Brousseau and Driver (1996) Derr & Laurent (1989) Zabusky & Barley (1996)</p>	<p>I know what I'm talking about</p> <p>Transactional contract Coping Strategy-Exit Uncommitted Expert career concept Success = getting high Achievement oriented</p>	<p>Desire to get on</p> <p>Balanced contract Coping Strategy-Voice Globally committed Spiral career concept Success=getting balanced Achievement oriented</p>
<p>some characteristics: This inquiry</p> <p>Rousseau</p> <p>Brousseau and Driver</p> <p>Carson & Carson</p> <p>Becker & Billings Derr & Laurent Zabusky & Barley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialist skills, commitment to job • easy exit, low commitment • developing knowledge and specialist skills • career citizenship behaviour • low commitment • excitement of the work • horizontal movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life balance, personal development • ongoing development, dynamic, commitment • personal development and creativity • preserve interpersonal relationships • top management focus • equilibrium • community of practice

Table 8.6 : Fit of Contract Typology with Related Existing Typologies

Implications of Research Inquiry or Application of emergent theory - a dynamic view

This research adds to opening up the understanding of the psychological contract as different for every individual, from two major aspects. The first is that the individual employee is different, with differing aspirations, experiences, and personalities and secondly, on the other side of the contract, the manager determining that psychological contract on behalf of the organisation, is also subject to those same differences. Human resource practices and organisational strategy will also influence what the manager can offer on the other side of the contract, but although they represent a constant to everyone in an organisation, how they are applied and interpreted will be different, depending on the manager. Some of those views of the psychological contract in the context of this inquiry are illustrated by the 'employment relationship' model.

Shore and Tetrick (1994) cite the individuality of the psychological contract as one of the reasons that such limited research has been conducted on psychological contracts, and also how difficult they are to study and understand, given their potential impact on organisations. The individuality is in effect similar to the understanding that Reichers (1986) has of commitment as a multidimensional concept which could be better understood as multiple commitments. Both demonstrate the need for qualitative research that allows an idiographic perspective, such as that which this inquiry has been able to provide.

The individual element that drives the difference is about what they want to achieve in their career, the extent to which they will let other factors determine their direction, which is a combination of personal factors, (goals, abilities, motivators), and environmental ones - the environment is the same, it is how they have interacted with it, and the manager involved, that is different. They are all working for the same organisation at the same point in time, in the same country, what is different for each of them is their expectations, personal factors, their manager, career and life experiences that add up to differing views of the psychological contract.

It would also seem from this that individual views of what the organisation expects is also driven by the type of psychological contract they perceive they have. A way of understanding this may be through Downing's plot theory (1997) where individuals may see themselves in an ironic, romantic, melodramatic or tragical plot, although this also links back to locus of control (McKenna, 1987) and whether the individual feels they can influence the environment. A further construction is that of Schein and Van Maanen's view of the internal career as a person's subjective view about life at work and their role within it (1977, in Derr & Laurent, 1989), with the external career representing the objective work realities, although these are also driven by the perceptions of the individual.

It is possible to take the inquiry findings a step further by extending the four types beyond the snapshot taken at the time of research inquiry, and understanding the psychological contract dynamically as it changes over time (Rousseau and Parks, 1993; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). The types potentially link to the age related career stages that Schein describes (1978) and have some similarities to Mirvis and Hall's (1994) exploration, trial, establishment and mastery career stages; or more promisingly, Driver's (1979) transitory, steady state, linear and spiral career concepts.

Strategic Direction	Strategic Advantage	Career Culture	Contract Type
Growth Deeper market penetration	Low Price High volume/low cost	Linear	it's not broke
Maintain position	Quality Reliability	Steady state	I come to work to get money
Diversification	Creativity Innovation	Spiral	a desire to get on
Entrepreneurial New market creation	opportunity Speed Novelty Ease of use	Transitory	I know what I am talking about

Table 8.7 - Linking Organisational Strategies to Career Cultures and Psychological Contracts - (adapted from Brousseau et al, 1996)

The steady state has now become a concept of expert (Brousseau *et al*, 1996), to make it easier potentially to equate to my typology has required a reversal with

transitory in my previous table 8.6, as in this inquiry I am working with knowledge workers in a new business set up, who are potentially taking their expertise to the highest bidder, leaving the transitional career concept to those joining the organisation before any moves take them laterally or linearly. In table 8.7, however I take the transitory concept to be the expertise needed in setting up the new business and therefore reverse the concepts back.

A classic successful management career scenario might start with the employee arriving in the organisation as a graduate trainee, keen to repay student loans so only focussed on earning a salary initially, perhaps on a fixed term contract, thus viewing their psychological contract in formal terms (stage one - *'I come to work to get money'*). Having learnt the technical skills relevant to the organisation's business, our graduate develops an interest in the industry and is moved laterally, gains confidence, and enjoying being the technical expert, discovers ambition and the view of the contract changes expecting different things of the organisation (stage 2 - *'I know what I am talking about'*). These skills and ambition are recognised by the manager when a new challenging project position opens up, and for a while our graduate moves around different projects and fresh challenges that provide opportunities for self-development (stage 3 - *'a desire to get on'*), developing a closer involvement in the organisation, expecting more and being prepared to contribute more. Finally with experience and skills, our graduate moves to an operational role or one that also involves mentoring and coaching others, thus enabling the company to harvest the investment in the individual and our graduate to continue the feeling of self-fulfilment and satisfaction (stage 4 - *'it's not broke'*). These stages have close parallels to Schein's career stages (1978) and Dalton's (1989) four career stages of: developing a sense of identity - stage one; developing competence - stage two; building mutually developmental relationships - stage three; developing the capacity to lead - stage four.

As the inquiry and the literature demonstrates, career paths can not be viewed as simplistically as the above scenario might suggest (Hall, 1996; Schein, 1996; Beckhard, 1977), in the same way that organisations no longer offer a 'job for life', people also no longer 'take the vows of organisation life' that Whyte (1960,

p8) observed in the 1950s, or have the same needs from their career. The concept of Protestant work ethic as measured by a recent US Values and Public Policy survey, has given way to a view of work as a source of personal satisfaction, living up to one's potential has become a priority for some, and enjoyable work is now seen as a measure of personal success (Capelli, 1997). Some people may stay in the same quadrant throughout their career in terms of how they view the relationship with the organisation, while others may move back and forwards between quadrants depending on how the organisation changes, their personal circumstances and other influences such as their manager affects them.

By interplaying Guzzo and Noonan's Change Triggers (1994), and Herriot and Pemberton's process of psychological contracting (1996) with my employment relationship model, the figure below (Figure 8.3) outlines some of the negotiation points where the individual and the organisation reconsider their needs and wants. It is at these points both parties decide whether there is enough of a match (Schein, 1978) to continue their relationship and how the individual might see their psychological contract at that time, as previously shown in figure 8.2.

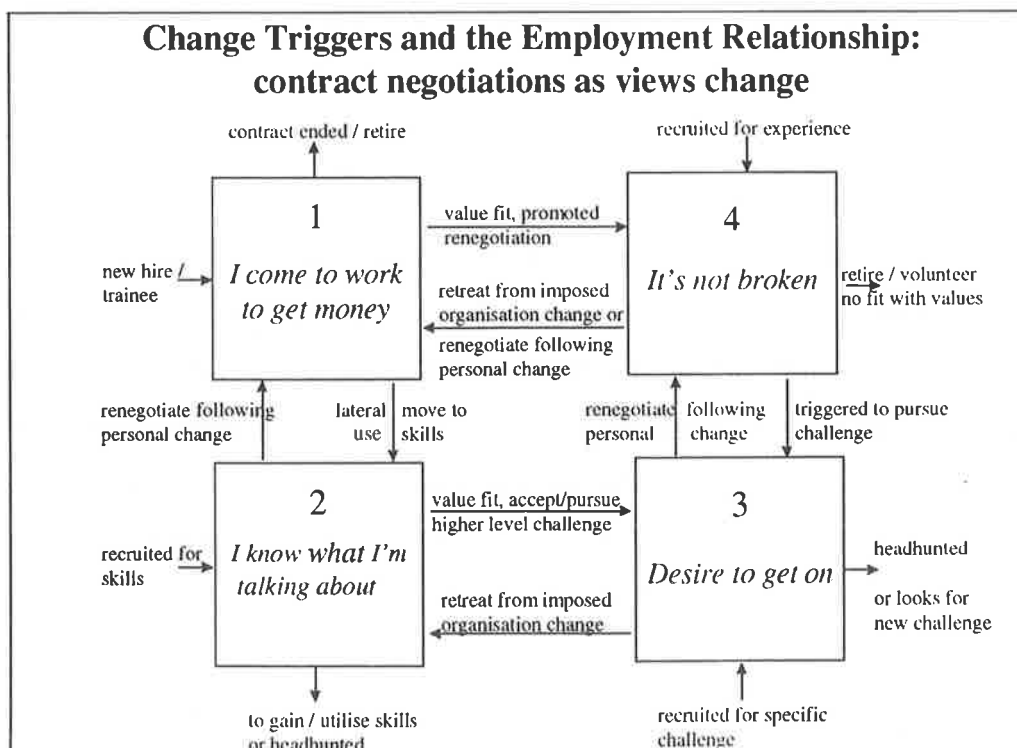


Figure 8.3 : Negotiations underpinning the psychological contracting process

An explanation for why some people may stay with a static view of their psychological contract is possibly provided by career anchors, where people may find their 'best fit' for their values and what they are looking for in their career quest. Indeed, Shore and Tetrick (1994) also suggest that psychological contracts should remain stable once developed and perhaps one aspect of the movement between 'types' is as individuals grow and develop. Others may seem to be 'passing through' a particular quadrant, as Van Maanen and Schein (1979, p213) put it '*transitions may be few in number or many, they may entail upward, downward or lateral movement, and demand relatively mild to severe adjustments on the part of the individual.*' This suggests three different reasons why people may appear to have a particular view of their employment relationship:

1. they are growing and progressing to the next quadrant laterally or hierarchically;
2. they are retreating, if things go wrong, or personal circumstances change, or are winding down
3. they have found their 'fit', which is perhaps their career anchor match.

It is difficult to assign career anchors clearly to a particular quadrant, because one person's view of an anchor is not the same as another's, for instance security can mean different things to different people, it will depend on factors such as where they are in the career stage. It may also be possible that once an individual has gone through what Gould (1972 in Driver, 1979) termed the '30s Crisis' which often leads to new direction (Beckhard, 1977), that their view of the psychological contract that they have remains the same unless something dramatic happens to them.

Additions to knowledge

This inquiry provides a subjective map of the psychological contract which has added a level of dimensionality to the concept of psychological contracts, through the dimension of directedness. This explains some of the contradictions discussed earlier and contributes the further central roles of the quality of the relationship with the manager, culture and the events that trigger change. Schein (1978) and

Herriot (1995) in developing the process of psychological contracting, had presaged this dimension through the notion of wants and offers, developed out of the matching process, in the same way that Guzzo and Noonan (1994) and Lee and Mitchell (1994) had developed the idea of the trigger events and shocks to the system that trigger individuals into assessing or reassessing their relationship.

My research has presented four main types of 'psychological contract' that I perceived were operating in the research group at the time of my inquiry from the individual's point of view, and another that could be interpreted as the organisation's view in the eyes of its managers. This suggests that the way each individual views his or her relationship with the organisation is unique, depending on a number of factors ranging from the organisation, the manager, to individual personality traits, (as demonstrated in Figure 8.4 below), therefore at any one time a number of different contracts were operating. This has close links to contingency theory as described by Carnall (1990) as the effectiveness of organisations being contingent on the factors such as, the technology, environment, organisational history, norms and expectations of employees, customers and clients. I have also suggested that individuals' views of their psychological contract with the organisation may change depending on a number of factors or 'change triggers', and the changing needs and wants of either party. These changes can happen in an evolutionary way as the result of factors such as the individual maturing or the organisation developing, or revolutionary when, perhaps, the organisation restructures or the individual faces a major life event.

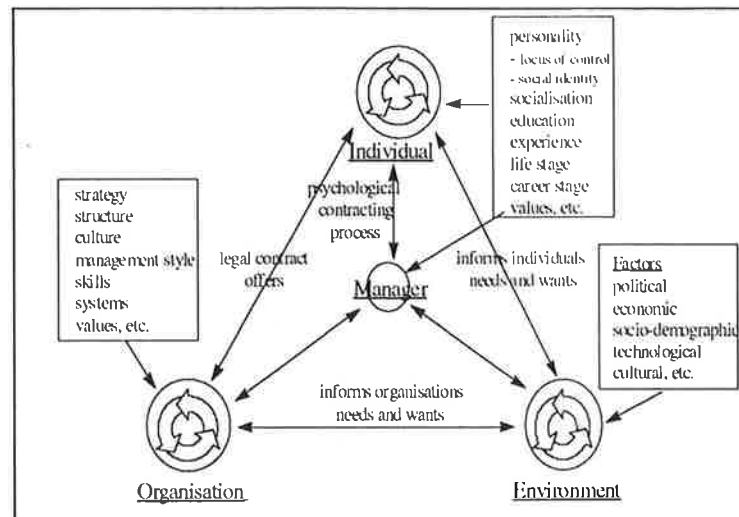


Figure 8.4 : The Dynamics of the Employment Relationship

From the organisational perspective in the research organisation, the psychological or informal contract part of the relationship appeared to be managed on behalf of the organisation by the line manager, who now takes responsibility for delivering most of the HR practices that were once seen to be the domain of the personnel function. The formal, written contract remained the responsibility of HR professionals and included the more legal aspects of the agreement and obligations between the two parties, those items that in a unionised environment would form part of collective bargaining (Cox and Parkinson, 1998; Mumford, 1995).

The inquiry adds the dimension of role of management in commitment and the informal contract as a key dependent in both interpretation and quality of that contract. The nearest constructs, that have been discussed in existing theory and literature, would seem to be socialisation and 'leader-member exchange' as the management role appears formerly to have mainly been seen in the context of HR practices (Meyer and Allen, 1997, Van Maanen and Schein, 1979, Gerstner and Day, 1997). The contribution of locus of control is also emphasised here, in the impact on the quality of the management relationship (Kinicki and Vecchio, 1994). It also potentially builds on the nature of the management function as the role of agent of the organisation in the employment relationship.

At a general level, the inquiry adds to the slim body of literature based on research in this relatively new field, which so far has mostly been limited to college alumni, and those in the first stages of their careers. The participants in this study have provided a wider range of career experience. In addition to the literature, this inquiry has also provided a different perspective through its interdisciplinary approach which draws the links between the different bodies of literature, due to the combination of the interdisciplinary nature of the DBA, as well as the prior experience of the researcher.

Research into the field of organisational commitment and psychological contract has been previously characterised by a quantitative and mainly positivist tradition, reflecting roots in the psychology discipline. There are few studies that have taken an interpretive, or a constructivist approach in this field, which has provided an illustration and dramatisation of the experience of the relationship from the perspective of those involved. This has enabled the inquiry to add a 'map of the subjective terrain' to the growing body of literature in the field of the psychological contract.

Tentative application of theory

The tentative application of theory is the last of Lincoln and Guba's naturalistic inquiry characteristics (1985). As the findings of a naturalistic and subjective inquiry, by their very nature, without knowledge of the context to which they may be put, any applications must remain tentative. It is left to the reader to use their judgement, based on the information supplied, to decide which aspects of the findings from this inquiry would be transferable to another situation. However the nature of the DBA, with its focus on application and communication aspects as well as the research project, suggests a foray into potential applications, however tentative. As several aspects of my interpretations have resonated with other studies, I offer these ideas for future consideration as firm suggestions, their applicability would be dependent on the context in which they may be used.

The most sensible application of this inquiry, as it stands, would seem to be in its use as a case study for education and development. Its purpose would be to

illustrate the different understandings that individuals had of their relationship with the research organisation, to enable either students or managers to consider either their own understanding, or what 'contracts' may be operating in the organisation, or among the individuals that they manage and their implications for HR practices and managing change.

From an organisation perspective

The employment relationship model and emergent theory suggest that organisations and managers should take a contingency approach to managing the informal part of the relationship, taking into account the individual's expectations and ambitions, the organisation's requirements and constraints and the environmental forces such as the marketplace. Offering a short term contractor a permanent contract, when they are seeking opportunities to develop their technical skills, rather than an 'organisational career' could potentially precipitate an exit should they perceive the permanence as potential handcuffs.

In the same way that Becker and Billings (1993) developed a typology of committed employees to enable a needs assessment to determine where interventions may be needed to lift commitment, a similar typology could be used to identify where the organisation is vulnerable to losing skills so that interventions could be made to prevent 'leakage'. This approach is analogous to the Boston Consulting Group's growth-share matrix (in Kotler, 1984), and a similar analytical approach could be taken to recognise which types or at what stage individuals make their most contribution, where investment should be made and where effort needed to turn a 'question mark' into a 'star'. Assessing where on the matrix a person might be would be more difficult as there are no 'convenient' objective measures, the reliance would be on the quality of the relationship the individual had with their manager. The organisation should also recognise that organisations need a mix and variety of skills (Brousseau *et al*, 1996), if they are to remain flexible to meet challenges, all appropriate to different types of need, by recognising this the organisation can find the best fit to produce best performance.

In understanding how individuals view their relationship and their psychological contract with the organisation, it may enable both planners of major change and line managers to consider the needs of individuals in managing that change, as well as the likely consequences, especially in terms of retention of scarce skills. For example, this would also provide a basis to consider the 'informal' needs of those working in non standard ways to the rest of the organisation, such as in call centres, or working remotely, when there may be 'old hands and new hires' working together or the manager and individual rarely see each other.

Understanding where an individual may be in terms of viewing the relationship also allows management to better target their resources in the role of career management as well as in general management, considering who is likely to need more support, and in what form it should take, for instance in mentoring programmes finding the appropriate mentor depending whether the focus may be on operational technical expertise or a more generalist management career. *'As soon as Larry Barton left the comfort of a university professorship for a managerial post at Motorola, he created his own "cabinet of advisors." These were old Motorola consulting contacts with whom he could discuss his next career steps in the changing, unfamiliar world he had joined'*. (Arthur and Rousseau, 1996, p32)

The concepts of typology may also provide an opportunity for the HR function to consider 'what is going on' in the organisation, especially if nothing appears on the surface, this may indicate reactions to change such as an exit, voice, neglect and loyalty response (Robinson, 1996; Carson and Carson, 1997). There may be some scope for developing a methodology to enable an organisational route for auditing 'psychological contracts', possibly using focus groups, as more quantitative methods may not achieve the level of understanding required.

The organisation suggestions above are all predicated on the need to develop its managers, who are unlikely to fully comprehend the role that HR have been gradually delegating to them for the last decade. Many have yet to find that it is

their role to manage the people, where personnel did it before, and not to just focus on the task. In the role of career manager, Nicholson (1996, 49) suggests *'Sabbaticals, exchanges, and more global information networks among organizations in the same region or market segment, can make inter-organizational career development a managed process. Information technology holds a key to accomplishing this, and to restoring career management's mission of satisfying the interests of employees and serving the needs of business.'*

From a individual perspective

The main implication and application for the individual from this inquiry could be in developing a greater self awareness of how they view the relationship with the organisation. This could be part of self development that would lead individuals to become more independent of the organisation in managing their careers and maintaining their employability. It would also encourage them to voice their concerns when they first think that needs and expectations are mismatched so that they can be addressed before a precipitative situation occurs.

As individuals and organisations recognise changing needs, the concept of employability and being able to discuss needs in a supportive atmosphere, will enable the individual to take more control over their career to achieve the balance between work and home life that is the most comfortable for them. Any relationship requires both parties to work together on developing it, if an open and honest relationship develops it becomes mutually sustaining and in turn will help contribute to developing a similar culture throughout the organisation.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have pulled together the strands that have been developed in the previous chapters, from the initial thinking about the inquiry, through the philosophic considerations before undertaking the study, followed by results, analysis and the interpretation of those analyses. Finally I have arrived at how what I have found has credence in relation to other studies in this and related fields, how the findings relate back to my original research questions. The implications of the inquiry in terms of the likely dynamics of my employment

relationship model arose from reconsidering the research questions. The chapter has been finished by taking them a stage further in reflecting on what applications may arise, although as a naturalistic inquiry what I found could only safely be seen as my interpretation of what was going on in the organisation at that particular point of time.

Throughout this chapter, there have been points where it seemed initially confusing in how the findings went together, or where particular aspects would fit into the whole, but whenever I came to finally writing that section the parts began to make sense and it became clear where pieces fitted. The final part of thesis, the concluding chapter, will provide the place to summarise the main findings and take them a stage further by suggesting areas for future research, and will conclude by a review of the learning from this research journey from a point, both in time and thinking, which now appears very distant.

Chapter 9 - Conclusions

*“What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from”.*

T.S. Eliot

Introduction

From starting out, following ending a full-time organisational career, my expedition has taken me into several foreign lands and strange places, before reaching the end that is represented by this thesis. The strangeness has meant many lengthy explorations, as I have sought to understand the meanings and implications of many new concepts and realms of science, through the practice that is required until a level of the internalisation, that a professional researcher takes for granted, is achieved.

In chapter 8, I pulled together the various strands of this practice in the form of my research inquiry and its findings, it is now left to this concluding chapter to review the research journey as a whole. The chapter will start by reviewing the itinerary of the expedition, where the inquiry has led, this will be followed by a summary of the findings in order to consider how well they lived up to the expectations at the beginning and the implications for organisations. I will then examine how well my research strategy worked in terms of what went well and where the disappointments and limitations came, to lead into suggestions for further research. Finally to keep the symmetry with a naturalistic inquiry paradigm, and the ‘learning contract’ that is a feature of the DBA process, I will conclude with some insights into my own personal learning during this period.

Review of the Expedition

The subject matter for my research inquiry had come initially from my own observations and experience when working in a large organisation undertaking a massive redundancy exercise. The question of what was it that triggered individuals into leaving or staying in an organisation when they were given the option to leave with a generous redundancy package, came to be translated into

understanding the field through the fairly new concept of organisation commitment.

Chapter two started by reviewing the literature on commitment only to find that it failed, in my eyes, to reach the understanding of the 'essence' of commitment that I was seeking. The opportunity to pilot my methods and thinking led me to realise that the findings from my main inquiry may well take me into other realms of literature, and that prejudging those areas may well lead to abortive effort at an early stage. The second chapter has therefore remained the 'theoretical sensitivity' that enabled me to provide a framework for my inquiry, rather than the traditional thorough, once off, literature review to develop hypotheses that more traditional research paradigms would require.

The next two chapters, three and four, formed the critical stage where I have outlined the philosophical and methodological underpinnings for this inquiry. The choice of a naturalistic inquiry, or 'constructivist' stance had a profound influence on the rest of the project from the design and analysis stages, to the nature of my findings. In these pages, I presented my understanding of the constructivist paradigm and the methodology that such view of reality would need (Erlandson, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In recognition of the very subjective nature of those methods and the results that they engender, I have taken particular care to follow the advice on trustworthiness, to ensure that the outcome of all the work that has gone into this inquiry, has credibility, and can contribute to knowledge in this field, as well as back to the organisation and individuals who participated so willingly.

Chapter five provided a summary of the pilot, which was the impetus for the shift to considering the employment relationship as the focus for my research rather than commitment. On reflection it is possible to see the themes of the main study coming through in the pilot. It had been the pilot that prompted me into recognising the role of the manager in the employment relationship, the issue of 'changing mindset' is consistent with Schein's thoughts (1996a) on the three cultures, and the issue of individual control had come through strongly.

The most time consuming phase has been the results, analysis and interpretation phase, especially as it involved three full iterations through my interview data, but it has also been the most rewarding. These have been the most influenced by the constructivist paradigm, which has also taken me into other previously uncharted waters such as narrative analysis.

Finally in the last chapter, whilst considering possible explanations, my findings have also been exposed to existing literature and theory in the field as well as exploring related areas, in order to enhance the credibility, transferability and level of theory building. It therefore also took on a role of providing a secondary literature review but focussed on the concepts under discussion. The chapter also demonstrated the extent to which my original research questions had allowed me to uncover the 'subjective terrain of the psychological contract' that was implicit in them.

Summary of Interpretations/Discussion

In summarising the key themes in this naturalistic inquiry, I will be summarising my interpretations of my participants' experience. Their credibility comes from the participants themselves, my sponsor in the organisation, the literature, and my researcher colleagues, who corroborate that what I have outlined below 'rings true'.

1. There were at least five different discernible types of psychological contracts or ways of viewing the employment relationship, operating at the time of the inquiry, which seemed to be independent of level, gender, department, or career anchor, although there were common themes it was difficult to isolate one group exclusively per type. Everyone had the same formal, legal contract with the organisation, managed via personnel. Their informal, 'psychological contract' however was personal, and managed through their manager as an agent of the organisation. It would also seem that their perception of what the organisation expected of them was also bound up by their contract 'type'. These psychological contract 'types' were illustrated by the five vignettes.

2. The dimensions that drove the typing appeared to be firstly based on the focus of the individual, around such issues as their sense of self, or commitment which led them to seek a more formal or informal relationship with the organisation or whether they were more centred on self and the more formal aspects. The second dimension identified was more clearly identified as linked into the 'locus of control', which appeared to drive how active they were in managing their careers.
3. The key contingent factor that emerged from the inquiry was that of the role of the line manager, the quality of the relationship could be seen to be regarded as an important factor in the view of the overall employment relationship. From the inquiry, the concept emerged of the role of the manager in managing the psychological or formal contract and of HR as the managers of the formal contract.
4. The fourth area of findings was in the trigger events that drove changes. Individuals who appeared to be active in their career had suffered 'downfalls' or violations of their psychological contract in the past, either through organisational restructuring where they had no control, or where they had had a personal stake in a negative event, so could be said to have had a measure of control.
5. The final main theme that emerged was that of the cultural dimension which reflected Schein's (1996a) model of sub cultures. The old hands, new hires, technical-functional and generalist have links to his 'operational' and 'engineers' cultures with different viewpoints on the world. This area is also bound up with the concept of socially constructed reality, which is the underpinning ontology for this inquiry.

The implications of the findings are explored in the previous chapter through modelling the negotiations that would underpin the psychological contracting process, as individuals move between the different types in my employment

relationship typology. Individual's view of their 'informal' contract may change over time, as their personal circumstances change, the organisation changes, or the environment changes. It would appear that when changes are thrust upon them, their reactions vary depending on the extent of the adaptation required. The more precipitative the change, such as organisation restructuring or major life crisis, the more likely they are to become active in thinking about their career, although more gradual change would also require transitions in ways of thinking about the relationship. There seem to be three different reasons why people may appear to have a particular view of their employment relationship:

- they are growing and progressing to the next quadrant laterally or hierarchically;
- they are retreating, if things go wrong, or personal circumstances change, or are winding down
- they have found the 'fit' with their values, potentially their career anchor match.

The theories that have been invoked to explain the findings have been those originally outlined from within the psychology discipline, such as organisational commitment, psychological contract and the related matching processes. By taking a more grounded theory approach I then found other bodies of theory to support my findings, from other psychological bases such as LMX, self-image, locus of control to career anchors, social identity, and the more sociological ones such as some aspects of career theory and social construction of reality.

Implications of this Inquiry for Organisations

The significance of this thesis is explored in the discussion of the previous chapter and in the introductory chapter in a number of areas. This section draws together those strands that relate to the implications for organisations in terms of actions and issues they may need to consider.

In terms of the employment relationship as described by the emergent typology itself, the main implication for organisations is in understanding the differing needs of different groups, which may not be confined to the more obvious

stereotypes such as technical, marketing or management employees. If the nature of the employment relationship is defined by each person, dependent on individual factors, then issues such as how they react to change, management style or what aid they need in managing their career in the organisation are likely to be different. When major changes are planned, organisations need to take into account the potential impact on different views of the relationship for each group and how to manage them. The discussion on 'trigger events' highlights the need to understand what moves people from a passive mode of career management to active one by changing their locus of control, whether the impact of change is enough to move from the absorption of gradual changes to leading people to reassess their self image and leave unexpectedly, rather than voicing the concerns which would enable the organisation to renegotiate the informal contract.

It would appear increasingly difficult to view and manage people as the collective of only a few years ago, organisations need to take into account the differing dimensions that make up the individual at work, described in this thesis by the focus of the relationship, not dissimilar to affective commitment and the dimension of directedness, which in many ways describes an individual's career history. In order to take into account individual needs and expectations, a different approach is required to the relationship with them through their manager, who emerges as the central player in the informal relationship between the organisation and the employee. The manager is the factor that binds the dimensions of the employment relationship model together suggesting a good relationship may mitigate against harmful effects brought about by external forces, also it is how managers model the values of the organisation that will determine whether the individual feels they identify with the organisation (Lee and Mitchell, 1994; Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

For managers in organisations, this thesis recognises the extent to which they are taking over many of the issues that they would have traditionally expected their HR colleagues to handle, as areas such as appraisal, development and recruitment are increasingly delegated to line management. However for many of them, as well as for others in the organisation, these changes have not been made explicit.

The HR department often now only manages the legal, formal side of the employment relationship with organisations leaving the 'informal' unwritten elements of the psychological contract to line managers.

In managing knowledge workers, this thesis suggests there may be different management needs, particularly borne out of retention issues and the lack of obvious fit with Rousseau's transactional model of psychological contracts. Some of the aspects raised by the inquiry which are more likely to particularly apply to this group include their need to balance work and home, their need for challenge, and their need to be stretched. By understanding their career aspirations, their managers or mentors can help the organisation know whether it should be buying in or training new skills, developing future management talent or renegotiating the informal contract to enable a lifestyle requirement to be met.

Coupled to the role of the manager, the issue of management style takes on added importance. The command and control style of scientific management is likely to be responded to by a mechanistic approach to work by those people subject to it, rather than developing and enhancing the specialist skills required by an organisation built on knowledge work. This style might be seen to be more appropriate to organisations that employ unskilled workers which would be more likely to lead to Rousseau's (1995) transactional contract. However there is little in my findings to suggest that other groups of employees would not take a similar view of their relationship with their employing organisation, and would also respond to a positive relationship with their manager, based on coaching and mentoring, which is also supported by the 'excellence' literature (Ouchi, 1981; Peters, 1987; Morgan, 1997). They may not have expected to move dramatically in their careers but if their expectations are raised realistically, 'late starters' may be able to develop potential that previously they and the organisation were unaware of, increasing commitment and enhancing the organisation's skillbase in a time of uncertainty. The advantages of the coaching / mentoring management style for knowledge workers would also include increasing retention of scarce skills by giving them a sense of a career path, ensuring the best use of skills by

taking a holistic view of the person, and by understanding each parties' needs, being able to best match individual and organisational needs.

The delegation of traditional HR practices to line management, and the increased understanding of the importance of the line manager in the employment relationship, underlines the crucial need for organisation's to train and develop their managers to meet their increased responsibility, especially where they are the interface with specialist skills. Not only do they need to be prepared for managing HR issues such as appraisal, communication and assessing training and development needs for individuals, but they increasingly need to understand individual differences, in the context of developing their interpersonal skills which would take many of them on into the domain of a coaching, mentoring role and working with those who require guidance in managing their career.

The organisation needs to take into account aspects of the cultural issues raised such as the implications of 'old hands' and 'new hires' in such a workplace. There may be a need to manage 'survivors' from restructuring in rebuilding their commitment or conversely to convince a complacent group that that there is a need to change and although they are still there, the organisation has fundamentally changed with different needs of them. Finally the HR practices that line managers are to deliver need to be reassessed to ensure that the implications and needs of the informal manager - individual relationship have been taken into account.

Review of Research Strategy

In order to assess the extent to which my research strategy was successful and has remained within an interpretive framework, and coherent from philosophy through to findings, I will draw on Moustakas' framework (1994, p105) of the characteristics of a human science research question. There were moments during the inquiry when I felt 'stuck', that I found I was trying to mix paradigms and once understood found that I was able to make progress again by taking an alternative, congruent approach.

1. *"It seeks to reveal more fully the essences and meanings of human experience;*
2. *It seeks to uncover the qualitative rather than the quantitative factors in behaviour and experience;*
3. *It engages the total self of the research participant, and sustains personal and passionate involvement;*
4. *It does not seek to predict or to determine causal relationships;*
5. *It is illuminated through careful, comprehensive descriptions, vivid and accurate renderings of the experience, rather than measurements, ratings, or scores."*

To some extent it is up to the reader to judge how well I have achieved the characteristics above, as the interpretations of my findings may be different. From my perspective, I have a better feel for what was going on in the area of the 'psychological contract', how it felt for my participants when we had our original conversations and any subsequent ones. Through the thick description and developing the stories from the subsequent analysis, meanings were revealed to me which remained qualitative rather than quantitative, and from these I was able to develop and cross reference my employment relationship model.

To the third statement, I can answer very positively, in that the nature of this research inquiry has certainly engaged my total self especially once I had understood the research paradigm that was appropriate, and this will be elaborated on briefly later in this chapter. However for the same reason given to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) charge that constructivist research is not transferable, although I have not sought to predict or to determine causal relationships, the nature of the DBA leads me to consider the implications and possible applications for the research organisation, which post restructuring will be out of the time context of the findings of this inquiry. Finally my reader and the participants themselves, are the best judges of how comprehensive and vivid an account I have given of their experiences in the organisation at the time that I conducted the inquiry.

What worked well

There were many highlights on this expedition, in particular the self development aspects, when a whole new world of ontology, philosophy and their consequences opened up. Another was undertaking the field work itself, working with my participants to explore 'what was going on' in their world. The analysis phase too was full of breakthroughs, going from troughs when I couldn't see any relationships, to waking up with a thought buzzing waiting to be applied and seeing things immediately fall into place which on reflection seemed so obvious.

The use of career as a lens gave me a better route into the psychological contract than I had realised at first, it is probably no coincidence that writers such as Schein came to the psychological contract through their work on careers. It has also provided the meeting point for different disciplines and therefore enabled wider insights from both psychological and sociological frames of reference (Derr and Laurent, 1989; Fournier, 1997). It also enabled me to utilise Schein's Career Orientation Inventory and Anchors interviews to inform the research process. These instruments, along with the time line, allowed me to overcome the pressures that the 'year end' and day-to-day operational issues placed on my participants to enable the best use of the limited time I had available. The dangers were that my constructivist stance may have been compromised to a certain extent but researching in a commercial organisation does not allow the luxury of completely open ended interviews. They also had an unexpected pay off in the analysis phase in providing support to my interpretations or opportunity to examine the dimensions from another perspective.

The research process itself, has appeared to me to have been remarkably successful, as I have ended up finding out about what I set out to, eventually, although taking much longer than expected and clouded with times when it was not apparent how anything linked or made sense. However, during the fieldwork, I was able to gain a feel of what was emerging which gave me confidence that it was worth following to a conclusion. The value of having a research paradigm that fitted with my personality and intuitive ways of working, also played a large

part in keeping some momentum for this inquiry, what I had wanted to understand was about the abstract part of the relationship and this would have been very difficult from a positivistic paradigm.

There have been surprises along the way, one that stands out was the discovery that much of the literature on what would seem to be a phenomenon of the 1990s, had its theoretical base in research and writings of over twenty years ago, especially in the field of careers (Schein, 1978; Argyris, 1960; Van Maanen, 1977; Driver, 1979). As practitioners, I and my colleagues, had seen 'academia' as trailing behind what seemed to be happening in practice. I later realised that as well as Schein's explanation for why good ideas academically take so long to implement in practice (1996a), that by the time something that was a theory has been communicated, waited for those who would read such literature to be in an appropriate position and then implemented, the resultant effects would not be observable for research until such a time span, so what seemed to be good ideas in the late 70s are now becoming observable in the late 90s.

If I were able to undertake the study again, it is difficult to assess what I would do differently as many of the steps I went through led to valuable learning experiences, even though in hindsight they may have seemed unnecessary. However another time I would move into the field much earlier, which would have allowed me the opportunity to focus my reading much earlier and explore some of the more unexpected areas that arose in greater depth. At the time I started reviewing the literature I had not understood the implications of the research paradigm I had chosen. In the same way, I would have also trusted more in my inductive analysis to lead me to the interpretations eventually arrived at, however this study gave me the opportunity to try out statistical techniques such as cluster and correspondence analysis and also to understand how seductive some of them can be. The final method related change would be to start writing as a means of analysis earlier, starting with the thick description process.

In an ideal world I would also have liked to fully transcribe my interviews earlier so that I could have fed the complete transcript back to my interviewees at the

time before several of them scattered to different jobs and companies. The part time researcher, not based in either an academic institution or the research organisation, is constrained by resources and the time that the 'researched' organisation can allocate to them. Two clear consequences followed: it had been planned to work with some of the participants to review the findings as a group prior to the completion of the thesis, but at the time of writing for operational reasons, a suitable time has yet to be found; I would also have preferred to have the resources to use a group of other researchers to corroborate my analysis at an earlier stage, perhaps checking a random sample of transcripts for themes prior to writing up the thick description.

Limitations of the inquiry

The study was carried out at a particular point in time with a small group of individuals, in a particular organisation, and the results may not be generalisable beyond that group. However there is plenty of evidence from other studies, as shown by the synthesis with the literature in the preceding chapter, that the findings are not unique and the spirit of the findings may then be able to be transferred in an appropriate context.

The main limitations that were due to the choice of organisation were the impossibility of drawing parallels to areas such as transactional contracts (Rousseau, 1995), due to highly skilled nature of the industry. The other effect from this is that good professionals are highly mobile and will have added another aspect of uniqueness to this inquiry.

Other limitations as far as my participants were concerned were the similarity in age, possibly due to the nature of the business unit, and the sector. This meant that it was not possible to assess the impact of career and life cycle issues on psychological contract more fully. Also the organisation was restructured shortly after the inquiry which has made it difficult to contact all the participants, or to bring them together later for a review panel.

Further research

This has been an inquiry based on one group of people's experience, at a particular point in time, and the models and theory are based on interpreting their understanding of their world, and therefore never intended to be generalisable or replicable in the traditional sense, rather to be transferable in an appropriate context. To take the spirit of this inquiry on further it may benefit from:

Other Organisational Settings

Using the same methods, but building on the learning from this inquiry, it would be useful to extend this inquiry into other parts of the same organisation to build understanding of what is happening in the organisation, to enable HR and line management to address issues such as retention of key skills and best use of the resources they have for mutual benefit.

In order to determine the areas of transferability of this inquiry, extending the inquiry into other naturalistic settings would provide insights for other organisations in the same industry sector, which may then enable a greater understanding of managing careers within that industry.

Further extension to other types and sizes of organisations would also establish the extent to which knowledge workers have different or the same perspectives on their career and the extent to which this inquiry relates solely to them. A similar study could be undertaken in a contrasting setting such as a 'call centre' environment. Such centres may be likely to have a similar age profile as this study but use a relatively unskilled labour force and therefore more likely to potentially have the characteristics of Rousseau's transactional contract (1995), which this study was less able to explore. The other aspect that such a study would also test would be the impact of the role of the manager in a relatively new sector where the old models of 'command and control' are less likely to exist as historic hangovers from the past.

A further extension to different country cultures would also determine the extent to which these findings have resonance with the UK workforce, which would support theories such as socialisation and the impact of national culture at a conceptual level.

Other 'Natural' Settings

To explore some of the individual constructs in more depth, especially the issues around lifestyle and changing values, other researchers may consider conducting a similar study but include interviewing subjects away from their 'work' environment. This may enable them to more fully explore the career and psychological contract, and the extent to which home and work interact and influence each other.

Other Methods

Other researchers may want to deconstruct the dimensions in this inquiry to explore the constructs in more depth and to establish the generalisability of individual findings from this inquiry. The holistic perspective taken in this inquiry has been focussed on understanding the subjective terrain, rather than determining any causal linkages between the constructs on each dimension, which other researchers may like to pursue. For instance, for those who consider the contract as an entity rather than a process, researching the contribution of each of the elements of either of the two dimensions would lend itself to a quantitative approach and would provide a greater clarity on the contract itself.

In the opposite direction, the use of a deeper phenomenological approach, perhaps using feminist methodologies, taking one aspect and exploring it in depth through an individual case study(ies) over time, may provide a greater depth of understanding to the psychological aspects.

Other Areas

Within the inquiry several questions that have arisen, that would benefit from more 'in-depth' research and focus. One of these that has already been alluded to (Parks and Kidder, 1994; Hallier and Lyons, 1996), is the move from active to

passive directedness, following 'downfall', if locus of control seems the best explanation for the active career orientation dimension, why is it that changes that are out of an individual's control, therefore fulfilling their belief in an external locus, leads them out of that view of the world?

The other area which has so far been omitted from psychological contract studies but recognised in other related areas, is that of the role of the quality of the relationship with the manager, who would appear to have a pivotal role to play in the employment relationship.

My own learning and development

I did not intend when setting out on writing up my research inquiry, to embark on a 'confessional tale' (Van Maanen, 1988). However in ensuring that the reader has understood the philosophical and ontological basis, and why I had followed particular steps, to ensure the credibility of my findings, this is how it may be interpreted. The thesis has in effect, become a chronicle of my own research journey, although the intention has been to enable the reader to consider what I have found, and to apply their own interpretations. I also offer these reflections to encourage others setting out on a similar path.

In reflecting on my own development as I come to the end of this learning process, I am able to see a very different person than the one who entered some years ago. This new person has gained an understanding of why the prevailing attitudes and approaches to organisations did not always sit comfortably, but in understanding some of the philosophical bases and the historical roots, I can now be more tolerant and seek to make change in a more subtle way. From this increased appreciation, I have developed my critical and analytical abilities, and found that these new frameworks for analysis can be applied in other situations: for instance, being able to provide an insight into how to address a particular problem with a staff member for a client, once we understood what plot she had been operating in.

In the subject area of this inquiry, I now have a greater understanding and have already found it has given me a better grounding for explaining the issues when teaching in the field of HR. Attitude surveys have been a part of my recent consultancy work to which the learning in both the content area and in the process have been a major contribution. As a researcher I have moved from an amateur, practitioner type to understanding the process and need for 'rigour', and that it doesn't take much more effort to provide it.

Another area that was reinforced was the need to keep up the momentum, by not being confident in myself in the early stages, and starting writing earlier I perhaps lost valuable time, although I am not certain that I would have ended up where I have, as the stimuli would have been different. Although I knew the issues from others, I still needed to go through the process and find this out for myself, as Carl Rogers suggests (in Makin, Cooper and Cox, 1996, p281) *'I have come to feel that the only learning which significantly influences behaviour is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning'*

The whole process has however reinforced the enjoyment that writing can bring, and the vital role it plays in helping develop thinking, which was reflected in the use of the reflexive journal of developing my thoughts and ideas to combine with findings to produce this thesis.

'the researcher discovers himself or herself through the act of research'

(Morgan, 1983, in Phillips, 1995, p643)

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Appendix 1 - Understanding Self as Research Instrument

This appendix will outline the impact of this particular 'human instrument' on the choice of research project and approach to it building on Gummesson's 'types of knowledge'.

Knowledge and Personal attributes

- **General knowledge of theories** - However unstructured, a researcher comes to the field with some orienting ideas, the social phenomenologist would prefer that the conceptual framework should emerge in the course of study; the important research questions will become clear gradually; instruments should be drawn from the properties of the setting and so on (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Miles & Huberman (1994) remind us, by drawing on Wolcott (1982), it is foolish to embark on research without having an idea of what you are looking for unless you are very experienced and have lots of time and they see themselves as towards the more structured end.

As advised by Gummesson, having an intellectual understanding and the background in the relevant theories, concepts and models helps the identification and analysis of major factors and relationships, giving structure to the research project, which also accords with Easterby-Smith *et al's* concept of the 'prepared mind' (1991, p14). In this particular case, the theories, concepts and models come from (see previous chapter):

- career anchors interview (Schein, 1978);
 - matching process (Herriot and Pemberton, 1995);
 - transactional and relational contracts (Rousseau, 1995);
 - 'trigger events' (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994, - also based on Schein);
 - commitment as discussed in the first section of the literature review as it informs one aspect of the psychological contract.
- **General knowledge of techniques, tools and methods** - Gummesson's (1991) advice here is in accord with Schein, (1987) with his emphasis on the high degree of training and experience that is needed in pursuing a qualitative research strategy from either his 'clinical' method or that of the ethnographer (p22). The researcher in this research study has a number of years experience in consultancy both within a large organisation and independently, and whilst in her former company received large amounts of training, much of it based around a 'process consultancy' approach. Many assignments over the last ten years also involved a research content where familiarity of using interviews as a research method was gained, as well as the more traditional quantitative tools such as developing questionnaires, especially for attitude surveys. An assignment that had a major impact on the decision to undertake this doctorate, was leading the research into 'Release '92', a major downsizing programme, to discover what motivated employees' decisions when considering whether to

volunteer for redundancy, which was felt would inform the levels of commitment people had to the organisation.

The other areas that has contributed to the general knowledge of techniques, tools and methods, has been the experience of the pilot, which is discussed elsewhere in the chapter. The researcher was also reasonably “computer literate”, to the extent that she would be able to use research tools should they prove to be appropriate to this study.

- **Specific knowledge of institutional conditions** - by this Gummesson means *‘the knowledge of technical conditions, customary practice, key decision makers, and other specific mechanisms and factors relating to a particular industry, company market, product, service, and so forth’* (p64). The organisation involved in the pilot and subsequent full study, was in a related sector to that of this researcher’s main experience in a large organisation. Not only does the researcher know a little about the computer industry, having been an internal consultant in the area, but also she spent much time with the research organisation some years ago as a customer of theirs whilst being the project manager for implementing a major system.
- **Understanding of Social patterns** - under this heading, Gummesson refers to the ‘soft’ structure of the research company *“cultural value system of rules (often tacit) of co-operation, social intercourse, communication ... informal hierarchies, different types of personalities”* (p64). He, like, Easterby-Smith *et al* (1991), also raised the problem of the researcher gaining access and building a rapport within organisations, suggesting that the only way to gain this knowledge is by spending time in the company. One of the advantages of having already known the research company, established rapport during the pilot and having undertaken a consultancy assignment in the organisation had mitigated against the problems that many inquirers might have when embarking on their research. Many of those interviewed had also been involved in the consultancy project which was also in a similar area so that they were familiar with both the inquirer and the subject of the study. All the interviewees were willing and interested in the research area, and were very open with the inquirer.
- **Personal Attributes** - in ‘naturalistic’ inquiry much emphasis is put on the nature of the inquirer herself especially as Lincoln and Guba (1985) stress that contextual inquiry ‘demands’ a human instrument who is adaptive to whatever situation is encountered and builds on their ‘tacit’ knowledge. This is similar to Gummesson’s notion of preunderstanding and he cites the need for intuition, creativity, human understanding, vitality in the researcher who takes the role of change agent (1993, p65), which recognises that the very act of research or inquiry changes the context especially where the role of the inquirer is an interactive one (Schein, 1987; Lincoln and Guba; 1985; Gummesson, 1991). Strauss and Corbin use the concept of ‘theoretical sensitivity’ in a similar manner, which they describe as *“the attribute of having insight, the ability to*

give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and the capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn't" (1990, p42), which they see as partly coming from background sources such as a review of the relevant literature and from personal and professional experience.

This inquirer has invested much time in the last five years or so in understanding herself and her strengths and weaknesses, which has included more objective assessments through personality instruments such as Cattell's 16PF and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator. The learning from both personal experience and the more objective instruments, suggests that the inquirer's preferred mode of operating is conducive to the more adaptable, open ended approach ('P' preference in MBTI, low 'Q3', 'Q4' and high 'M' in 16PF) and required by that of a constructivist, or use of naturalistic inquiry mode (Gummesson, 1991; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Her preference is also to draw evidence from the more intuitive modes of thinking rather than the more detailed, quantitative data, preferring to work with people and ideas rather than facts or things (high 'N' in MBTI, and high 'A', 'B' and 'M' in 16PF).

Guba and Lincoln (1994), believe that values play a paramount role in constructivism "*values have pride of place*" (p114) and play a crucial part in shaping inquiry outcomes, they also see the inquirer as "*the 'passionate participant' actively engaged in facilitating the 'multivoice' reconstruction of his of her own construction as well as those of all other participants*" (p115). The impact of the inquirer's 'F' preference in MBTI, which suggests that she is more inclined to make decisions based on her values than a more rational, logical process if able to follow her preference; is twofold. Firstly, she would be uncomfortable following a research strategy than she felt did not fit her beliefs and value set, which would also resonate with a chosen paradigm; and secondly if values have the 'pride of place' in constructivism, then it would seem more appropriate for this paradigm to be used by someone who is 'value-driven' rather than those who prefer a (outwardly) more logical value-free approach, that would be appropriate to the positivist or postpositivist paradigm (p114). In approaching the research proposal, I was aware that the more traditional (and straightforward) approach would be positivist and quantitative and that most studies in the area were quantitative, but saw the research arena as understanding people's (unarticulated) beliefs and expectations, therefore more appropriate to the naturalistic inquiry given my personality, the key areas of which have been discussed in this section.

My experience as a consultant was also relevant in arriving at the choice of methodology and subsequent methods, as has been the subject of discussion by several writers. Gummesson (1991) adds several different types of consultant/researcher role to Schein's 'clinical perspective' ranging from the traditional 'analyst' research role who would normally not have particularly good access to a strategic or organisational processes, to that of the change agent, which is more active within the organisation. In this particular research project it would seem that this OD approach model is the closest, from the perspective "*where knowledge of human relationships and emotional states is combined with intellectual analyses*" (p34), the use of the process consultant model (Schein,

1988) and in that Gummesson sees that the “*behavioural science approaches described above are quite different from original expert research and expert consultancy approaches in management*” (1991,p36).

Gummesson also quotes Carlson, who is concerned that consultancy and research are a dangerous mix as “*consultancy requires a spontaneous creativity, ingenuity, and boldness*” (p46) but in this he has taken a more traditional positivist approach to the requirements of research, rather than seeing these as the very attributes required for undertaking a naturalistic inquiry (Erlandson et al, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Nature and Appeal of The DBA

One of the appeals of the DBA research degree was the multidisciplinary approach that it took and the practical aspects of also having to demonstrate consultancy and human resource development skills. As a pragmatist, it is personally important that this research is relevant to practical management problems as well as contributing to academic knowledge and debate. Indeed Schein (1987), Gummesson (1991) and Easterby-Smith *et al* (1991) support this approach suggesting that organisations are unlikely to allow research access unless they can see some commercial or personal advantage from it. Easterby-Smith *et al* also state that although the practice of management is largely eclectic there is still a dilemma for the researcher: whether to take the safer course for academic respectability and take a single disciplinary view; or to adopt a cross disciplinary approach that is more likely to produce results that are of practical use to managers.

Schedule of Interviews

Date	Participant	Location
1/11/96	Participant 1	BA
25/10/96	Participant 2	BA
25/10/96	Participant 3	BA
25/10/96	Participant 4	BA
21/10/96	Participant 5	BE
21/10/96	Participant 6	BE
21/10/96	Participant 7	BE
28/10/96	Participant 8	BE
1/11/96	Participant 9	BA
28/10/96	Participant 10	BE
29/10/96	Participant 11	WA
21/10/96	Participant 12	BE
1/11/96	Participant 13	BA
29/10/96	Participant 14	WA
29/10/96	Participant 15	WA
28/10/96	Participant 16	WA

12/11/96	Initial Review Panel Meeting	BE
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CAREERS RESEARCH INTERVIEW

Introduction

These interviews are being carried out for a number of reasons: to gain feedback on the career guide and career workshops; to develop a process for managing careers in the business; to understand people's expectations; and as a doctoral researcher I would also like to ask some related questions.

Everything we discuss will be kept in confidence unless I have sought your permission beforehand, any quotes will be unattributable.

Biographical





Career anchor

Name		Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 - 29	<input type="checkbox"/> TF
			<input type="checkbox"/> 30 - 39	<input type="checkbox"/> GM
Part of Business			<input type="checkbox"/> 40 - 49	<input type="checkbox"/> AU
			<input type="checkbox"/> 50 - 59	<input type="checkbox"/> SE
Number of years with HAL				<input type="checkbox"/> EC
Date of Interview	/ /	Type of contract	<input type="checkbox"/> permanent	<input type="checkbox"/> SV
			<input type="checkbox"/> fixed term	<input type="checkbox"/> PC
Location			<input type="checkbox"/> part time	<input type="checkbox"/> LS
			<input type="checkbox"/> other	
<input type="checkbox"/> manager <input type="checkbox"/> professional <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify)				

Please complete Schein's Career Orientations Inventory which should only take a few minutes.

Any comments ?

Please draw your recent career history showing both organisation and job moves and whether they involved increases in influence or responsibility as a graph.

 job change  organisation change	 learning process	 already had skills
---	--	--

increased responsibility or influence

(This exercise enables the participant: to provide the synopsis of 'their story' for themselves for the ensuing discussion; to settle into the discussion; to highlight where changes have been triggered; and to provide a consistency check)

Time

What areas did you concentrate on in your last period of education, why did you chose those areas and how do you feel now about those choices?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview)

What was your understanding of 'career' when you first entered the world of work?

(to provide their first set of expectations of the employment relationship, prior to starting work)

What is it now?

(to provide their current expectations of the employment relationship)

What were you looking for in your first job? Why did you make that choice?

(taken from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, Herriot and Pemberton's 'wants' and 'offers' (1996))

What were your goals and ambitions then, how did they work out?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview)

Moving on to five years ago what was the next major change in job or employer?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, to provide 'trigger event' information (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994))

How did this come about? Who initiated the change? What were the reasons for the change?

(taken from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, more in depth on the 'trigger' and change in 'wants' and 'offers')

How did you feel about the change? How did it relate to your goals?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, to access a deeper level and issues such as 'reality shock' (Schein, 1978))

What was the next major change in job or employer?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview)

How did this come about? Who initiated the change? What were the reasons for the change?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, further 'trigger event' and 'wants and offers' information)

How did you feel about the change? How did it relate to your goals?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview)

As you look back over your career have there been times you particularly enjoyed or not enjoyed - what was it about those times that made them particularly enjoyable or not?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, to cross reference career anchor preference)

Have you refused a job or promotion and why?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, cross reference preferred career anchor, and trigger information)

Looking ahead, what are the things you are especially looking forward to, and why? Are there things you would especially like to avoid and why?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, cross reference preferred career anchor, and trigger / wants and offers information)

What do you think your next 2 career moves will be and why?

(adapted from Schein's Career Anchors Interview, consistency of expectations, anticipated triggers, changing wants and offers)

Who do you think should be responsible for these moves? Who else should be involved? and why?

(views on who influences trigger events and their career)

How would you characterise the relationship between HAL and its employees?

(views on the psychological contract, potential further definition and understanding of it)

How do you think that has changed in the last few years? How would you like it to change in the next few years?

(views on changes in the psychological contract and their relationship, also possible 'trigger events' at a higher, societal level and organisational/individual wants and offers changing)

What do you think HAL's expectations of and obligations to its employees are?

(views on the organisational side of the psychological contract and their obligation, or commitment to employees)

How well does HAL meet these?

(views on the organisational side of the psychological contract and their obligation, organisational issues that may lead to 'trigger events' e.g. downsizing, restructuring)

What do you think employees' expectations of and obligations to HAL are?

(views on the employee side of the psychological contract and their obligations)

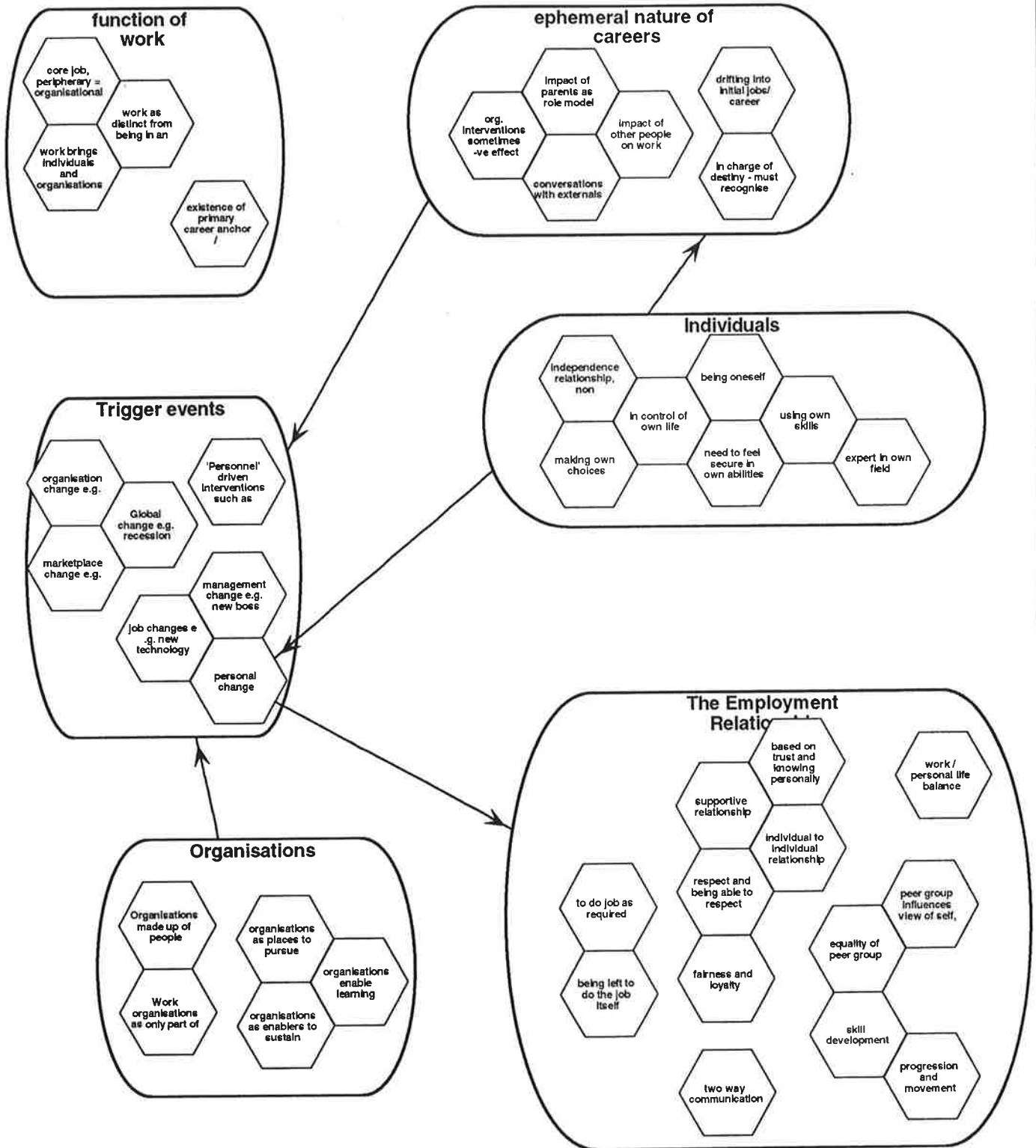
How well do employees meet these?

(views on the level of commitment that exists)

What are the actual events or symbols that you consider to define the relationship between HAL and its employees? e.g appraisal, pay review etc.

(views on the symbols of mutual acceptance (Schein 1978), potential trigger events or events that change wants and offers)

Appendix 3 : My view of the employment relationship



Dear

Research into the Changing Employment Relationship

You may recall that at the end of 1996, you kindly gave me the opportunity to interview you for my research into how the employment relationship was changing. I would now like your reactions to how I interpreted what you said and to check that I have not misconstrued what you told me. I am attaching two sections of my thesis for you to read which I hope are quite readable, although quite long, (please ignore any academic undertones). The sections are:

1. 'Results in the form of thick description'. This is the 'data dump', taken from our conversations, which I have grouped under various headings for you to check that:
 - they give a reasonable reflection of what seemed to be going on at the time, i.e. October / November 1996, especially where I have quoted your comments.
 - confidentiality and anonymity have been adequately protected. Is it possible to work out who anyone is to their detriment?
 - are there errors of fact or interpretation?
 - are there important omissions?
 - are 'hot' issues included that could/should be left out?
2. The last few pages are my analysis of the five 'types' that have emerged from the analysis of what you all said and I have developed them one stage further into 'vignettes' or short stories, the fifth type (Gerry) I see as the organisation's view. To help me confirm I am on the right lines, I would appreciate it if you could let me know which of them most expresses where you were at the time (end of 1996), it may be that none of them do and I would also find it useful to know that.

Next Steps

It is suggested that I present my findings formally to the HR Board and also that if people are interested, a meeting be set up to discuss them and how they could be applied in practice. I will develop a short paper on the findings for the business and yourselves, once you have been able to confirm that the base from where my findings have been developed is accurate.

Please don't hesitate to contact me, especially if you have concerns about how accurately I have portrayed your views, or if you would like a copy of the transcript of our conversation. The list of contributors to this research is confidential to myself and the two people that arranged the original interviews, so that your anonymity should be protected.

I have attached a reply sheet which I would be grateful if you would post or fax back to me (no cover needed), if you prefer please send any comments via email, or if you wish to discuss any issues please feel free to telephone me. I am hoping to finish writing everything up within the next two weeks so please let me know immediately if you have concerns, otherwise I would appreciate replies by mid August.

Thank you again for your help in this and the original research.

Yours sincerely

Please reply to:

From: Name:
Address
(if transcript wanted)

Ann Parkinson
The Long House
Barrow Gurney
Bristol
BS48 3RY

Tel: 01275 474451
Fax: 01275 472554
email:ann.parkinson@btinternet.com

1. Comments on accuracy of the 'thick description', please circle as appropriate :
 - They give a reasonable reflection of the time yes / no
 - Confidentiality and anonymity are adequately protected yes / no
 - It is impossible to work out who someone is to their detriment. yes / no
 - It is factually correct, or interpreted correctly. yes / no
 - Everything that should be, is included. yes / no
 - There are no 'hot' issues included that could be left out. yes / no

2. If you have responded 'no' to any questions above, please explain your concerns, or any other comments you wish to make on my analysis (*continue on separate sheet if needed*):

3. The story that best reflects my feelings and views: (please circle appropriate name(s))

Kim Alex Sam Jo None of these

4. To help me validate my further analysis I would appreciate an answer on a further two questions:

4a. At work I am looking for a contract based on:

exchange of work and skills for pay and benefits	<i>(please circle the point that best describes where you see yourself on the continuum below)</i> 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7	involvement with the organisation (commitment in exchange for career support)
---	---	---

4b. I would consider that in pursuit of my career I am:

Active - I know what I want/don't want and make moves to achieve it	<i>(please circle the point that best describes where you see yourself on the continuum below)</i> 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7	Passive - I am happy to take opportunities as they arise and let others direct my career
--	---	---

5. I would like to attend a follow up discussion of the findings and implications: yes/no

Thank you, once again, for your time

Appendix 5

Second Researcher Construct Clusters

Notes from the clustering exercise with Cristina.

Her major constructs on personal factors:

1. people who like challenges, but are prepared to move if something goes wrong with their contract - they are not prisoners of the job. Respect and recognition is a stimulus.
2. those who are not challenged, lazy, lack 'get up and go', allow themselves to be pushed along either through being incapable of making decisions or reluctance to make changes. There are two groups: those who are incapable and those who need stimulus and challenge to get moving.
3. respect and recognition (includes progression) in the more traditional sense, includes security / job for life, liking status in the company (big fish in little ponds)
4. security and money / materialism - also linked to recognition
5. progress and development
6. lifestyle issues - those finding other ways to achieve to manage the balance
7. achievement - what's driving them, result/stimulus - results of motivated action
8. the contract - written / formal
9. the quality of the relationship with the manager - if very good it can overcome a bad written contract
10. enjoyment and being good at the job and getting on
11. about where help for career came from
12. responsibility for own careers



The Changing Nature of the Employment Relationship

Peer Debrief

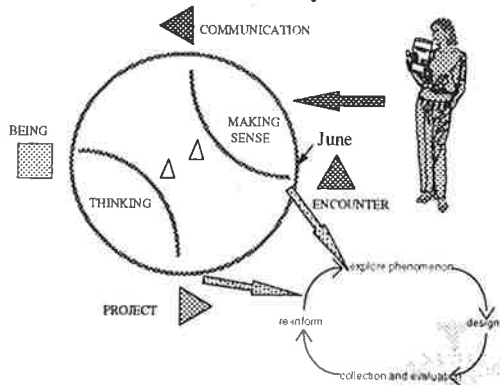
Ann Parkinson

Conclusions and issues

- need time to 'get immersed' in data
- a continually iterating process-
Gummesson's 'Hermeneutic Spiral' from
pre-understanding to understanding
- richness of interviews
- fallibility of technology!
- need to know when to stop
- need to take 'time out' to finish.

23rd June 1997

Rowan's Research Cycle



so, what's changed?

- presentation has become prelude to next stage,
rather than conclusion of previous
- reflected and begun to understand implications
of philosophical position - constructivist
- prepared data for analysis
 - transcribed, unitised, etc..
 - immersion underway

Peer Debriefing - Please

purpose

- to test working hypotheses and design
- listen to ideas and concerns
- to analyse materials (limited today)

role of debriefer(s)

- ask questions
- play devil's advocate
- provide alternative explanations
- allow researcher to vent frustrations and
emotions!

Erlandson et al., 1993



Pre-understanding

- large organisation experience
 - as 'inmate'
 - as consultant
- 'non-academic' research experience
 - as internal consultant
 - research project 'Release '92'
- personal interest in the phenomenon under
study
- knowledge of strengths (and weaknesses)

DEFINITION OF COMMITMENT

"the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation"

It has three factors:

- strong belief in organisation's goals & values
- willingness to exert considerable effort
- strong desire to maintain membership

(Walton 1985)

ASPECTS of COMMITMENT

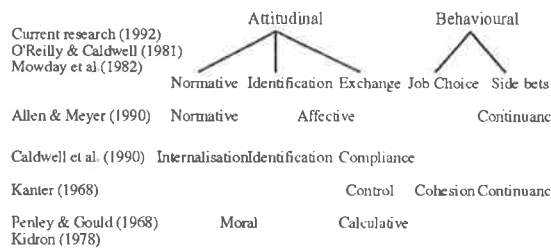
Attitudinal

- affective
- continuance
- normative

Behavioural

- Becker's theory
- Salancik's theory

ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT LABELS



Helen Lydka

Helen Lydka's research

- leavers and stayers

BT and Release '92

Why did people leave

- Not happy with the way people treated
- Uncertain future / no security
- To retire early / family reasons
- No career development within BT
- The money

BT and Release '92

Why do they stay

- BT influences
 - good terms and conditions
 - social environment
- Personal Circumstances
 - lifestyle, mortgage, family responsibilities
- Training and development, Career Aspirations
- Climate outside BT

"LEAVER'S" PROFILE

- value driven - disaffected
- attitudinally committed
- marketable skills
- entrepreneur
- "fixers"
- strategic, external orientation
- creativity
- quality of life

"STAYER'S" PROFILE

- financially committed
- 'side bets'
- career prospects

Consequences :

- head down, stick to the rules
- internal focus
- 'here and now'
- own objectives paramount

End of Chapter One

Chapter Three

Questions of Methodology

and of Philosophy



Pilot Research

Objective

- to uncover the issues of managing employed flexible workforce

Scope

- 18 organisations
- 20 interviews

Personal objective

to determine research questions

Pilot Opportunity

- Data
 - grounded theory?
 - focus to reading
- Methodology
 - test philosophical stance
- Methods
 - Pinpoint
 - Hexagons
 - Interviewing skills
- Future Research Sites

PILOT FINDINGS

- Definitions of flexibility
- Traditional Vs Newer forms
- Drivers
 - Individual demand
 - Business needs
 - Newness
- Profile of Flexible Workers
- Key issues
 - Managers' attitudes
 - Culture and style
 - Nature of the relationship

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

- Pilot invaluable
 - renewed enthusiasm
 - tested methods
 - aided understanding of philosophy
 - gave focus
- Initial results supported other studies
- If part time must be work related
- Must be interesting area
- Confirmed
 - subject area
 - type of study

PROJECT

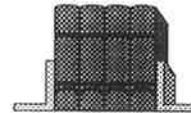


Pre-understanding

- using principles of grounded theory to develop theory
 - level of preunderstanding and
 - pilot
- how and why questions not how many and how often,
- using frameworks and theory to interpret or 'pattern match', not replication
- case study(s)

Chapter Two

- revisit literature review
- leave it open for post analysis re-iteration



PROJECT



Knowledge of Theories, Models

Frameworks for research taken from:

- career anchors interview (Schein)
- matching process (Schein)
- contracting process (Herriot and Pemberton)
- transactional and relational contracts (Rousseau)
- 'trigger events' (Guzzo and Noonan - based on Schein)

Psychological Contract

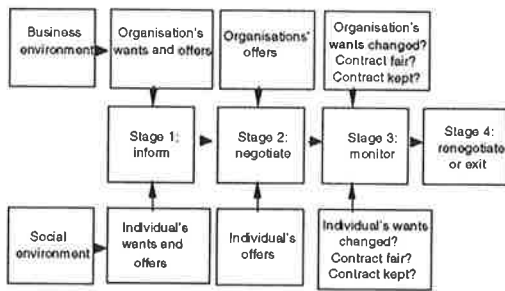
"assumptions about the future, the degree of what is overtly said, and the actual events which the career unfolds". (Schein, 1978)

Organisation demonstrates acceptance by:

- salary increase
- positive performance appraisal
- new job assignments
- sharing of organisational secrets
- promotion

In exchange for employee:

- deciding to remain
- high level of commitment
- willingness to accept various constraints



Four Stages of Psychological Contracting - Herriot and Pe

Rousseau's Types of Psychological Contract

	Performance Terms	
	Specific	Not Specific
Duration	Transactional	Transitional
Short Term	Low ambiguity	High ambiguity
	Easy exit	High turnover / termination
	Low member commitment	Instability
	Freedom to seek new contracts	
	Little learning	
	Weak interdependence / identification	
Long Term	Relational	Relational
	High member commitment	High member commitment
	High interdependence / identification	High affective commitment
	Ongoing development	High interdependence / identification
	Mutual support	Stability
	Dynamic	

Psychological Contract Literature

- mostly exhortation - little based on research
 - recent research mostly quantitative
 - the contract 'reified'
 - focus on the violation of the contract - when it goes wrong
 - little work on understanding the 'essence'
- " we need to better map the subjective terrain of the psychological contract as a prelude to an improved appreciation of it" (Guzzo & Noonan, 1994)



Chapter Four

the study



Research Questions

- How is the nature of the relationship between organisations and their employees changing?
 - change in expectations
 - change in obligations
- What are the 'trigger events' that define it?
- Using careers as the 'lens'
 - gives both a future and a historic perspective





Research Study

- one of pilot organisations
- organisation - had prior knowledge of
 - as customer
 - as consultant
- 10 managers, 6 'professionals'
- recorded interviews of 1 - 2 hours, using 'career anchors' model
- tested validity through report on initial findings to group (including interviewees)

Interview process

mood setting

- career anchors questionnaire
 - career history map
- career anchors (shortened unnecessarily)
- early expectations of work and career
 - changes, how 'triggered', how felt
- questions about employment relationship



Analysis

- transcribing interviews to Pinpoint
- main categories determined
- emerging themes mapped on hexagons and magnetic board (a form of conceptual mapping)
- vertical and horizontal 'passes' through data
- 'pattern match' to confirm existing models
- 'new' themes check against literature, further research

Meanwhile

back to philosophy and methodology

- clarifying philosophical stance
 - understanding why 'constructivist' and 'phenomenologist' approach
- how chosen methodology is underpinned
- what it means for methods of analysis
- re-inforces 'doing it backwards'

Chapter Three - Part two

Questions of Methodology

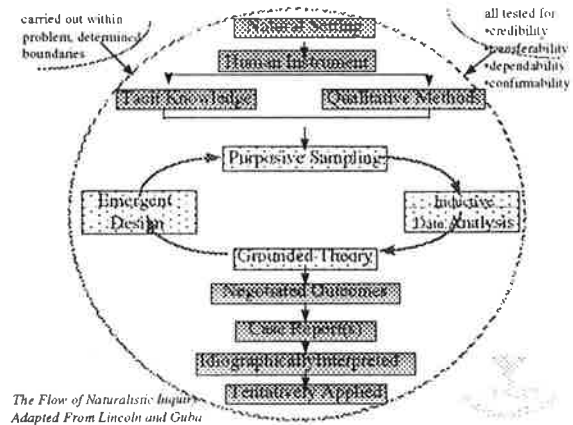
and of Philosophy



*"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference"*

Robert Frost

reminders of constructivist paradigm



Recent and current concerns

- Does my data answer my research questions?
- Is 'careers' the right lens?
- which analytic method to follow?
 - Colaizzi, Keen etc.
 - Strauss and Corbin
 - Miles & Huberman
 - why do I feel uncomfortable with some of them?
- is 'cluster analysis' appropriate - will it give right depth?

Understanding of dilemmas

Theoretical dilemma

- from analysis so far - career lens gives appropriate data.

Analysis dilemma

- back to Husserl - "All things become clear and evident through an intuitive-reflective process" (Moustakas, 1994:32)
- Mason, 1996, search for *particular* and *holistic* through non-cross-sectional data organisation

Moustakas' version of Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen Method

- describe own experience of phenomenon
- analyse using method
 - consider each statement and record relevant ones
 - 'unitise' or convert to invariant horizons
 - relate and cluster into themes
 - synthesise into description of textures
 - reflect and construct structural description
- repeat process for each co-researcher
- construct composite description

Phenomenological Reduction

Epoche - refraining from judgement, to abstain from

"The Epoche is the first step in coming to know things, in being inclined toward seeing things as they appear, in returning to things themselves, free of prejudgements and preconceptions."

The Process

"letting the preconceptions and prejudgements enter consciousness and leave freely ... This meditative procedure is repeated until I experience an internal sense of closure. As I do, I label the prejudgements and write them out. I review the list until its hold on my consciousness is released, until I feel an internal readiness to enter freshly ... and come to know it as such."

Moustakas, 1994: 89

Cluster of my Epoche

It always amuses me when I read books on how to do content analysis ... the units are really fairly obvious - you get chunks of meaning that come from out of the data itself. ... Also the books say, "Arrive at the categories you will use." Well I don't do that either, but let the categories build up all the time as I put things together that go together. I think this is partly about how much anxiety and uncertainty you are willing to tolerate for how long; I think the more you can, the better the analysis works out."

Judy Marshall, 1981

Trustworthiness

Positivism		Constructivism
internal validity	→	credibility
external validity	→	transferability
reliability	→	dependability
objectivity	→	confirmability

Credibility

- prolonged engagement
- tying emergent theory to existing literature
- triangulation
 - within method - multiple interviews
 - theoretical - commitment, psychological contract, career anchors
 - between method - interviews and anchors
- member checking
- peer debriefing!

Transferability

"not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability, it is his or her responsibility to provide the database that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers"

(Lincoln and Guba, 1985:316)

Dependability

"following the same rules for data gathering and analysis, plus a similar set of conditions, another investigator should be able to come up with the same theoretical explanation about the given phenomenon"

Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 251

Confirmability

audit trail

- raw data files
 - tapes
 - transcriptions
 - interview notes
 - documents
- data reduction, reconstruction and synthesis products

example of clusters



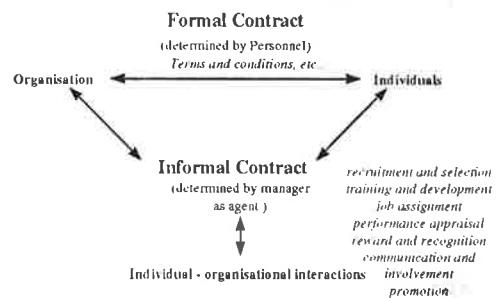
Overall Career Expectations

It was	It is
- steady progress	- still the same
- working up the organisation to a position of awe and respect	- gradual progression
- ambition and advancement	- Increase of responsibility, self importance and making a difference
- getting promoted every two years and paid more	- different challenges
- foundations for the future	- lateral not hierarchical, developing talents to peoples' benefit
- an opportunity to grow	- being independent - having transferable skills
- It was a job	- self fulfillment - enough money to give freedom
- no real idea	- not a career - it's a job
- fell into my first job - my year out company	- being happy and getting on
- enjoying the work I was doing	- having the respect of peers, subordinates and superiors
- to earn money in what I enjoyed doing	- doing what you are good at and maximising your potential
- joining the world's most successful company in the industry	- working to pay for house and looking after my family
	- doing things that enhance my CV



Emerging Model

How is the Employment Relationship determined?



Emerging Themes

- clear responsibility for own careers
- pivotal role of manager in how view relationship with organisation
- separate cultures with differing views on career expectations
 - long termers - confidence in company to deliver
 - short termers - building skills in case
- links to BT 'stayers' and commitment?

Tentative Applicability

organisational

- from understanding, ability to address issues
- provide route to auditing 'psychological contracts'
- new understanding of commitment for 2000

personal

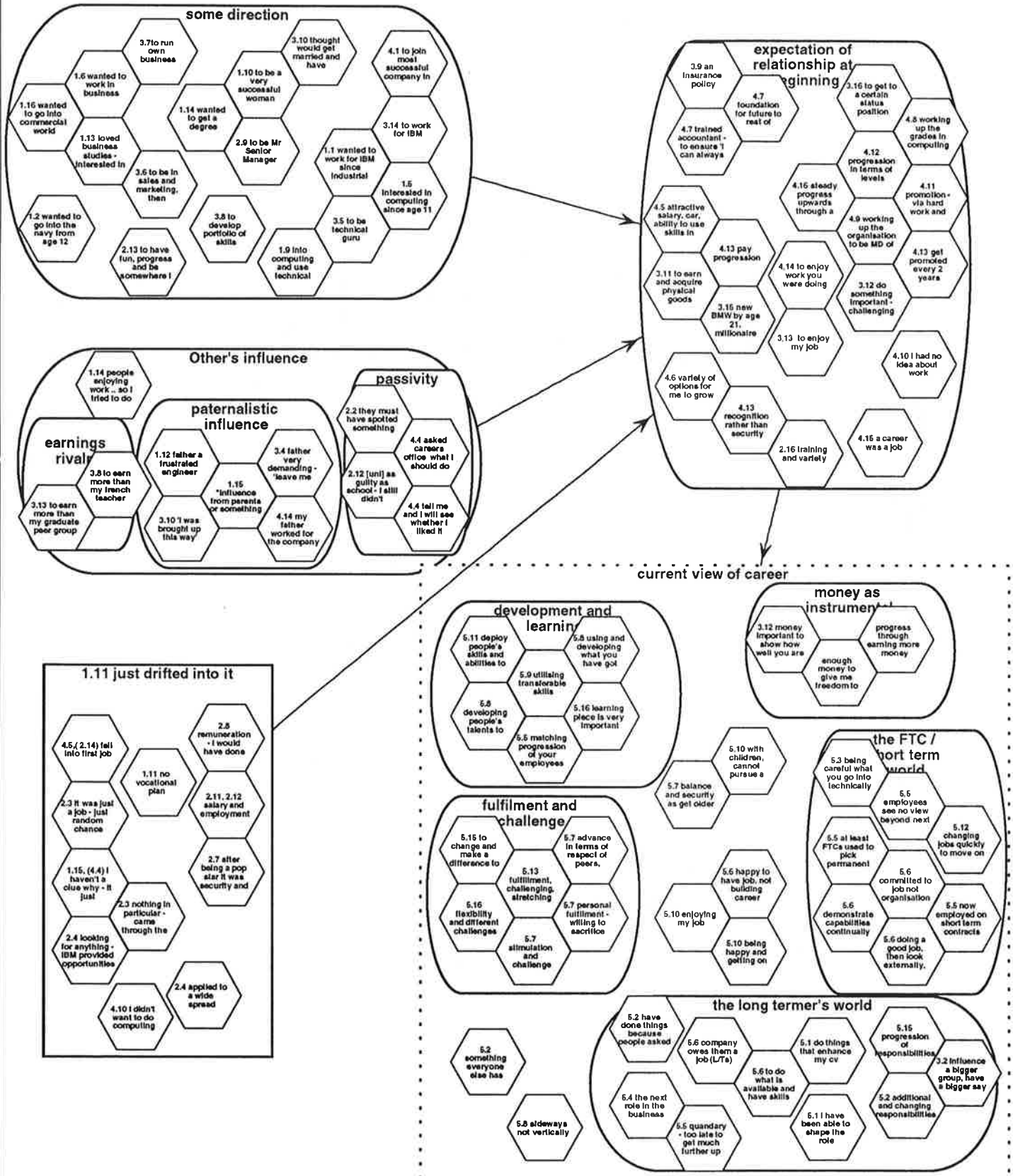
- to develop consultancy tools
- to provide USP

*“We shall not cease from exploration
And at the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And to know the place for the first time”*

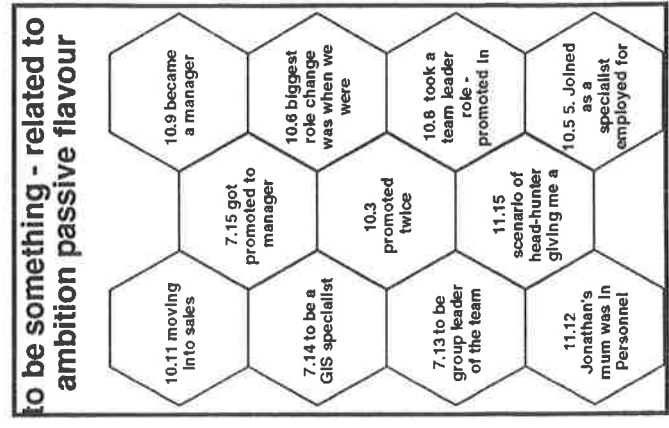
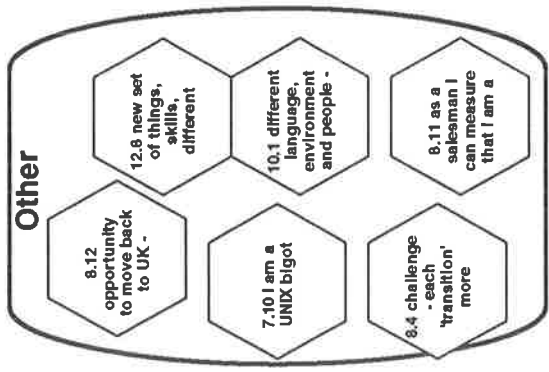
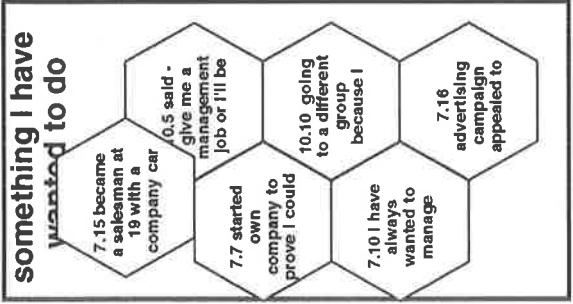
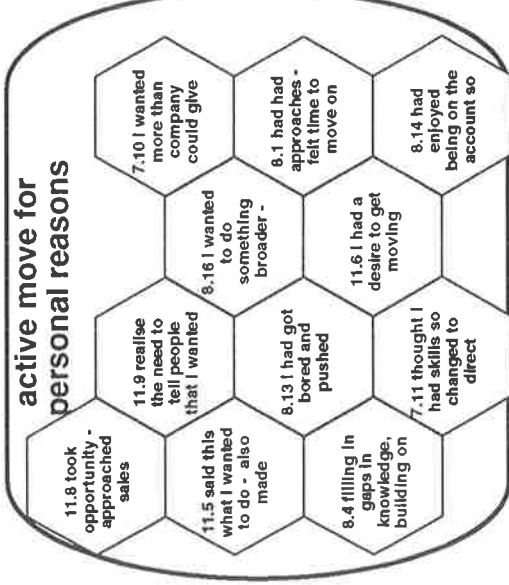
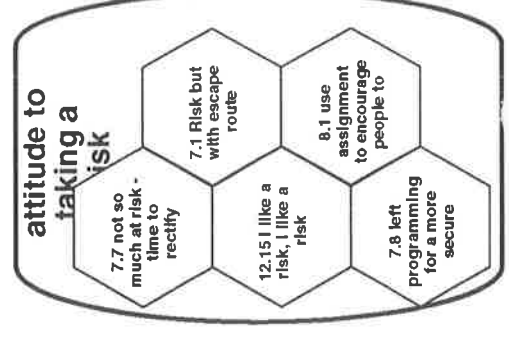
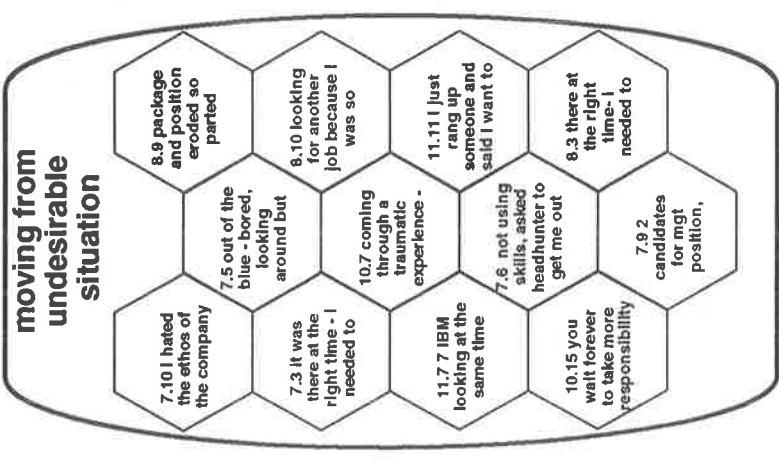
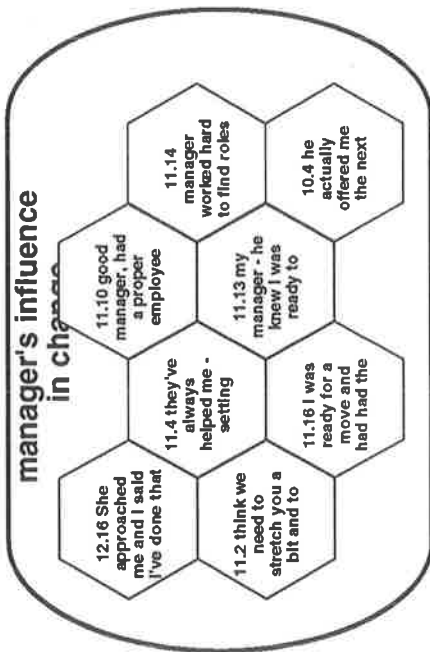
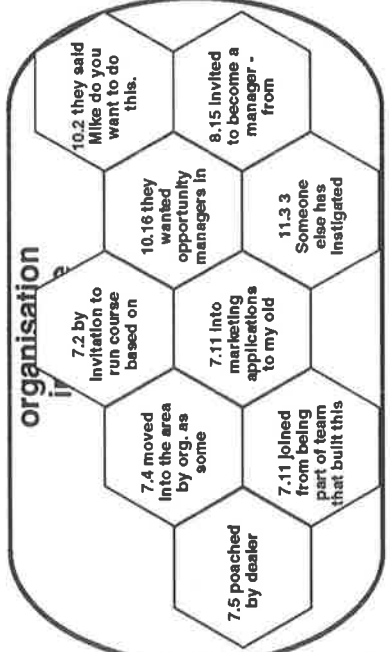
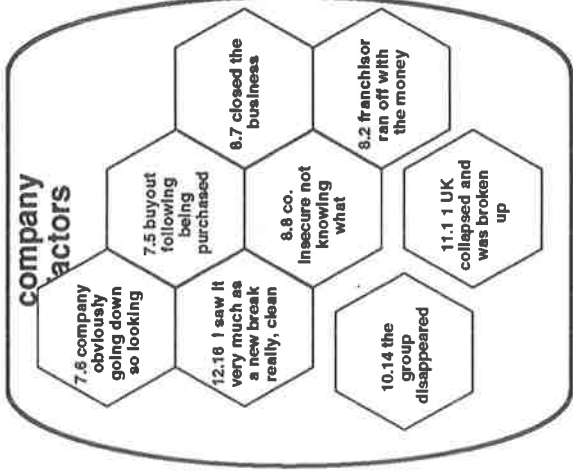
T.S. Eliot



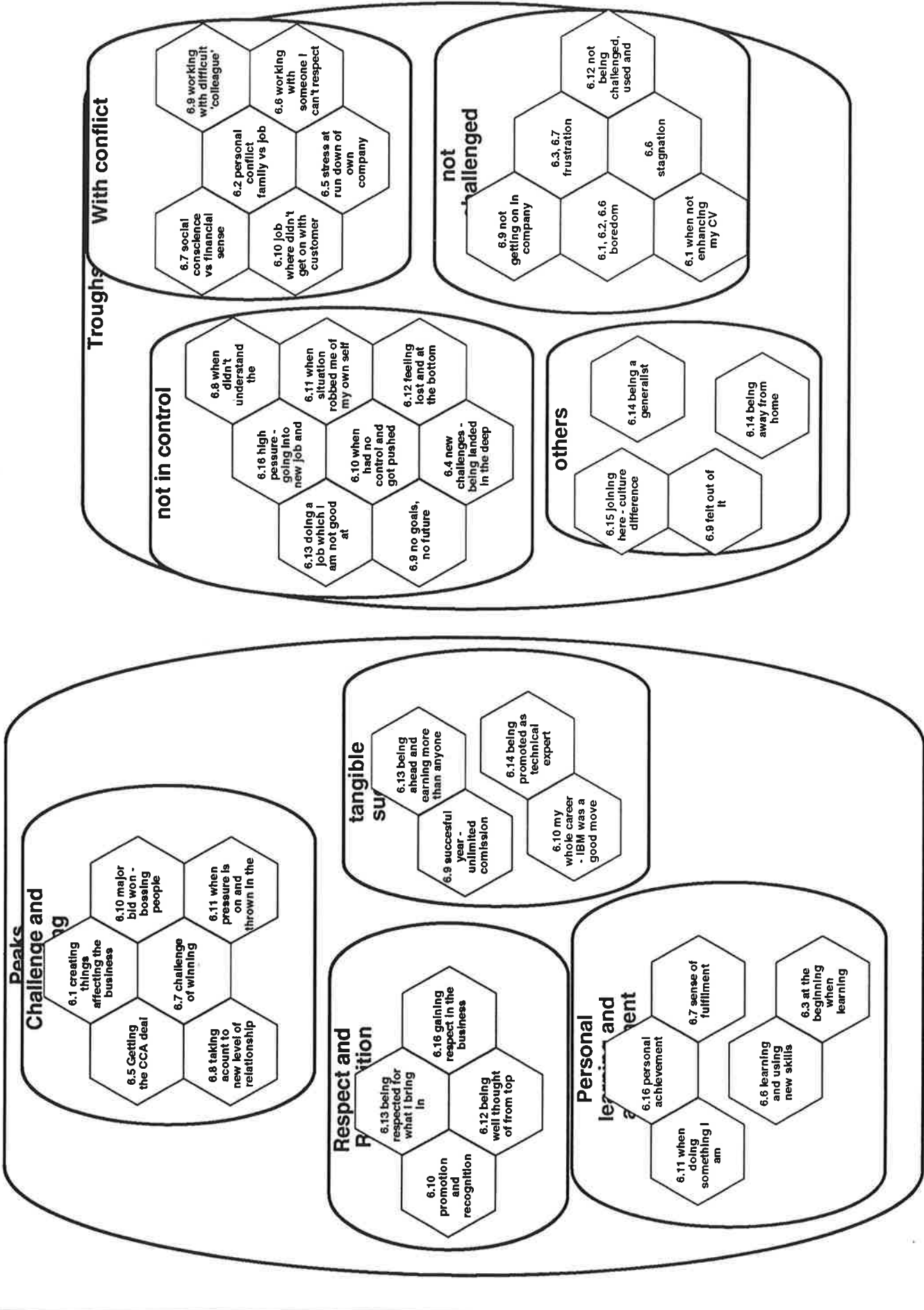
Appendix 7 - 1 : The Unfolding Career



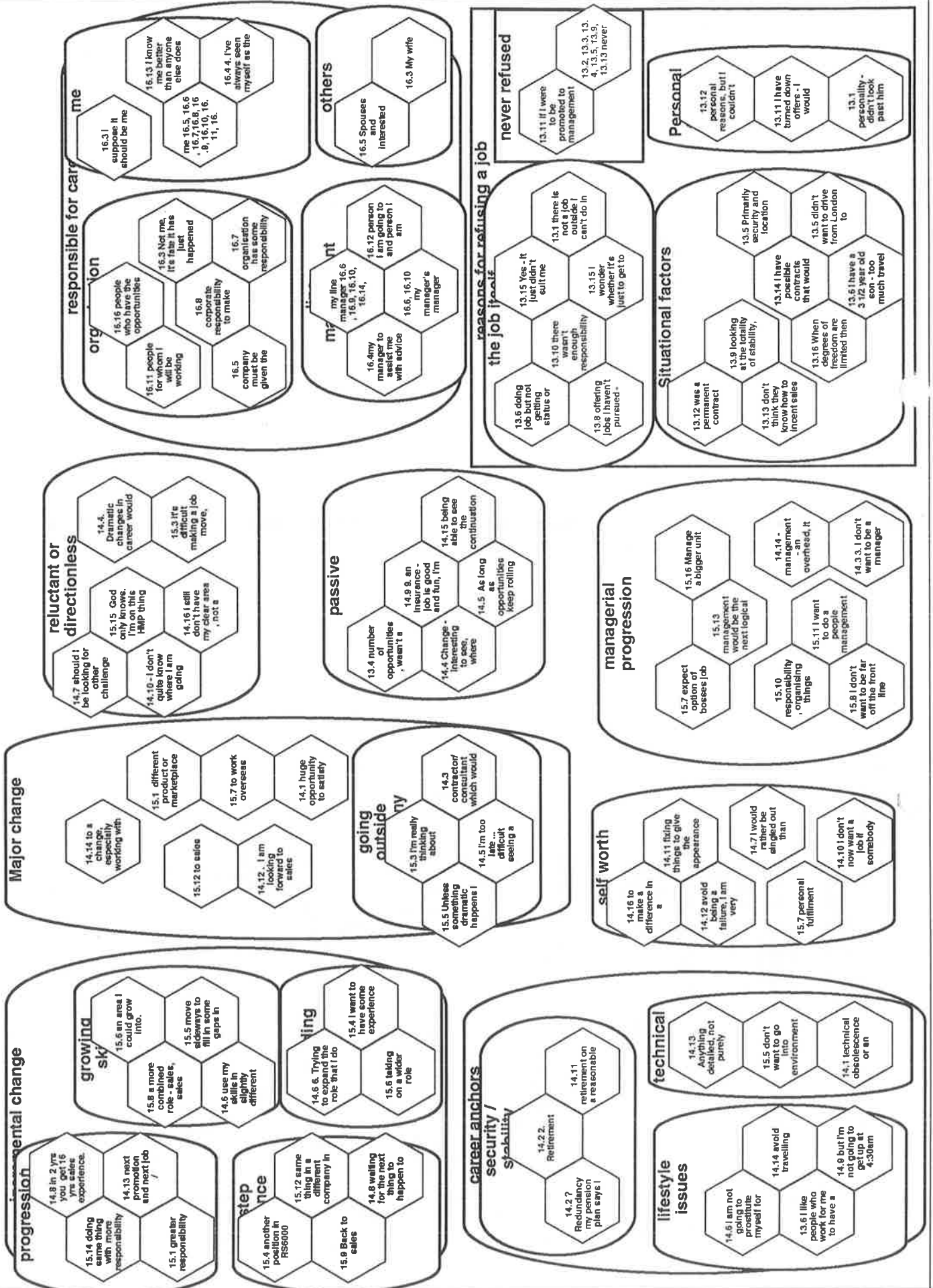
Appendix 7 - 2 : Major Changes



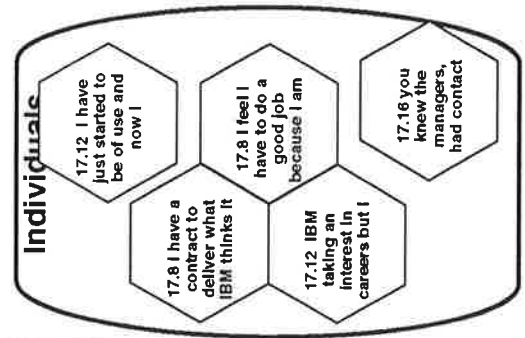
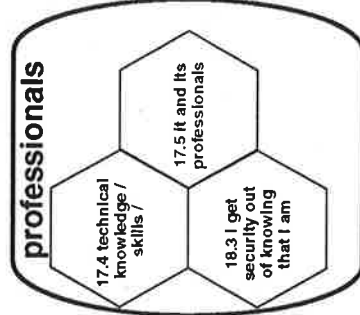
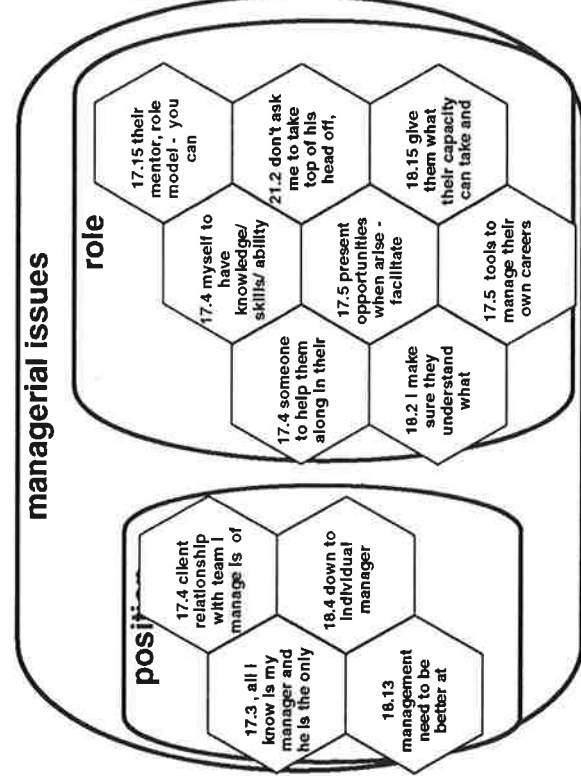
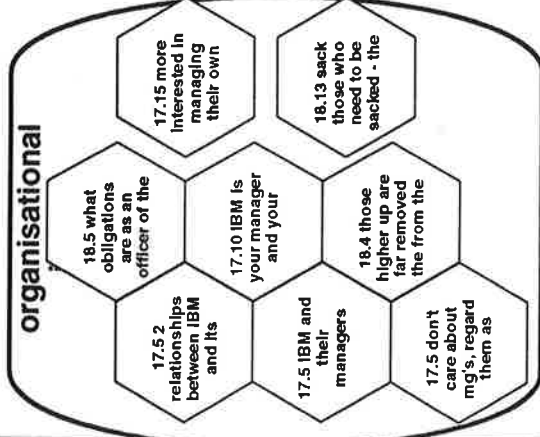
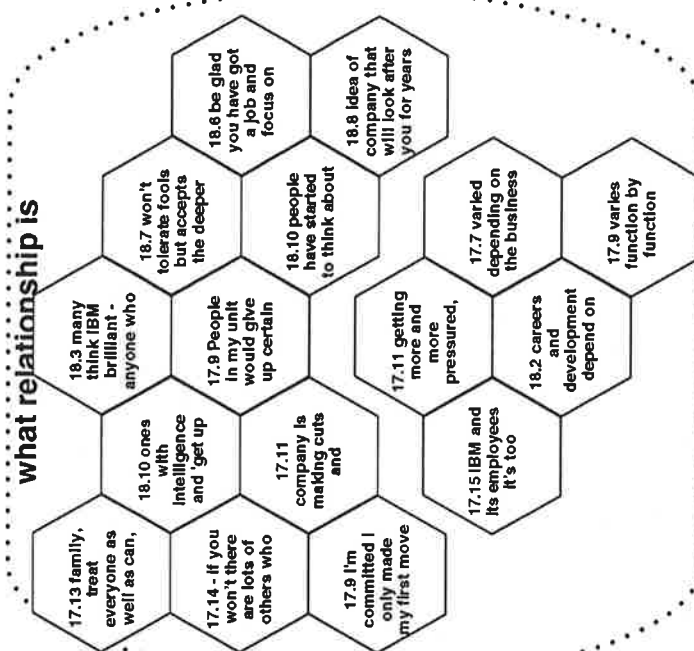
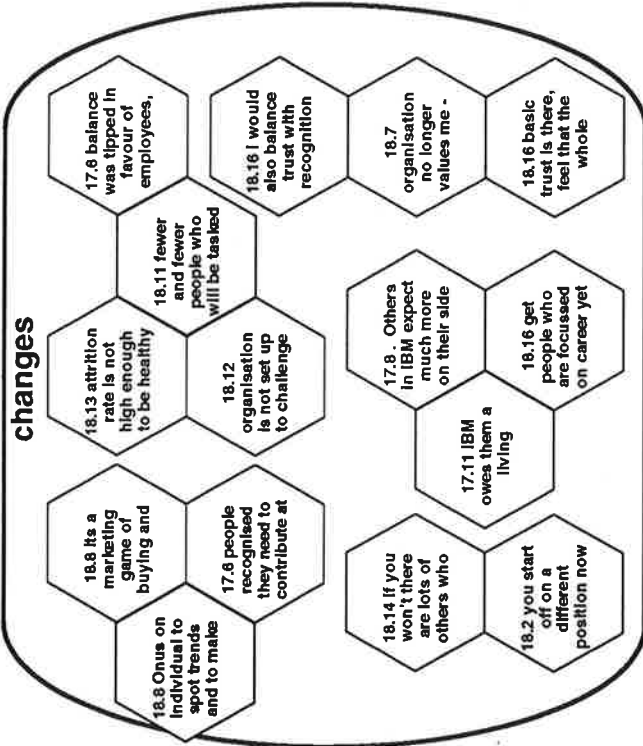
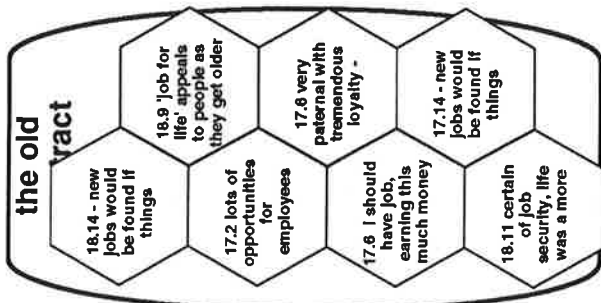
Appendix 7 - 3 : Peaks and Troughs



Appendix 7 - 4 : FUTURE CAREER

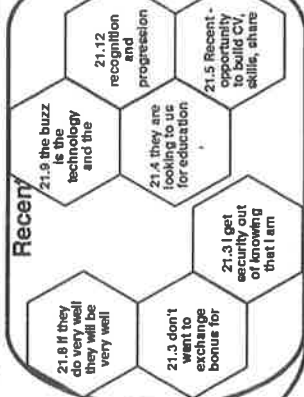
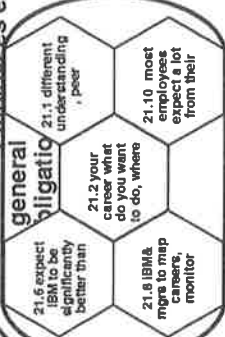


Appendix 7 - 5 : Relationship

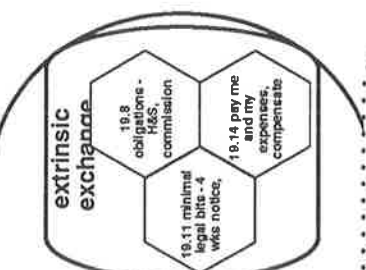
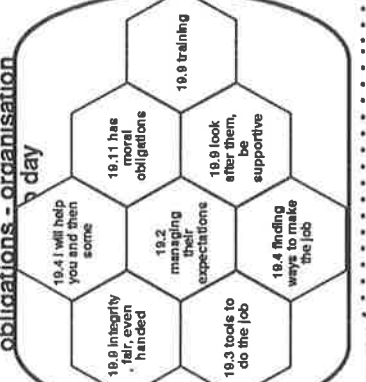
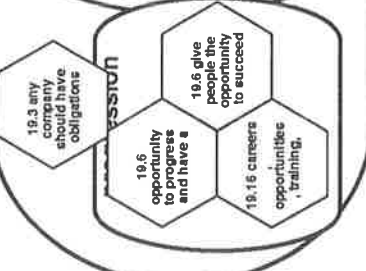


Appendix 7 - 6 : Obligations and Expectations

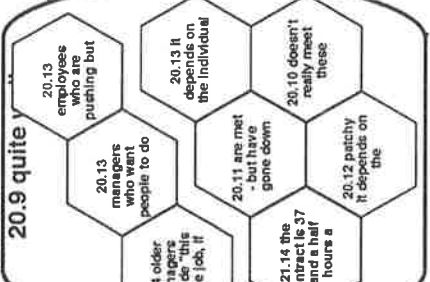
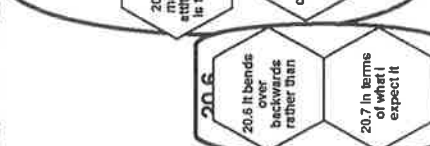
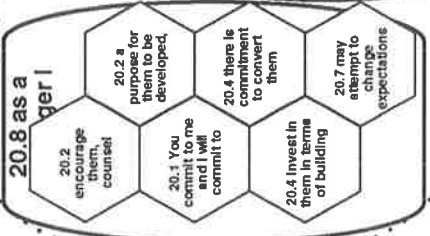
Employees expectations



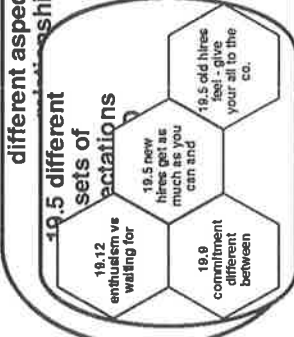
obligations - organisation



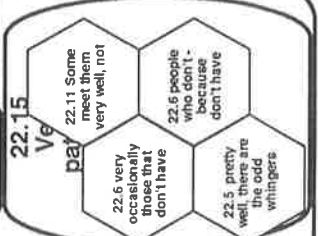
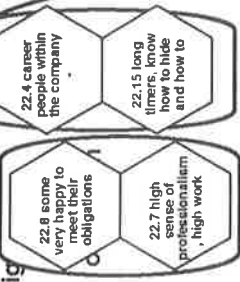
how well does it meet them?



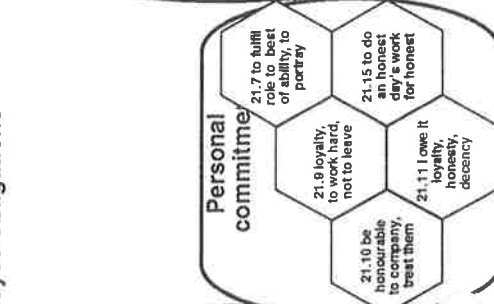
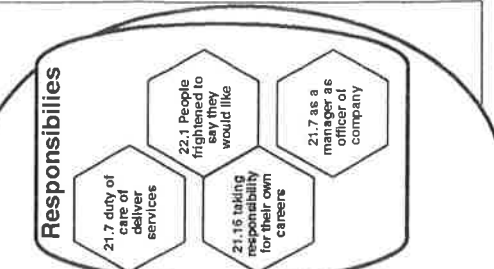
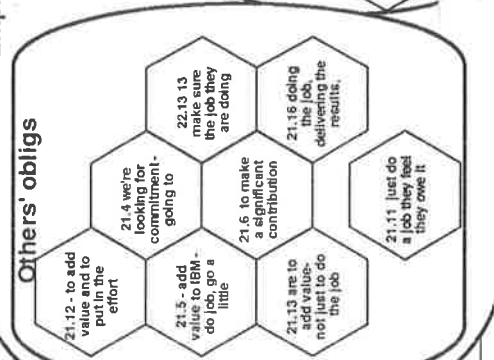
different aspects of the relationship



How well do employees meet their obligations

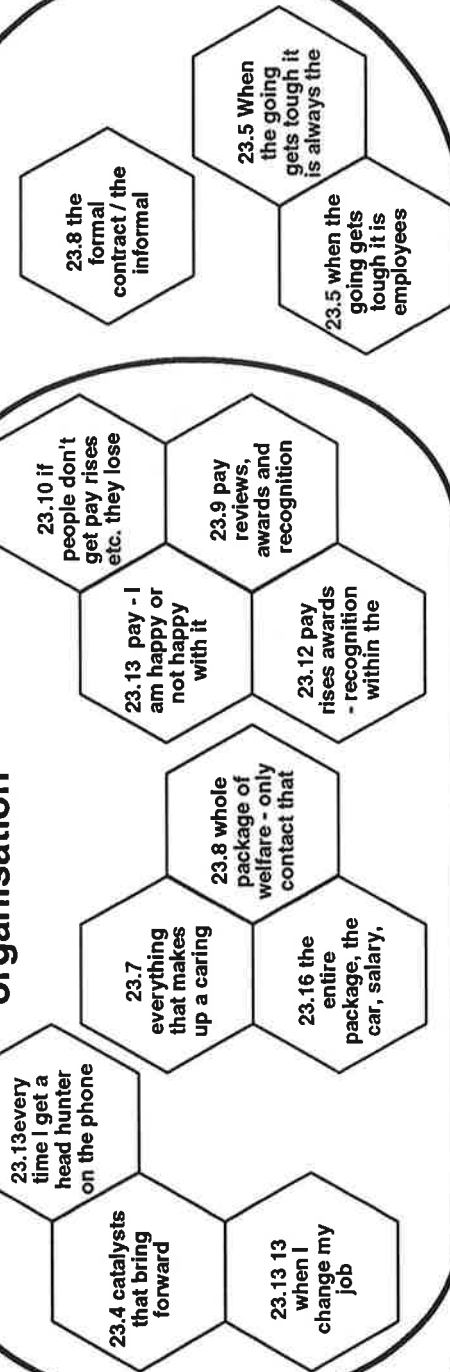


Employee Obligations

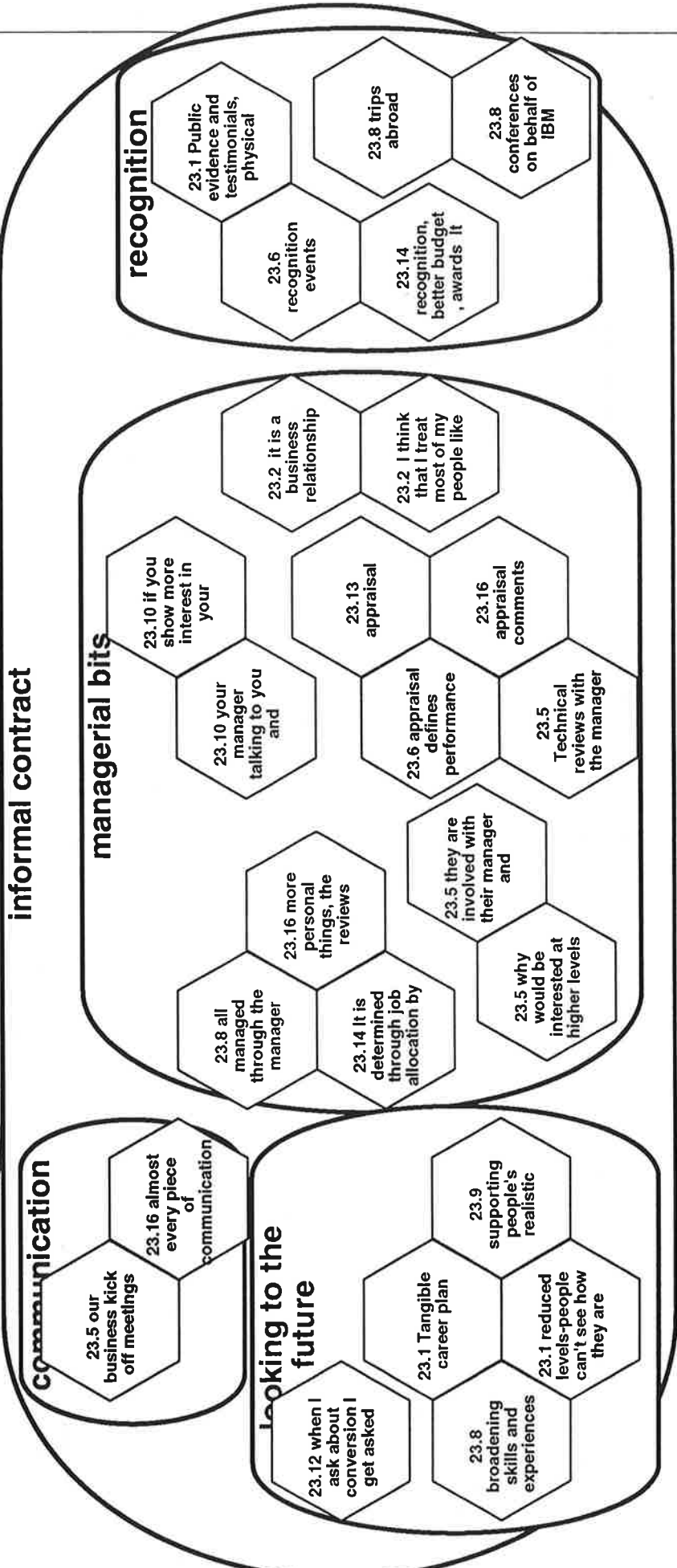


Appendix 7 - 7: EVENTS and SYMBOLS

contract with the organisation

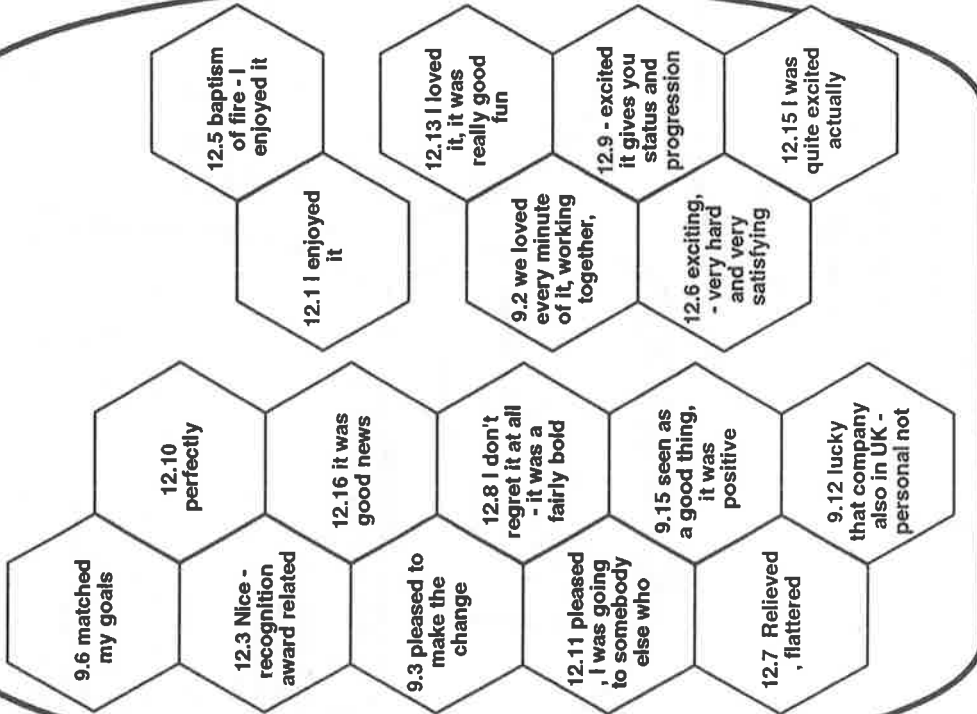


informal contract

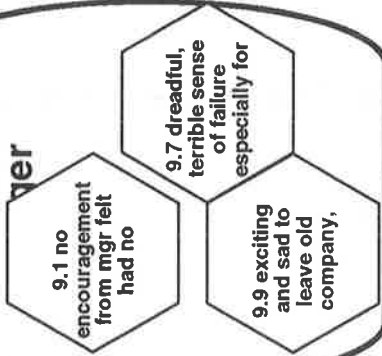


Appendix 7 - 8 : FEELINGS

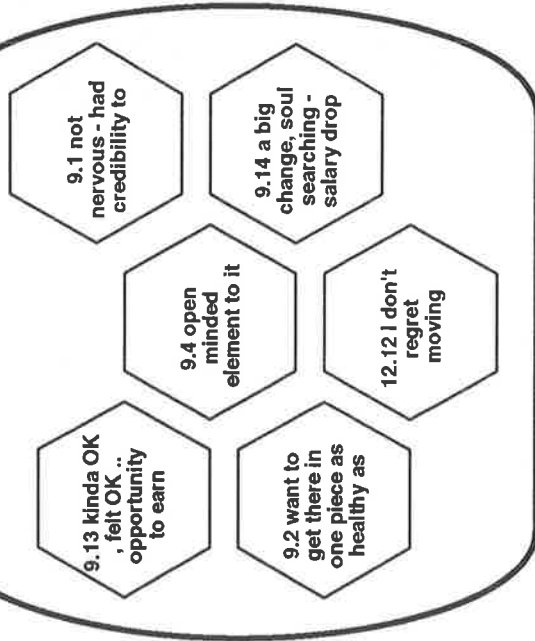
Happy



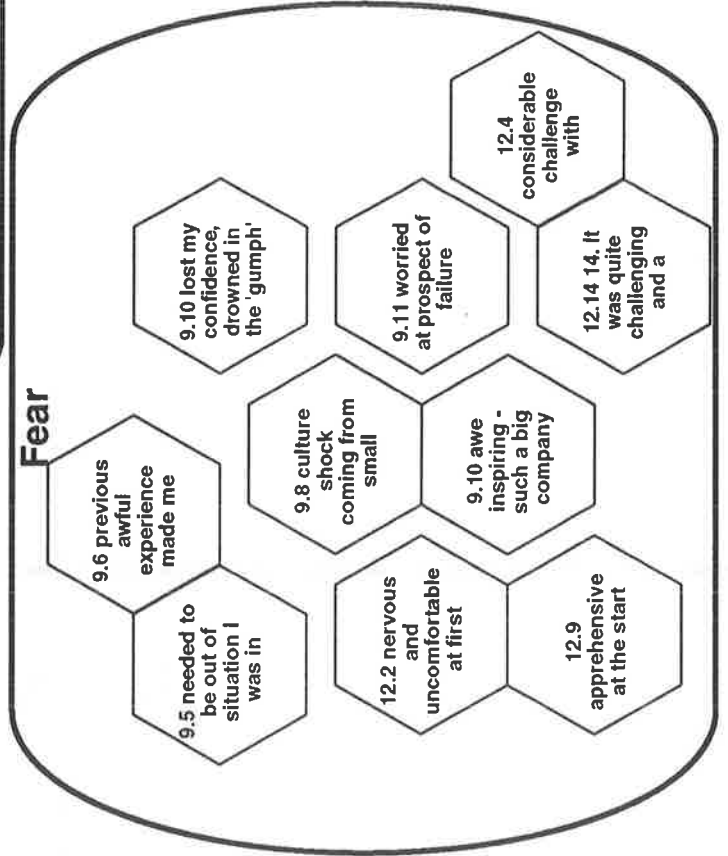
Sadness and anger



neutral



Fear



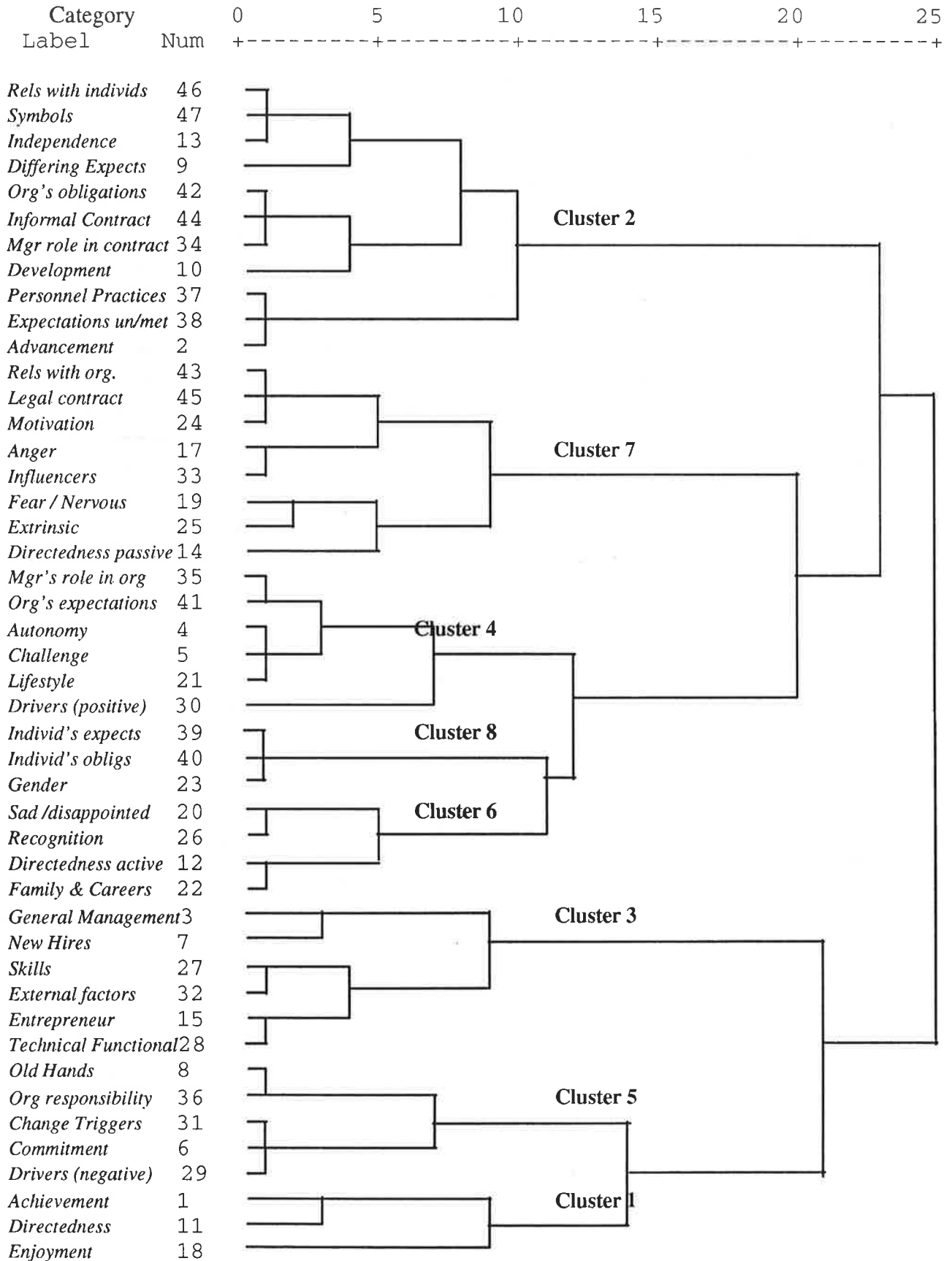
CATEGORY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
progression	✓							✓					✓	✓		
growing skills					✓	✓		✓								
one step difference				✓				✓	✓			✓				
self worth							✓			✓	✓	✓				✓
passive				✓	✓				✓						✓	
lifestyle						✓			✓					✓		
security / stability		✓									✓					
technical	✓				✓								✓			
major change	✓						✓					✓		✓		
going outside co.			✓		✓											
Relationship																
current relationship		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
old contract		✓				✓			✓		✓			✓		
changes		✓				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
organisation issues				✓	✓					✓			✓		✓	
management position			✓	✓									✓			
management role		✓		✓	✓										✓	
management individs								✓				✓				✓
management profs			✓	✓	✓											
Obligations and Expectations																
different aspects					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
or'g obligations			✓													
extrinsic exchange								✓			✓			✓		
day to day		✓	✓	✓					✓		✓					
progression						✓										✓
expectations - or'g				✓			✓		✓						✓	✓
how well met	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	?	x		
emp expectations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
employee obligations	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
how well met				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	
Events and Symbols																
management bits		✓			✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓		✓
recognition	✓					✓		✓						✓		
communication					✓											✓
looking to future	✓							✓	✓			✓				
formal contract					✓			✓								
contract organisation				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
Feelings																
happy	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
fear		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
sadness and anger	✓						✓		✓							
neutral	✓	✓		✓								✓	✓	✓		
additional bits																
other	✓											✓	✓			

Appendix 9

HIERARCHICAL CLUSTER ANALYSIS

Dendrogram using Complete Linkage

Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine



Confirmation by Correspondence Analysis

The purpose of this appendix is to provide the background for the correspondence analysis that provided the final method of triangulation in analysing my participants' data, based on the grid (chapter seven, Table 7.1: Constructs Contributed by Participants) of their contribution to each of the 46 constructs which were to form the rows and columns that are included here.

The principal proponent of the technique of Correspondence Analysis is Greenacre (1993, in Houldsworth), who describes it as a useful statistical technique for researchers who collect categorical data, enabling them to analyse cross tabular data in the form of numerical frequencies to result '*in an elegant but simple graphical display which permits more rapid interpretation and understanding of data*'. Its use is growing in Management Research, especially in marketing but still remains less widely used than other statistical methods.

It is more formally described in SPSS as a technique that allows an examination of the relationship between two nominal variables graphically using a multidimensional scatterplot by computing row and column scores and producing plots based on the scores with the objective of describing the relationship in as few dimensions as possible. Those categories that are similar to each other appear close to each other in the resulting plot.

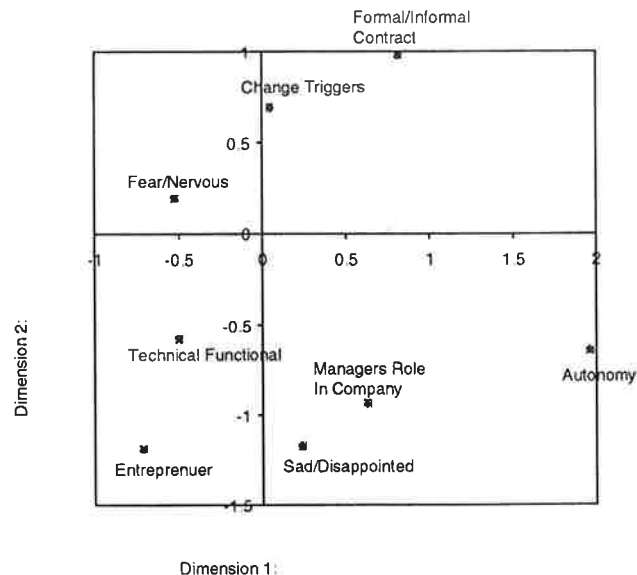
The output includes a frequency table which gives a value of inertia, a measure used to indicate the 'goodness of fit' or chi-square of the solution, for each dimension as well as the proportion and cumulative proportion of the total inertia explained by each dimension. It also includes the contribution of row points and column points to the inertia of each dimension. The inertia measure is split into components attributable to each dimension (the maximum number of dimensions is the smaller of (the number of rows minus 1) or (the number of columns minus 1)). The dimension with the largest amount of inertia is displayed on the horizontal axis, and the dimension with the second largest is displayed on the vertical axis of the joint plot (Houldsworth, 1995; Nuttall, 1998; SPSS documentation).

In this case the correspondence analysis was performed using Minitab version 11. In order to do this the scores on the initial matrix were converted into binary data with 1 replacing the * and 0 where it was blank. Steps taken:

Analysis of Contingency Table

Axis	Inertia	Proportion	Cumulative	Histogram
1	0.1199	0.1537	0.1537	*****
2	0.1010	0.1295	0.2831	*****
3	0.0940	0.1205	0.4036	*****
4	0.0844	0.1081	0.5117	*****
5	0.0668	0.0855	0.5972	*****
6	0.0568	0.0727	0.6700	*****
7	0.0511	0.0655	0.7355	*****
8	0.0456	0.0584	0.7939	*****
9	0.0348	0.0446	0.8385	*****
10	0.0299	0.0383	0.8768	*****
11	0.0267	0.0342	0.9110	*****
12	0.0209	0.0267	0.9377	*****
13	0.0198	0.0254	0.9631	****
14	0.0166	0.0212	0.9843	****
15	0.0123	0.0157	1.0000	***
Total	0.7805			

1. From the above contingency table the dependency was calculated by the square root of the total inertia, i.e. square root of $0.7805 = 0.88$ - Greenacre (in Nuttall, 1998) suggests a value exceeding 0.2 indicates dependency. This would indicate that the solution represents 88% of the variability of the original data.
2. The next step is to calculate the Critical Value from the contingency table of 16 columns and 46 rows by taking the maximum of $100/16$ (6.25%) or $100/46$ (2.17%) of the Inertia. The critical value, therefore is 6.25% (100/16).
3. The total number of 'significant' dimensions is therefore 7 as this is the number of dimensions with proportional values of greater than 6.25%
4. The proportion column which indicates contribution to Inertia suggests that nearly 30% (28.3%) of the total inertia is explained by the first two dimensions which will be the ones focused on.
5. In order to try and understand each dimension on the correspondence plot and be able to describe it, it was necessary to focus on the variables with the highest contribution to the dimension. The quality column, in tables below, provides the proportion of the column inertia represented by the two dimensions and indicates how well each point is represented within 2 dimensions. In this cases the constructs with values $> .4$ were selected, autonomy, entrepreneur, fear, sad, technical, change triggers, manager's role, informal contract, to establish the nature of the dimensions of the plot.



In naming the dimensions - dimension 1 - the horizontal (x) axis is key dimension and considered first. By examining those variables with highest quality scores and identifying those with either negative or positive co-ordinates it may be possible to find something in common. The steps to naming the dimensions are discussed in chapter seven.

Row Contributions

ID Name	Qual	Mass	Inert	----Component 1		----Component 2		----Component 3	
				Coord	Corr	Coord	Corr	Coord	Corr
1 Achievem	0.355	0.022	0.019	0.454	0.300	0.294	0.055	0.008	0.008
2 Advancem	0.125	0.039	0.061	-0.055	0.115	0.208	0.020	0.000	0.000
3 General	0.037	0.015	0.031	-0.239	0.022	0.080	0.005	0.000	0.000
4 Autonomy	0.637	0.005	0.042	1.961	0.575	0.444	0.062	0.000	0.000
5 Challeng	0.236	0.032	0.010	-0.179	0.129	0.208	0.207	0.000	0.000
6 Commitme	0.043	0.020	0.024	-0.103	0.011	0.076	0.021	0.000	0.000
7 New Hire	0.175	0.020	0.028	-0.438	0.174	0.085	0.001	0.000	0.000
8 Old Hand	0.388	0.037	0.005	-0.188	0.359	0.220	0.009	0.000	0.000
9 Differin	0.227	0.015	0.030	0.682	0.297	0.125	0.039	0.000	0.000
10 Developm	0.210	0.020	0.025	0.458	0.208	0.440	0.003	0.000	0.000
11 Directed	0.392	0.015	0.031	-0.358	0.078	0.214	0.214	0.000	0.000
12 Directed	0.215	0.027	0.017	-0.327	0.214	0.207	0.001	0.000	0.000
13 Directed	0.036	0.032	0.010	-0.031	0.004	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.000
14 Independ	0.377	0.034	0.006	-0.129	0.131	0.488	0.258	0.000	0.000
15 Entrepres	0.473	0.007	0.038	-0.714	0.126	0.182	0.248	0.000	0.000
16 Anger	0.116	0.002	0.030	0.211	0.005	0.002	0.111	0.000	0.000
17 Enjoyment	0.105	0.017	0.031	-0.244	0.042	0.057	0.062	0.000	0.000
18 Fear / N	0.405	0.022	0.022	-0.525	0.356	0.195	0.049	0.000	0.000
19 Sad / di	0.522	0.010	0.034	0.238	0.031	0.000	0.501	0.000	0.000
20 Lifestyl	0.384	0.012	0.030	0.231	0.028	0.070	0.350	0.000	0.000
21 Family a	0.100	0.017	0.026	0.284	0.068	0.195	0.032	0.000	0.000
22 Gender	0.250	0.007	0.040	1.093	0.283	0.000	0.037	0.000	0.000
23 Motivati	0.135	0.039	0.001	-0.055	0.115	0.000	0.020	0.000	0.000
24 Extrinsic	0.377	0.025	0.020	-0.474	0.358	0.040	0.019	0.000	0.000
25 Recognit	0.273	0.029	0.013	-0.162	0.076	0.000	0.197	0.000	0.000
26 Skills	0.193	0.032	0.011	-0.207	0.164	0.011	0.029	0.000	0.000
27 Technica	0.426	0.017	0.030	-0.501	0.184	0.000	0.242	0.000	0.000
28 Career D	0.138	0.029	0.013	-0.030	0.003	0.000	0.136	0.000	0.000
29 Career D	0.069	0.022	0.023	0.209	0.054	0.000	0.014	0.000	0.000
30 Change T	0.505	0.020	0.024	0.046	0.002	0.000	0.502	0.000	0.000
31 External	0.159	0.017	0.033	-0.042	0.001	0.000	0.158	0.000	0.000
32 Influen	0.099	0.025	0.020	-0.186	0.054	0.000	0.045	0.000	0.000
33 Manager'	0.135	0.039	0.001	-0.055	0.115	0.000	0.020	0.000	0.000
34 Manager'	0.652	0.012	0.030	0.631	0.205	0.041	0.447	0.000	0.000
35 company/	0.131	0.029	0.014	-0.095	0.023	0.000	0.107	0.000	0.000
36 Personne	0.317	0.010	0.034	0.903	0.305	0.000	0.069	0.000	0.000
37 Expectat	0.013	0.027	0.015	0.074	0.012	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000
38 Individu	0.067	0.022	0.021	0.041	0.002	0.000	0.064	0.000	0.000
39 Individu	0.073	0.029	0.011	0.147	0.072	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000
40 Organisa	0.004	0.029	0.012	0.033	0.004	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000
41 Organisa	0.077	0.034	0.006	0.071	0.035	0.000	0.042	0.000	0.000
42 Relation	0.213	0.027	0.016	-0.312	0.298	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.000
43 Informal	0.541	0.010	0.038	0.818	0.223	0.000	0.218	0.000	0.000
44 Legal/Fo	0.123	0.012	0.031	-0.266	0.035	0.000	0.088	0.000	0.000
45 Relation	0.322	0.010	0.034	0.907	0.301	0.000	0.021	0.000	0.000
46 Symbols	0.313	0.025	0.017	0.407	0.312	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000

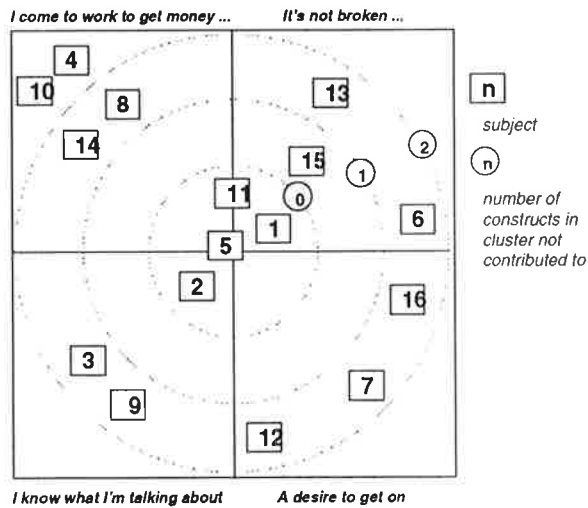
Column Contributions

ID Name	Qual	Mass	Inert	----Component 1		----Component 2		----Component 3	
				Coord	Corr	Coord	Corr	Coord	Corr
1 Column1	0.019	0.054	0.078	0.010	0.009	0.000	0.019	0.000	0.000
2 Column2	0.446	0.049	0.081	-0.556	0.356	0.000	0.110	0.000	0.000
3 Column3	0.217	0.052	0.059	-0.273	0.084	0.000	0.133	0.000	0.000
4 Column4	0.120	0.049	0.050	-0.279	0.093	0.000	0.022	0.000	0.000
5 Column5	0.206	0.096	0.066	0.073	0.010	0.000	0.196	0.000	0.000
6 Column6	0.236	0.064	0.074	0.486	0.260	0.000	0.076	0.000	0.000
7 Column7	0.610	0.066	0.087	0.688	0.464	0.000	0.146	0.000	0.000
8 Column8	0.220	0.066	0.051	-0.028	0.001	0.000	0.219	0.000	0.000
9 Column9	0.306	0.069	0.060	-0.158	0.037	0.000	0.269	0.000	0.000
10 Column10	0.138	0.064	0.042	-0.243	0.115	0.000	0.023	0.000	0.000
11 Column11	0.468	0.071	0.039	-0.330	0.253	0.000	0.215	0.000	0.000
12 Column12	0.032	0.064	0.048	-0.021	0.001	0.000	0.135	0.000	0.000
13 Column13	0.096	0.059	0.041	-0.066	0.008	0.000	0.088	0.000	0.000
14 Column14	0.159	0.057	0.060	-0.181	0.039	0.000	0.120	0.000	0.000
15 Column15	0.400	0.057	0.075	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.400	0.000	0.000
16 Column16	0.415	0.064	0.089	0.671	0.415	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000

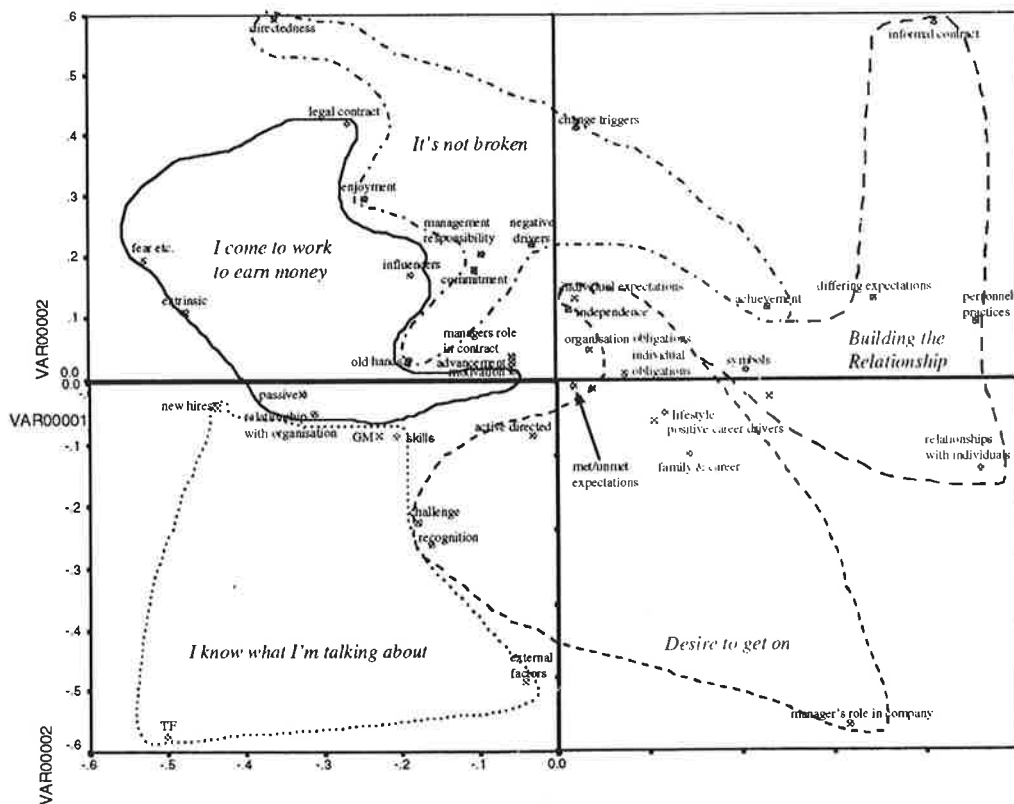
Part Two

This part of the appendix provides the key steps and illustrations of a similar process to reach understanding how the correspondence analysis also provides the confirmation of the plots of the contribution of the participants to the 'typology' that emerged from the analysis.

My initial diagram which shows my choice of the key participants to use to provide the views for my vignettes.

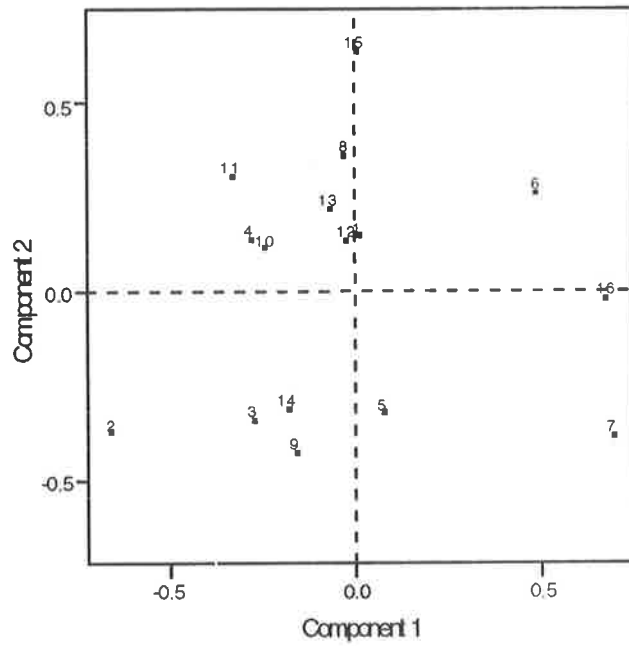


This is followed by the diagram of how the clusters already identified map onto the correspondence analysis plot of the same constructs developed from the same matrix.



Finally, the column plot shows how the participants map onto the correspondence analysis and if given a similar treatment to the diagram the patterns of the clusters are similar.

Column Plot



Column Plot

