

Institutionalising ethics in organisations: The role of mentorship

by

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DISSERTATION

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in

The logo of the University of Johannesburg, featuring a stylized bird with its wings spread, holding a book. Below the bird, the text "UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG" is written in a serif font.

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**Institutionalising ethics in
organisations: The role of mentoring**

I, Xenia Goosen (student number 9022773), hereby declare that the thesis (Institutionalising ethics in organisations: The role of mentoring) submitted for the Magister Philosophiae degree to the Rand Afrikaans University, apart from the recognised assistance, is my own work and has not formerly been submitted to another university for degree purposes.



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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Pieter van der Merwe, who is my mentor in life. It gives me great pleasure to make you proud of me.



ABSTRACT

The phenomenon exists that organisations do not do much to ensure the institutionalisation of business ethics in general, and more specifically, the ethical behaviour of their employees. The possibility that mentoring may act as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices was proposed as a possible solution to the aforementioned problem. This possibility was formulated in the form of a research question.

A literature study on mentoring and ethics was applied as theoretical foundation to this research. The aim of this part of the study was to answer the first six research sub-questions related to mentoring and ethics. A qualitative study followed to answer the remaining sub-questions, namely whether organisations do make use of mentoring as a tool to institutionalise ethical behaviour; to establish how organisations make use of mentoring to institutionalise ethical behaviour; and whether mentoring is a suitable vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices.

From this study, it became evident that organisations do implement mentoring to a certain extent, but do not formally use mentoring as a tool to convey ethical messages. This study revealed that mentors transfer ethical messages on an informal basis, although the organisation does not expect them to do so. Further, no previous research could be found on the role of mentoring in the institutionalisation of business ethics.

All participants of this study agreed that mentoring would be suitable as vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical principles. This process needs to be formalised and integrated. An integrated model of mentoring in the institutionalisation of business ethics was generated which highlights the compatibility of these two processes. This model could be a handy tool firstly for designers of mentoring programmes, secondly for organisations implementing mentoring programmes and finally for tertiary institutions that train managers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	(i)
List of figures	(vi)
List of tables	(vii)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. BUSINESS ETHICS AND ORGANISATIONS TODAY	3
2.1 General overview	3
2.2 Institutionalisation of ethics	6
3. MENTORING	8
4. RESEARCH QUESTION	9
5. METHODOLOGY	10
5.1 Introduction	10
5.2 Procedure	10
5.3 Measuring instruments	11



CHAPTER TWO: BUSINESS ETHICS

1.	INTRODUCTION	13
2.	DEFINING ETHICS	13
3.	BUSINESS ETHICS	16
3.1	Approaches to business ethics	16
3.2	Levels of inquiry to business ethics	17
3.3	Defining business ethics	18
3.4	Characteristics of an ethical organisation	21
3.5	Prominence of business ethics	22
3.6	Institutionalisation of business ethics	25
3.6.1	Institutionalisation of business ethics on a strategic level	30
3.6.2	Institutionalisation of business ethics on a systems level	35
3.6.3	Institutionalisation of business ethics on an operational level	38
3.6.4	Role players in ethics management	39

CHAPTER THREE: MENTORING

1.	INTRODUCTION	42
2.	DEFINING MENTORING	43
3.	THE NATURE OF MENTORING	47
3.1	Broad functions of mentoring	47
3.2	The mentoring relationship	48
3.2.1	Types of mentoring relationships	49
3.2.2	Formal vs. informal mentoring relationships	50
3.2.3	Stages of mentoring relationships	51
3.2.4	Qualities of successful mentoring relationships	52
3.2.5	Roles and responsibilities within the mentoring relationship	53

3.3	Mentoring programmes	55
3.3.1	Prerequisites of successful mentoring programmes	57
3.3.2	Formal vs. informal mentoring programmes	57
3.4	Value of mentoring	58
4	TRANSFER OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES	61

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH PROCESS	66
1. AIM OF THE RESEARCH	68
2 SPECIFIC SECONDARY QUESTIONS	68
3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	69
4 RESEARCH DESIGN	69
4.1 Research paradigms	70
4.1.1 Exploratory research	73
4.1.2 Descriptive research	74
4.2 Design and execution of research for this study	75
4.2.1 Context	75
4.2.2 Participants	76
4.2.3 Data collection and analysis	77
4.2.4 Quality control	88
5. ETHICAL RIGOUR	94
6 CONCLUSION	96



CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	INTRODUCTION	97
2.	IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES AND CATEGORIES	98
2.1	Mentoring	98
	Theme 1: Formal mentoring programme	99
	Theme 2: Mentoring relationship	102
	Theme 3: Benefits of mentoring	105
2.2	Ethics in mentoring	108
	Theme 1: Concept of ethics	109
	Theme 2: Code of ethics and organisational transfer	110
	Theme 3: Ethics training in the formal mentoring programme	113
	Theme 4: Ethics in the mentoring relationship	115
2.3	An integrated model and integrative summary of results	118
3.	IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS	121
3.1	Implications for organisations implementing mentoring programmes	121
3.2	Implications for designers of mentoring programmes	123
3.3	Implications for tertiary institutions involved in management training	123
4.	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	124
5.	REFLECTIVE ANALYSIS	124
6.	CLOSING THOUGHTS	125
	REFERENCES	127

List of figures

- Figure 2.1 Defining ethics
- Figure 2.2 Managing ethics in organisations
- Figure 3.1 Mentoring relationships
- Figure 4.1 The research process
- Figure 5.1 Context for organisational transfer of code of ethics
- Figure 5.2 An integrated model of business ethics and mentoring



List of tables

Table 3.1	Stages of mentoring relationships
Table 3.2	The mentoring process
Table 5.1	Aspects related to a formal mentoring programme
Table 5.2	Aspects related to mentoring relationships
Table 5.3	Aspects related to the benefits of mentoring
Table 5.4	Aspects related to ethics training in the formal mentoring programme
Table 5.5	Aspects related to the ethics in the mentoring relationship



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

In recent years the question of business ethics has been discussed on many forums such as the media, training programmes, boardrooms and in general, in South-Africa as well as internationally. It seems therefore that this topic has drawn particular attention and the question is how did this apparent state of affairs develop?

Early speculations on the cause for organisational interest in business ethics indicated that the initial interest in business ethics was driven by a desire in the USA to avoid business scandals (De George, 1987). Although this was the initial cause of the interest in business ethics, it is no longer an adequate explanation for the current surge in organisational interest in business ethics. A number of other factors have since become prominent. The realisation of the cost of immorality to organisations on the one hand, and of the competitive advantage that ethical performance affords organisations on the other, may be the driving force behind this ongoing academic and organisational concern with business ethics (Rosso uw & Van Vuuren, 2002).

The business environment is extremely competitive and this threat to competitive advantage has become so important that organisations can no longer afford not to attend to business ethics. In this regard Van Vuuren (2002) states, "the strategic focus of organisations should consist of systematically embedding ethics in the corporate purpose and values as well as in strategic planning". It is therefore apparent that business ethics has been elevated to a strategic level.

To address business ethics only on the strategic level and in the boardrooms is not sufficient. In recent years the importance of institutionalising business ethics

in organisations has come to the fore. A business consists of various sub-systems. To implement ethics into one sub-system, e.g. sales, whilst ignoring other sub-systems such as manufacturing, will limit the impact of the institutionalisation in the organisation as this could create tension at the interface between the systems. It is therefore evident that a 'holistic' systems approach should be followed. To achieve this, business ethics must be built into the strategic plans, processes, management, communication, and culture of organisations. Processes to institutionalise business ethics have been researched and established. These processes will be dealt with in more detail later in the dissertation.

According to Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2002), there is sufficient empirical evidence that a stage has now been reached where organisational interest in business ethics is moving beyond mere talk to overt organisational commitment to managing the ethical dimension of business ethics. In this new phase, the emphasis is no longer on the 'why' of business ethics, but rather on the 'how' of business ethics. Research by Van Vuuren (2002), investigates various vehicles for implementing the 'how' of business ethics. Examples of these are compensation, training, ethical codes, ethics committees and recruitment.

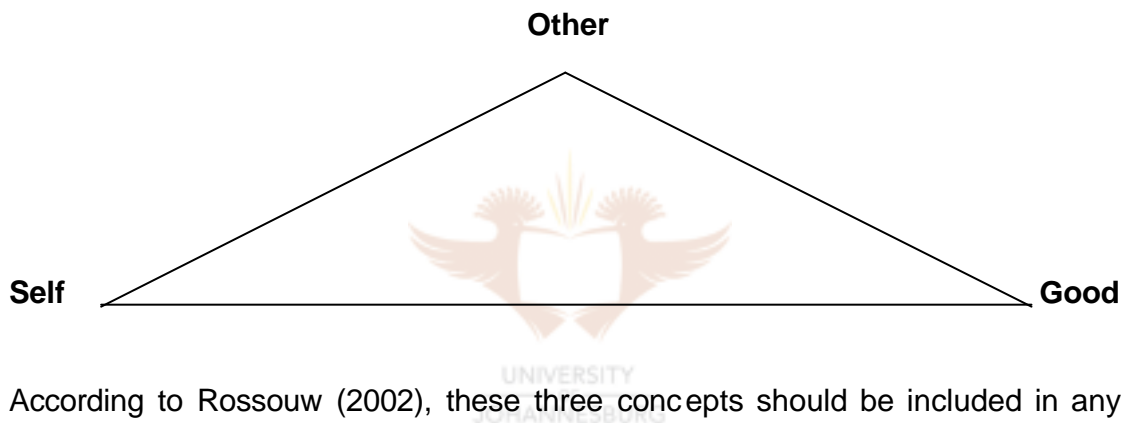
Mentoring is a powerful tool to convey information, expertise, beliefs and change of behaviour, either formally or informally, throughout all levels of the organisation. The question asked is whether mentoring can be used as an alternative and/or additional method to institutionalise (the 'how' of) business ethics in organisations.

2. Business ethics and organisations today

2.1 General overview

In order to investigate the impact of business ethics in organisations, it is necessary to move one-step back and first define the term ethics. “Ethics concerns itself with what is good or right in human interaction”, (Rossouw, 2002:3). In the attempt to define ethics, Rossouw makes use of the following simplified figure.

Figure 2.1: Defining ethics



According to Rossouw (2002), these three concepts should be included in any definition of ethics. He further states that if the concept 'good' is neglected, the unique nature of ethics is in jeopardy. Ethics is not only about the relationship between the 'self' and the 'other', but is concerned with the quality of the interaction between the 'self' and the 'other'.

Now that ethics has been defined, attention can be given to the term business ethics. An initial investigation into the term business ethics revealed a wide range of definitions that will be fully explored in Chapter 3. Rossouw (1994) defines business ethics as:

“the specific application of this general principle (what is good or right for human beings) to business activities. To act morally within the business environment means ensuring that the consequences of business actions are not detrimental to others. Alternatively, to put it more positively: ensuring that business activities contribute towards personal well-being, the well-being of others and the societies

who are influenced by these actions.” ***The above definition will be used as initial working definition for the study.***

An investigation into organisations’ annual reports clearly indicates that most companies have embarked on a road of establishing a value statement. In most cases one of the core values in these value statements is ethical behaviour, often supported by an ethical code of conduct. “There is ample evidence of the extent of unethical behaviour in business in Africa” (Gichure, 2000; Kpundeh, 1998; Rossouw, 1997). Fraud is a manifestation of unethical behaviour. For example, in 1999 Deloitte and Touché conducted a survey on fraud in 17 African countries. In every country, with the exception of Botswana, fraud was on the increase. The kinds of fraud that were identified included forging bank documents, tax evasion, false insurance claims, and electronic funds-transfer fraud. Other forms of unethical behaviour that are well documented included unfair dismissal of people with AIDS; race and gender discrimination; intimidation of employees to perform work they find morally repugnant; and neglect of the safety of employees in the pursuit of profit” (Rossouw, 2002).

One needs to look no further than at the recent past to find that big international corporations like Enron, WorldCom, Citygroup, J.P. Morgan, ICN Pharmaceuticals, AT&T to name but a few, have been involved in gross scandals relating to unethical behaviour. In a question addressed to Kirk Hanson, executive director of the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, he suggested that the two most important reasons for what happened to Enron, had been the lack of truthfulness by management and the culture of Enron (Enron-lessons).

If we assume that the above organisations did indeed have value statements in place, these examples illustrate that the mere existence of value statements and ethical codes of conduct, do not ensure corporate ethical behaviour. Ethical behaviour, like any other type of behaviour, does not manifest because of the mere existence of a set of rules. In the case of Enron and many other companies, rules may have been in place, but these were wilfully and perhaps even skilfully circumvented. The result is that investors as well as internal and external

stakeholders are losing trust in companies, and one of the main reasons may be due to the phenomenon that they are managed on unethical principles Fry (1998).

On the other hand, businesses have much to gain if they have a reputation of corporate governance based on ethical behaviour. It stands to reason that any organisation that has a reputation for corporate governance and ethics, would be able to (i) attract investors for whom good corporate governance is a major consideration, (ii) attract ethically discerning customers, and (iii) be a preferred employer for people that perceive themselves as having the capacity to thrive in an environment that fosters ethical behaviour (Van Vuuren 2002). Organisations with strong values-based ethics programs improve their reputation, gain access to capital, favourably influence their bottom line, positively affect their employees' commitment and enhance customer loyalty. Organisations who display ethical behaviour will also find that it has a positive impact on the nature and quality of jobs people perform, which can lead to better morale and performance.

Business ethics sets standards of conduct and identifies appropriate behaviour for the organisation based on values, beliefs, judgments and attitudes, concerning issues such as what is right and wrong, good or bad. This includes the way we interact with other people and how our actions affect these people. Rossouw (2002:4) contends that "When ethics is applied to business we consider the implications of economic activity on the interests of all who are part of such activity. The ethical impact of economic activity is studied in business ethics, but so too is the economic impact of ethicality".

2.2 Institutionalisation of ethics

From the previous section it is evident that the institutionalisation of business ethics poses a challenge that organisations cannot ignore. It has in fact become a business imperative, which is crucial for long-term organisational survival and success.

According to Van Vuuren (2002), “Organisations recognise that the institutionalisation of business ethics is no longer a nice-to-have, but a strategic imperative. Instead of debating the point that business and ethics cannot mix, ethically aware corporate leaders continuously and actively endeavour to find optimal ways of creating ethical organisational cultures”. Traditionally organisations made use of the *compliance approach* to institutionalise ethics into the organisation. This approach forces business ethics upon employees. A potential problem with this approach is that it forces itself on all stakeholders. The question thus is whether all stakeholders will internalise the same set of values. A value shift needs to take place.

According to Van Vuuren & Rossouw (2004), the modes of managing morality model explains the changes in mode of managing ethics within organisations. These modes indicate the strategy of an organisation to manage its ethics. According to Van Vuuren & Rossouw (2004), their model consists of five modes describing organisations' preferred choice of strategies for managing ethics. These authors are of the opinion that organisations can manage their ethics on a continuum from the immoral mode (least managed), reactive mode, compliance mode, integrity mode to the totally aligned organisation mode (most managed). These modes will be discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

In contrast with the immoral, reactive and compliance approach, the integrity and totally aligned organisational approaches focus on the internalisation of business ethics. The all-embracing integrity approach includes that ethics is extensively institutionalised and ethical values have to be made part of the operating consciousness of the organisation (Goodpaster, 1989). This approach proposes

that the way to institutionalise ethics in an organisation would be to integrate and align ethical thinking to all components of a corporate strategic planning process (Van Vuuren, 2002). An all-embracing approach should be regarded as ethical management in organisations, which creates possibilities to optimise and humanise various organisational elements. This in itself can increase the competitive power of the organisation.

Corporate ethics training is not only useful to foster a general awareness of ethics, but deemed an important system for the institutionalisation of ethics. On a deeper level ethics training serves to equip people with (i) an understanding of the corporate code of ethics, (ii) the ability to recognise ethical issues, (iii) a capacity for solving ethical problems, and (iv) ethical decision-making skills (Van Vuuren, 2002). This author further states that “Embracing ethics as good business is more than a mere commitment to be ethical; it requires the establishment of *corporate ethical capacity* in a concerted and structured way” (Van Vuuren, 2002). Ulrich and Lake (1990) describe this capacity as “the key dimension in the corporate quest of developing shared mindsets between internal and external stakeholders for the purpose of achieving corporate strategic objectives and properly institutionalising the concomitant strategic processes”. The building of a corporate ethical capacity is largely about managing the risk to an organisation’s reputation in a sustainable way (Moon & Bonny, 2002).

Based on the assumption that an organisation has clearly defined corporate values, a mission statement, and business objectives, these values and objectives of the organisation need to be conveyed to all employees to ensure its institutionalisation. It can be concluded from the above analysis that business ethics is not merely a 'nice to have', but has become an imperative for organisational survival. It is therefore clear that the institutionalisation of business ethics is a pre-requisite for success. The question to be asked is how the institutionalisation of business ethics can successfully be implemented. An attempt will be made to explore mentoring as one possible vehicle to the institutionalisation of business ethics.

3. Mentoring

Mentoring subordinates is one of the typical functions of an effective manager. Here the term mentoring is being used in a broader organisational context to describe particular human resource interventions.

It is therefore necessary to define mentoring. Mentoring or being a mentor refers to a relationship between an individual with experience (mentor) and an individual with less experience (protégé) manifested through advisement, sponsorship, or friendship (Levinson 1980). Shea (1998) defines mentoring as a significant, long-term, beneficial effect on the life or style of another person, generally as a result of personal one-on-one contact. A mentor is one who offers knowledge, insight, perspective, or wisdom that is especially useful to the other person.

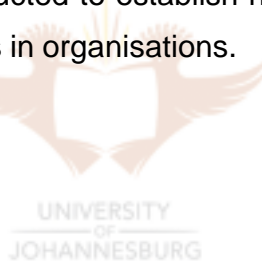
Miller (1997) and Townsel (1997) argue that three principles guide mentoring in process and outcome. Firstly, mentoring allows individuals to build reciprocal relationships. Secondly, mentoring relationships are important for individuals to engage in for purposes of completing tasks or achieving outcome goals. Mentors provide exceptional learning experiences for their protégés and highlight the key ideas and information that make events memorable and meaningful. They expand their protégés' awareness, insight, and perspective. Interaction between leaders and their sub-ordinates is important in fostering a relationship of mutual loyalty, admiration and respect Butler (2000). For an organisation to be successful, it needs committed employees. According to Gilbert & Ivancevich (1999), mentoring is positively associated with organisational commitment.

Thirdly, mentoring could be a tool to reinforce and build appropriate social values and norms. If this is true, mentoring could be a tool to build ethical values and norms. It is therefore possible that mentoring will provide situations that are ideal to convey the above elements of business ethics.

Through effective mentoring programs, leaders can create an atmosphere in which truth is an elemental ingredient in daily operations. Along with truth comes respect and credibility. An organisation that values truth builds cohesiveness and trust among its members as well as among those outside the organisation. Norms and values such as honesty, sharing and empathy can be modelled and reinforced by means of mentoring.

From this analysis of literature it is evident that mentoring creates learning experiences on a broad scale in the organisation. The learning experiences provide a tool through which social values and norms within an organisation can be built, and behaviour can be changed. On the other hand, literature seems to indicate that to bring business ethics to an acceptable standard in the business world of today, it should be institutionalised in all organisations. On this premises further investigation will be conducted to establish how mentoring can contribute to the institutionalisation of ethics in organisations.

4. Research question



In the initial investigation of mentoring, it was demonstrated that mentoring lends itself to behavioural change. It is therefore the purpose of this research to investigate **the extent to which mentoring can be utilised as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices.**

To address the research question meaningfully, attention needs to be given to a number of sub-research questions. These sub questions are:

1. What is business ethics?
2. Why is business ethics of importance?
3. How can business ethics be institutionalised?
4. What is mentoring?
5. What are the characteristics of a mentoring program?
6. Can ethical principles be transferred by means of mentoring?

7. Do organisations make use of mentoring as a tool to institutionalise ethical behaviour?
8. How do organisations make use of mentoring to institutionalise ethical behaviour?
9. Should mentoring be used as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices?

5. Methodology

5.1 Introduction

For the purpose of this study, given the research question and sub-questions, it was decided that more than one research design and method would be used because each method addresses different dimensions of the problem.

In solving the research problem, the researcher is of the opinion that a literature study and the qualitative method as approach can fully deliver on the promise to answer the question as to what extent mentoring can be utilised as a vehicle to institutionalise ethical behaviour. Using this research method can capture a complete, holistic and contextual portrayal and reveal the dimensions of the given phenomenon.

5.2 Procedure

A comprehensive literature study will be conducted to clarify and explain all concepts contained in the research question and sub-questions. Information regarding past research conducted on these topics will be of value in answering these crucial questions. The researcher intends to answer the following five sub-questions during the literature study:

- What is business ethics? (sub-question 1)
- Why is business ethics of importance? (sub-question 2)

- How can business ethics be institutionalised? (sub-question 3)
- What is mentoring? (sub-question 4)
- What are the characteristics of a mentoring program? (sub-question 5)

The main concepts to be investigated are business ethics and mentorship. For both concepts, the researcher intends to establish what these concepts are, why they are important and how they work. Thereafter an empirical study will be undertaken to answer the remaining sub-questions.

5.3 Measuring instruments

The intention is to answer the following research sub-questions during the empirical study:

- Can ethical principles be transferred by means of mentoring? (sub-question 6)
- Do organisations make use of mentoring as a tool to institutionalise ethical behaviour? (sub-question 7)
- How do organisations make use of mentoring to institutionalise ethical behaviour? (sub-question 8)
- Should mentoring be used as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices? (sub-question 9)

To answer the above questions, the researcher will make use of in-depth interviews to gather relevant and appropriate information.

In-depth interviews

Leedy (in De Vos, 1998:5) describes *qualitative* research methodologies as dealing with data that are principally verbal. According to Denzin and Lincoln, (in De Vos, 1998:240) *qualitative* research is defined as a multi-perspective approach to social interaction, aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that the subjects attach to it. According to Holton (1997), qualitative methods are particularly strong at attaining deep and detailed understandings about a specific group or sample but at the expense of generalisability.

In-depth interviews would be conducted with mentors and their protégés to establish whether mentoring was used as a vehicle to institutionalise ethical behaviour, how mentoring was used to institutionalise ethical behaviour and whether mentoring should be used as a means to institutionalise ethical practices.

As referred to in paragraph 1.6.2, the researcher will, in the following two chapters, endeavour to clarify and explain business ethics and mentoring - which are the main components of the research question - through a comprehensive literature study.

CHAPTER 2

BUSINESS ETHICS

1. Introduction

In order to investigate the extent to which mentoring can be utilised as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices (research question) a more in-depth study is necessary to answer the first sub-question: “What is business ethics?” In doing so, the researcher will attempt to formulate and motivate a working definition for the purpose of this study. Against the above background, further attention will be given to the second and third sub-questions of this study. With regard to the second sub-question: “Why is business ethics of importance?”, the researcher will attempt to address developments that lead to the current prominence of business ethics globally and more specifically in the South African context. In order to answer the third sub-question: “How can ethics be institutionalised?”, the researcher will attempt to analyse how institutionalisation can position business ethics in the organisation and then explore strategies to do so.

2. Defining ethics

In the search of finding a suitable definition for ethics, it became clear that some philosophers use the term ‘morality’ and ‘ethics’ interchangeably, but many philosophers do make a distinction between these two concepts (Pojman 1994:2). The first school of thought includes researchers such as Adelman (1991), Plug, Meyer and others (1991), Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988), and Brugger and Baker (1972) who perceives morality and ethics as two distinct concepts. For example, Adelman (1991:665) differentiates between the two concepts as follows: “Morality deals with principles of right and wrong conduct. Character traits such as honesty, integrity, etc. are moral qualities to be developed in accordance with principles of right conduct. Ethics is more

concerned with standards of conduct acceptable to a group, a profession or members of an organization”.

The second school of thought, Rossouw (1994), Reese (1980), Rich and de Vitas (1985), Hoffman and Frederick (1995), do not distinguish between the two concepts, but use the two expressions interchangeably, because etymologically, the Latin vocable 'moral' corresponds to the Greek word 'ethical' (Lacey 1976:138). As Baldwin (1960:346) states, “No distinction can be drawn between ‘ethical’ and ‘moral’ except that the latter term is somewhat more commonly used of the facts and judgments with which the science deals”.

The school of thought by philosophers Rossouw (1994), Reese (1980), Rich and de Vitas (1985), Hoffman and Frederick (1995), that do not draw a distinction between morality and ethics, but use the two expressions interchangeably, will be followed for the purpose of this study,

Gouws, Louw, Meyer and Plug (1979) firstly describe ethics as the opinions as to what is perceived to be correct and incorrect in a specific situation or for a specific group, and secondly, morality as the quality of behaviour that deals with the degree to which it is correct or incorrect according to the opinion of the specific group. In another attempt to define ethics, De George (1999:20) contends that in its most general sense ethics, is a systematic attempt to make sense of our individual and social moral experience, in such a way as to determine the rules that ought to govern human conduct, the values worth pursuing, and the character traits deserving development in life.

Rossouw (2000:8) emphasises that element of ethics that deals with the interaction between people, when he explains that ethics is concerned with studying what is good and right within human interaction. In Rossouw’s opinion ethics is therefore centred on three basic concepts, namely the good, the self and the other. Refer to this definition dealt with in Chapter 1.

The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought (1977:214) defines ethics as:

“The branch of philosophy that investigates morality and, in particular, the varieties of thinking by which human conduct is guided and may be appraised. Ethics is concerned with the rightness or wrongness of actions, the virtue or vice of the motives which prompt them, on the one hand, and with the goodness or badness of the consequences to which they give rise, on the other”.

According to Craig, in Carruth & Carruth (1991:170), the concept of ethics requires one to think about and reflect upon such issues as morals, values, various ways of life, to contemplate the reason for adopting certain values and to possess the ability to question certain traditions and even proffer suggestions for change. Zeigler (1992:4) aptly sums up this thought:

“Ethics is defined variously as a ‘pattern or way of life’; a listing of rules of conduct or moral code or an ‘inquiry about rules of conduct in a society or culture’. It can be explained further that ethics has a direct relationship with values, to ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ as applied to individual or collective acts and to ‘good’ and ‘bad’ applied to the effects of acts”.

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According to Wiley (1995:22), the concept of ethics refers to a system of conduct based on moral obligation that indicates how we should behave, our acceptance of responsibility and social justice. It also includes the commitment to do what is right Hoffman & Frederick (1995:83). The following characteristics are applicable to ethical people: they can be considered people who behave in accordance with sound moral principles grounded in principles such as fairness, justice and trust. These principles of conduct should govern one’s behaviour as an individual and at organisational levels Wiley (1995:22).

The authors of the BESA survey (2002) provide the following definition of ethics:

“Ethics is the practice of aligning human life, individually or collectively, or institutional structures and practices, according to basic standards of conduct”.

Human conduct, practices and institutions are judged good or bad, right or wrong, in the light of such standards of conduct. Standards of conduct take on the form of values/principles, obligations, rights, and consequences and meeting those standards emanate from good character or virtues.

For the purpose of this study, the definition of Rossouw (2002:3) “Ethics concerns itself with what is good or right in human interaction” will be used as working definition of ethics. The researcher is of the opinion that this simplified, but holistic definition provides an inclusive framework for this study.

Against this background, the question that presents itself is how ethics manifests itself within the business environment. The next section will therefore focus on business ethics.

3. Business ethics



3.1 Approaches to business ethics

Descriptive approach: According to Rossouw (2002), the objective of this approach is to provide accurate descriptions and explanations of the state of ethical affairs. The aim of these descriptions is to describe and explain the values and characteristics of ethical situations. Provision is made for explanations of the values upon which people base their judgments about certain aspects. In this approach, people refrain from making value judgments about the phenomena described, and therefore stick to mere description.

Normative approach: Rossouw (2002) states that this approach entails making prescriptions or judgements about ethical issues. A stand is taken about what is right and wrong, and this position is justified theoretically.

Meta-ethical approach: “Meta-ethics concerns itself with issues related to ethical judgements, without offering such ethical judgements themselves.” Rossouw (2002:34). This approach deals with problematic issues related to the making of moral judgements.

3.2 Levels of inquiry to business ethics

The levels of business ethics, relates to the multi-dimensional nature of business ethics. Barkhuysen and Rossouw (2000:230) state that “Business ethics studies have ethical dimensions of economic activity as it is being manifested of three different levels”. These three dimensions or levels of inquiry, are according to the authors, the following:

Micro-level: the ethics of businesspersons or members of the organisation, internal constituents. This level focuses on the problems with decision making by individuals in a business organisation. Shaw in Barkhuysen (1999) calls this the level on which individuals are moral agents and takes responsibility for their decisions or their ability to make decisions.

Meso-level: the ethics of business organisations, external constituents. This entails the ethics of the organisation in terms of the relationship it has with the government, the community and the environment.

Macro-level: On this level, there is a focus on the morality of the complete economic system. Becker in Barkhuysen (1999) mentions that business ethics on this level refers to the patterns of social, political and economic powers that works in on individuals and organisations.

3.3 Defining business ethics

The above approaches and levels of inquiry provide a contextual framework for defining business ethics. Lewis (1985) compares attempts to define business ethics as trying to nail 'jello to a wall'. In an attempt to find a synthesis of different definitions Lewis (1985) describes business ethics as “rules, standards, codes, or principles that provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and truthfulness in specific situations” (Velasquez, 1988:18) defines it as “a specialised study of moral right and wrong. It concentrates on how moral standards apply particularly to business policies, institutions and behaviour”.

Rossouw (1994) describes business ethics as the specific application of this general principle (what is good or right for human beings) to business activities. To act morally within the business environment means ensuring that the consequences of business actions are not detrimental to others. Alternatively, to put it more positively: ensuring that business activities contribute towards personal well-being, the well-being of others and the societies who are influenced by these actions. (p. 2)

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Nash (1990:5) describes business ethics as “the study of how personal moral norms apply to the activities and goals of commercial enterprise. It is not a separate moral standard, but the study of how the business context poses its own unique problems for the moral person who acts as an agent of this system”.

In an attempt to synthesize from various definitions, Lewis (1985:381) formulates the following definition: “Business ethics is rules, standards, codes, or principles which provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and truthfulness in specific situations”. Barkhuysen (1999) defines business ethics as “the study of ethical behaviour of organisations and their members within the work environment.” Hochstein, quoted by Emde (1998:5), states that ethical values precede behaviour, and it is safe to say that if no attention is given to ethical values it will be directly reflected in behaviour. In other words, it is clear that ethics should not stay an aspiration but should be put in action (institutionalised).

The definition used in the King II Report (from hereon referred to as IoD (2002) is that a company's ethics refer to the principles, norms and standards that it promotes for the guidance and conduct of its activities, internal relations and interactions with external stakeholders, in accordance with established values. Thus, ethical business conduct means that a company's stakeholders – most notably its staff – adhere to defined standards of behaviour in all their business decisions and actions.

Barkhuysen (1999), in her attempt to analyse definitions of business ethics, comes to the following conclusions: (i) Some definitions are limited in the sense that it doesn't make provision for the whole spectrum of the field; (ii) some definitions only focus on the internal activities of the organisation; (iii) some definitions are so abstract and wide that the 'business' identity of business ethics is lost. An example is the definition of Coetzee (1990:15) "managerial ethics is the normative frame in which the organisation and its people think and act".

The majority of definitions do not make provision for all the *types* of ethical inquiry, or sometimes referred to as approaches, (descriptive, normative and meta) as discussed in a previous section of this chapter it seems as if most definitions are descriptive or normative of nature. Very few definitions comprise of all three *levels* of ethical inquiry (micro, meso and macro) as discussed in a previous section of this chapter.

Barkhuysen (1999:39) defines business ethics in terms of the levels and types of ethical inquiry as follows. "Business ethics is the study of business on a micro ; meso; and macro level by way of three levels of ethical inquiry namely descriptive; normative/prescriptive; and meta-ethical".

Since the above definition is tailor-made for the study of business ethics as academic field, the researcher is concerned that this definition might be too academic for the purpose of this study. Van Vuuren (2001) who is of the opinion that it is necessary to put the definition of Barkhuysen (1999) in a more practical perspective supports this view. He suggests the following definition in this regard:

Business ethics is the study of the ethical behaviour of organisations and their members with relation to work.

This definition will therefore be used as a point of departure for this study, based on the following two assumptions.

For the purpose of this study, the focus is on the micro level of business ethics.

This implies that an investigation is made of ethics and ethical behaviour of individual members of organisations. Although the focus of the study will be on the micro level of business ethics, it should be stated that the meso- and macro levels are just as important. Mentoring is concerned with the internal stakeholders of an organisation. For the purpose of this study, the focus will therefore be on the micro level. An organisation is a system and cannot function in isolation. The importance of organisational ethics in terms of external constituents (meso level) as well as morality of the complete economic system (macro level), should be noted by all organisations

For the purpose of this study, the focus is on descriptive ethics.

This implies that for the sake of this specific study an investigation is made of ethics and ethical behaviour providing accurate descriptions and explanations of the states of ethical affairs. An attempt will be made to describe and explain values or characteristics of ethical situations.

With the scope of the definition for this study defined, the researcher will shift emphasis to the characteristics of an organisation that manage ethics effectively as well as why ethics is prominent in the world today.

3.4 Characteristics of an ethical organisation

In the previous sections, ethics and more specifically business ethics, were defined. The question now is how business ethics manifests itself in organisations. In order to address this question a description of an organisation that manages ethics will be used as a point of departure. This will form a basis to understand the context of how ethics can be institutionalised in organisations.

According to van Vuuren (2001), an ethical organisation is one that is managed in such a manner that the concepts of the good, the other and the self are in a harmonious relationship to each other, as to the process that organisations use to go about its economic activities. He further states that it might be impossible to define the ideal ethical situation, but that certain components should be present:

- A situation where there is no debate within the organisation whether business ethics is important, but where it is unconditionally accepted
- A situation where ethical awareness and behaviour automatically becomes an integral component of the organisation's long-term strategy
- A situation where ethics is institutionalised in all organisational activities. The existence of an ethical organisational culture and climate
- A situation where this culture and climate is favourable for making ethical decisions
- An organisational environment that rewards ethical behaviour in a natural way
- An environment where every member of the organisation performs as an agent of business ethics and the organisation's ethics office functions as a co-ordinator of ethics related information.

Van Vuuren (2001) adds more characteristics, namely an organisation should have a strong ethical value orientation; an ethical value orientation that is inextricably linked to the practice of good corporate governance, commitment to ethics and the endorsement of the CEO. An over-structured attempt should be made at continuously managing corporate ethics. According to Rossouw (2002), ethics is vital for cultivating dedication and creativity in people. Dedication means that you will be willing to work hard and to make personal sacrifices for the sake of the company. Creativity means that employees will go beyond what is expected of them and use their imagination for the benefit of the organisation.

Now that an overview was given about the profile of an organisation that manages ethics, the researcher will attempt to investigate why business ethics has become so prominent in world economics.

3.5 Prominence of business ethics

A series of well-publicised ethics scandals among major organisations, beginning with Enron, have affected the global business environment in the years 2000 to 2004. The result was new regulations, such as the second King Report on Corporate Governance (IoD 2002), which placed additional emphasis on conduct and organisational standards and practices. Events like these formed the backdrop of various surveys conducted on ethics. The 2003 National Business Ethics Survey (done in America), the KPMG ethics survey and the Deloitte ethics survey (done in South Africa), are examples of surveys conducted.

According to Rossouw (2002), if ethics is abandoned in the name of competition, the future of the game of business itself is endangered. Environments in which the basic interests of economic competitors are not protected is neither conducive to economic growth, nor to the legitimacy of the market economy. Business environments where unethical conduct is rampant scare off investors who fear for their property and investment. He further states that unethical

behaviour can result in penalties or the exclusion of certain businesses, and can even endanger the future of the business enterprise itself.

In many countries, a constant decline in proper corporate governance has led to the implementation of harsher, more prescriptive rules, such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act in the US and more recently Smith & Higgs in the UK. Shough (2003) comments that the implementation of harsher rules tends to be counterproductive, because it emphasises mere superficial and mechanical compliance with rules and regulations at the expense of inculcating true values and ethics, living according to them, and of a true belief in corporate governance. However, corporate governance is good for the business, because it protects and creates value for the company, its shareholders and stakeholders.

Unethical behaviour has a negative impact on funding of projects and increases expenses significantly while decreasing levels of service and lowering employee morale. In the process, the perception of the image, reputation and integrity of the organisation is severely undermined, and this in turn affects trust and confidence, causing untold damage to the organisation's credibility. The marketplace itself will lose faith in and will downgrade those organisations and individuals who fail to show a record of accomplishment of corporate integrity. This will become an important issue because it will eventually be reflected in the share price of organisations.

Unethical behaviour in American organisations forced the American government to take action. The Federal Sentencing Guidelines (FSG) was established in an attempt to minimise this type of behaviour. According to King II (2002), the Federal Sentencing Guidelines provide basic principles for developing an ethics and compliance programme for American companies. Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines (American), in the King Commission's Report (2002), it costs a company under prosecution far more in terms of fines and probation conditions, if unethical conduct leads to a lawsuit. However, the Federal Sentencing Guidelines also reward companies that have effective ethics and

compliance programmes in place, either by not prosecuting them at all, or at least by reducing their fine if they are found guilty.

Compliance standards and procedures need to be established, high level individuals must be assigned to oversee compliance, due care needs to be exercised in delegating discretionary authority, all employees need to be communicated with and trained regarding company values and compliance procedures. It is further stated that organisations should monitor, audit and provide safe reporting systems, enforce appropriate discipline with consistency and respond to offences and prevent recurrence.

Organisations take an ethical risk to foster and promote strong unethical behaviour. This problem was not isolated to American organisations, and therefore the South-African government developed the King II (IoD) report on corporate governance for South African organisations. King II (IoD, 2002) recommended that South Africa adopted, with modifications where necessary, the Federal Sentencing Guidelines. This recommendation is made in order to standardise penalties for misdemeanours, and set seven criteria (as discussed previously) for good internal corporate management. The idea being that if these guidelines are followed, company or individual director liability will be diminished. From the above it is clear that organisations need to take action, as unethical behaviour can definitely lead to extensive financial risk.

According to Rossouw (2002), given the social nature of business, ethics is essential for maintaining the intricate network of relationships within business. Ethics is a prerequisite for the reputation and sustained financial performance of a company. The case for a link between ethical performance and bottom-line performance seems watertight. It makes no sense to eliminate ethics from business in the name of the bottom line.

According to a survey on Corporate Governance done by Finance Week, 5 May 2003, Roy Shough of Deloitte & Touche mentions that codes of ethics provide guidance, a framework and direction on what constitutes best practice. Nevertheless, what will drive the true implementation of those practices are the hearts and minds of people of integrity. Shough continues by stating South Africa currently finds itself in a situation of “realising that structures and procedures achieve nothing if corporate morality and integrity are just words and if the values and ethics of corporate custodians are lacking.” Trends found in the KPMG ethics survey imply that some organisations pay lip service to ethics, since these results reveal little commitment to ethical practice. The very existence of a code of conduct does not imply that employees will know how to use it.

This implies that the institutionalisation of ethics, which will be discussed in the next section, becomes a prerequisite for sound business ethics in corporations.

3.6 Institutionalisation of business ethics

Currently business ethics is based on an over-dependence and reliance on rules and regulations which threaten to foster a compliance mentality; it remains mechanistic and superficial. On the contrary, we need to create a culture of value and integrity. This refers to the integrity approach to institutionalising business ethics. The creation of a culture of ethics does not exclude any formal compliance initiatives. As formal compliance structures increasingly become part of the local and international regulatory environment, South African companies cannot afford to fall behind the rest of the world. However, it is critical that organisations do not succumb to a minimalist or legalistic tick-box approach to corporate ethics management. Along with creating formal compliance structures, organisations need to nurture a culture that provides the ethical commitment necessary to turn formal compliance into effective compliance.

According to the BESA survey (2002), creating a corporate ethics culture requires governing and managing three stages. Firstly, the organisation needs to develop a code of ethics that is integrated through training and awareness. Secondly, ethics need to be institutionalised and progress monitored continuously. Thirdly, organisations need to report on ethics performance. According to the above survey, what remains to be done by South African companies, is putting into place the constituents of formal ethical compliance (for example developing a code of ethics). South African organisations need to turn formal ethical compliance into effective ethical compliance, and most importantly establish a culture of ethics in all organisations. Ethics is not merely a marketing tool, but needs to be made part of the everyday functioning of an organisation. It involves the interests of all stakeholders, internal and external, and it requires proactive ethics management.

For the purpose of this study, the focus of importance is specifically on the internal stakeholders of the organisation.

The conclusion to this report is that the importance of building a responsible culture of ethics lies in the growing evidence that medium to long-term sustainability is crucial to reputation management and business success, and, consequently, that good ethics is good business.

According to King II IoD (2002) all companies should aspire to create a culture of ethics by instituting a core set of ethical principles. In doing so, this will demonstrate a commitment to organisational integrity, *fairness, transparency, honesty, non-discrimination, accountability and responsibility, and respect for human dignity, human rights and social justice*. King (IoD) continues by stating that the formulation and adoption of principles and standards of ethical business conduct are meaningless without demonstrable adherence.

Management needs to provide sufficient leadership for ethics to play a meaningful role in organisations. Currently, they rely on a few basic practices to do the job. Instead, management should lead by example and integrate these practices with existing management processes. Only then will ethics be seen as a core strategic issue. According to the KPMG ethics survey, some of the major ethics related challenges that face organisations are the assigning of clear responsibilities for ethics at senior management level. Organisations further need to design and implement effective ethics policies and secure the measuring of ethical performance.

The King recommendations IoD (2002) are inspirational rather than regulatory, and propose three stages for institutionalising ethics - a process that may take five to seven years - in which organisations need to codify core values, institutionalise ethics management and secure reporting on ethics management. King II in IoD (2002) requires that companies institutionalise their internal ethics management initiatives in the form of programmes with definite constitutive components such as determining values, monitoring and reporting on ethics performance, and commissioning an external ethics audit. Such an ethics programme should be aimed at establishing an ethics culture, reflecting a balance between a commitment to core values and compliance, with the former informing and driving the latter.

The need for meaningful ethics practices is stressed in the King II IoD (2002) on Corporate Governance. A starting point for institutionalising business ethics is for organisations to compile policy statements and codes of conduct and ethics, as core elements of company culture. The result should be for ethics to be integrated into the everyday activities of all parties concerned. The report's emphasis has shifted from merely requiring a code to clearly communicating how organisational integrity is achieved. While compliance with a code is important, it is but one element of a much bigger process. A corporate ethics programme merely begins with a commitment from the top and the development of a code of ethics

The BESA survey (2002) concluded that the development of a code of ethics may be formalistic, the completed code may not be integrated in corporate culture, and the code may fail to contribute to the development of a good organisational ethics culture. It is found that consistent communication on the importance of ethical values in a company is as important as putting a code of ethics in place. A values-driven culture cannot exist without ongoing commitment to those values by all stakeholders. A sound organisational ethics culture is, in part, premised on an integrated ethics management programme, and extends from values determination and code development to formal and informal ethics education and training (role modelling, training, and open discussion of ethics in the workplace), monitoring, reporting, enforcement, and performance or outcomes evaluation.

Structural measures, which can be introduced as part of an ethics programme to support embedded ethical business practices, could be regular and formal identification of ethical risk areas, the development and strengthening of monitoring and compliance policies, procedures and systems. Organisations have to establish easily accessible safe reporting channels. Furthermore, aligning the company's disciplinary code with its code of ethical practice to reinforce zero-tolerance for unethical behaviour is vital. Integrity assessment as part of selection and promotion procedures need to be implemented and new appointees have to undergo an induction process. Training on ethical principles, standards and decision-making must be available at all levels of the organisation. Monitoring of compliance with ethical principles and standards needs to be undertaken on a regular basis. The organisation needs to report to stakeholders on compliance. The organisation must adhere to independent verification of conformance to establish principles and standards of ethical behaviour IoD (2002).

In addressing the institutionalisation of ethics internal to the organisation, IoD (2002) recommends that companies commission an independent verification of its ethics and compliance programme. Such external ethics audits can be performed by organisations such as non-governmental organisations, auditing firms, or by academia.

IoD (2002:106) concludes that:

“While prescriptive measures are necessary, at least to define desirable and undesirable forms of behaviour, the challenge for companies in South Africa is to take the moral initiative. By its very nature, corporate governance has an ethical dimension that can be viewed as the moral obligation for directors to take care of the interest of investors and other stakeholders. The moral objectives of the company, exemplified by the board collectively and the directors individually, needs to be made visible to both internal and external stakeholders and seen to be integral with other corporate objectives.”

From the above it is clear that governing the moral performance of a company challenges directors and managers to assume responsibilities that are often new and untested. They must face up to this challenge, however. Failure to do so might discourage investment and will almost certainly damage the company's integrity and the reputation of its board, directors, managers, employees and other internal and external stakeholders closely associated with it.

Many South African organisations have developed and implemented the necessary structures required for compliance with King's recommendations. What is still largely lacking is the disclosure of the key qualitative aspects of these governance processes and how their effectiveness is managed. This relates to specifically addressing the more 'sensitive issues' such as the implementation of a code of ethics.

In this section a preview was given to the 'what' and 'why' of institutionalising business ethics in organisations. In the following sub-sections attention will be given to the 'how' thereof. This includes the levels (strategic, systems and

operational), as well as the role-players involved in various stages of ethics management.

3.6.1 Institutionalisation of business ethics on a strategic level

Although the King report made certain recommendations to institutionalise ethics into organisations, possible strategies need to be investigated. In the previous section, the conclusion was that the institutionalisation of business ethics should be an all-embracing process that could be based on an integrated integrity-based management system. It must be noted that not all values are ethical values. It is therefore appropriate to investigate the fundamentals of an integrity-based management system.

For the purpose of this study, only ethical values will be investigated.

The fundamental economic purpose of a business enterprise is to create wealth for its owners. Unfortunately, as has been the case with other management paradigms such as total quality management and reengineering, many organisations are finding that applying the tools of value-based analysis and planning is not sufficient in itself to increase shareholder value. These tools focus on financial management and the actions of the top management team, whereas the creating of a values' driven culture, is the result of the actions of individuals and groups throughout the organisation.

A comprehensive integrity-based management system must engage, motivate, and reward those people throughout the organisation who act out the ethical principles of that organisation. In essence it therefore involves transforming behaviour in a way that encourages employees to think and act like owners. This approach must impact on all levels of the organisation, although it normally starts with initiatives at top management. The leadership of the organisation must be committed to the creation of an ethical organisation and then continuously communicate this commitment to the rest of the organisation.

An organisation in almost all its phases is a reflection of competing value choices. There is no simple solution and it is thus important that managers understand complex problems in terms of value choices. Ideal choices result in fulfilment for all stakeholders (Anderson, 1997). Value choices have a specific, well-understood place in the framework for making ethical decisions (Hosmer, 1994). Ethical principles provide the foundation for all other moral reasoning and behaviour, and value choices are built on ethical principles (Mitchell & O'Neal, 1994). To translate principles to practice when problems are complex, decision-makers rely on value judgements of goals or purpose. Value choices are subjective interpretations of ethical principles.

Value choices define the area of freedom for managerial action and subsequent organisation performance. Ethical principles are constants and serve as building blocks for behaviour. Value choices influence what people do and how they will do it (McCoy, 1985). The idea of what is right, and what people do, usually merge with one another. Empowering employees, for example, increases individual motivation and eventually profit, an important organisational goal, while preserving individual dignity, an important principle. Thus, management choices define the organisation and the performance achieved (Nohria & Ghoshal, 1994).

An integral part of an integrity-based management system is to transform behaviour through commitment by the leadership of the organisation. The question to be asked is what practical approaches can be used to realise the transformation of ethical behaviour, within the realm of integrity-based management. In this regard, it is postulated that mentoring can possibly be such a practical instrument and thus warrants further investigation. Van Vuuren (2002) states that a strategy for the institutionalisation of ethics in an organisation may consist of four steps, namely (i) analysis or diagnosis to determine the current state of corporate ethics and the stage of ethical development, (ii) design of a comprehensive strategy of intervention to construct the way forward, (iii) implementation of strategy and resultant programmes, and (iv) feedback and

corrective measures. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will address steps two and three.

Once an organisation has committed itself to become an ethical organisation, and it has given itself enough time in which to achieve this, it can proceed to design a multi-level strategy to entrench corporate ethics. Van Vuuren (2002) proposes that this multi-level ethics strategy should focus on three levels, namely strategic, systems and operational. It should be borne in mind that these foci are not mutually exclusive.

For ethics to be extensively institutionalised, ethical values have to be made part of the operating consciousness of the organisation (Goodpaster, 1989). Ideally, this would result in an ethical organisational culture. To create an organisation with a broad and shared ethical direction requires a complex, long-term effort from all stakeholders. The change required needs to be characterised by a multi-dimensional intervention of multi-level proportions, which will result in the repositioning of the organisation. To transform the culture in organisations that have strong and established cultures may not be easy, as Woodall (1996) cautions. Ethical culture change therefore has to be of a deep, but gradual nature. Change of this type can only be conceptualised and driven at a strategic level in the organisation.

It is a well-known fact that organisational strategies also address non-economic goals. Pastin in Rowe, Mason, Dickel, Mann & Mockler, (1994) suggests an inextricable link between ethical thinking and strategic thinking. An ethical focus during strategic planning renders more depth and a broader perspective to leaders' decisions and actions (Kahn, 1990). Harrington (1991) identifies alignment of ethical thinking with strategic thinking as a prerequisite for ethics to become an organisation's competitive edge.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will make use of the definition of strategising as defined by Manning (1988:80) as "... the process of thinking through what today's business is and what tomorrow's business should be, and then getting there". It is proposed that the way to institutionalise ethics in an organisation would be to integrate and align ethical thinking to all components of a corporate strategic planning process. In a broad sense, this process consists of four stages, namely environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and evaluation De Bruyn & Kruger (1998); Rowe et al. (1994); Wheelen & Hunger (1995).

Van Vuuren (2002) proposes the following strategic process: The incorporation of ethics is particularly crucial in the strategy formulation phase, during which the corporate values, vision, mission, goals, strategies and policies are generated. *Values* are sustained principles of behaviour, or prescriptive beliefs that specific behaviours are preferred to other behaviours. Values stated individually, or as they are contained in the collective corporate value declaration, dictate strategy. Ethics can therefore be integral to all corporate values. Although the word 'ethics' might not be used explicitly, terms such as 'integrity' or 'respect' are used as value descriptors. The connotation of these descriptors with ethics is clear-cut.

The key to intentional behaviour is an *organisation's vision* as "the way you imagine your company to be sometime in the future" (Manning, 1988:134). Ethics is not usually an obvious dimension of an organisation's vision statement, but plays a cardinal role in that it determines the way the vision is achieved and the future ethical quality of organisational behaviour.

An organisation's *mission* is more specific than a vision, and "defines the company's business and describes what it will do to succeed in that business" (Manning, 1988:134). In this statement, the intent is not only to determine what should be done (vision statement) but is also a projection or manifestation of (ethical) values that determines the *how of* doing things (ethically).

Organisational *goals* are concrete results that an organisation aims at achieving. According to Ladd (1970:496), a description of the ethical dimension of goals is as follows: "The logical functioning of the goal ... is to supply the value premises to be used in making decisions, justifying and evaluating them. Decisions ... must take as their ethical premises the objectives that have been set for the organisation". De Leon in Caudron (1997) points out that certain goals are non-negotiable, especially when referring to the ethical component of an organisation's goals.

The choice and formulation of specific organisational *strategies* are determined by the existing ethical norms of the organisation, and in particular those of top management. Cavanagh, Moberg & Velasquez (1981) and Rowe, et al. (1994) recommend that strategies be evaluated not only for economic feasibility, but also in terms of pre-determined ethics criteria. Rowe, et al. (1994) identify three criteria: the rights of stakeholders, justice and ethical means and ends. A product of strategy formulation is policy-making. The code of ethics of an organisation is a typical example of such a policy in that it formalises and sets the boundaries for the behaviours required for compliance to the ethical norms and values of that organisation. It contains standards or guidelines for the interaction between members of an organisation and between the members and stakeholders Rossouw (1997). Once the ethical code has been drafted, a programme has to be formulated with regard to the institutionalisation of ethics. According to Van Vuuren (2002), this ethics programme describes and determines all formalised ethics interventions and systems that need to be designed and implemented to firstly achieve the organisation's ethical goals, and secondly to ensure that the institutionalisation of ethics occurs in a planned, comprehensive and structured manner.

Strategy formulation is followed by *strategy implementation*. During this stage, corporate ethics management structures and systems are designed. *Strategy evaluation* takes place on a regular basis thereafter with a view of assessing the extent to which (i) ethics goals have been achieved, and (ii) the ethics needs and expectations of stakeholders have been satisfied.

According to Van Vuuren (2002), the essence of the strategic focus of ethics institutionalisation was the creation of a context for managing corporate ethics. During implementation of the corporate ethics strategy specific ethics management systems are designed and implemented, with a view to manage the ethical context that was created. Hence a *systems focus* is adopted, the aim of which is to ensure that an ethical environment is created. Particular systems that can be utilised to mould this ethical environment are designed for purposes of assessment, communication, staffing, performance management and reward, training, and the co-ordination and management of ethics.

According to Van Vuuren (2001), management interventions can be viewed from two perspectives, namely from a strategic and systems level. Corporate strategy should also include non-economical goals. This is explicitly found in business ethics literature (Andrews, 1989a; Harrington, 1991; Kohls et al., 1989). Once an organisation has decided on a strategy for managing ethics, it has to implement this strategy. The challenge is to translate this ethics strategy into meaningful ethics management systems.

3.6.2 Institutionalisation of business ethics on a systems level

In the previous section, attention was given to ethics management on the strategic level. It is evident in the sections that highlight the prominence of business ethics that the process should not stop there. As stated in Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004:231), “designing and implementing such systems (ethics management systems) are crucial to ensuring that the vision and strategy for ethics are made real throughout the organisation”.

Systems should be in place to provide for the introduction of ethics into various aspects of the organisation. Some of these systems, as mentioned by Van Vuuren (2004) are communication, recruitment, selection, orientation, performance management, training, disciplinary procedures, and then finally systems for monitoring and evaluating ethical performance. Short descriptions of each of these systems will follow.

Communication: Ethical organisation status is achieved over time only if an organisation effectively communicates its ethics expectations to all stakeholders. Throughout this study, the importance of a code of ethics is emphasised, but also that the code should be understood and applied by every employee of that organisation. This is achieved through effective (two-way) communication. As Van Vuuren (2004) states, “communication about ethics forms the backbone of implementing an ethics strategy.” Van Vuuren further identifies specific interventions that can be utilised to ensure effective communication on ethics. These interventions include ethics awareness programmes, ethics newsletters and ethics help-lines, just to mention a view.

Recruitment: Organisations need to attract potential employees with integrity if they wish to build or maintain an ethics culture. Van Vuuren (2004) states that “when devising recruitment strategies the organisation has to put out the word in no uncertain terms that it wishes to attract people that can align their ethical orientations with those espoused by the organisation”. This approach will then lead to awareness of ethics from the outset, attract talent and build the organisation’s reputation.

Selection: Today organisations do not have an option other than to be ethically discerning employers. Many organisations have now included integrity as a criterion for the selection of new employees. This is also true in the promotion of current employees where ethical accountability is one of the requirements.

Integrity may be integrated in a number of the steps of the selection process. Detail hereof can be dealt with in other relevant research (Van Vuuren, 2004).

Orientation of new employees: Inadequate orientation leads to high labour turnover in the first few months of employment. This may be a powerful intervention to create ethical awareness amongst new employees. Employees entering the organisation are open to adopting the new organisation's culture. If the organisation emphasises the importance of ethics from day one, the new employee will be made aware of the organisation's expectations regarding ethical behaviour. In the orientation process employees receive information about the code of ethics, and then more specifically, how to apply these guidelines. Here the role of managers and supervisors become extremely important. They play a major role in the new employees' compliance with organisational ethics (Rossouw & Van Vuuren, 2004).

Performance management. It is a fact that decisions made in jobs in organisations have ethical consequences. Ethics is the collective responsibility of all employees, but also the responsibility of each individual employee. Employers should therefore hold their employees accountable for the ethical decisions they make. This means that employees should be rewarded for ethical behaviour.

Training: According to Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004), "the key focus of organisational ethics training interventions is the training of employees to understand, interpret and apply the code of ethics".

Disciplinary procedures: Organisations can expect that there might be instances where not all employees comply with ethical behaviour. Organisations need to deter unethical behaviour and deal with transgressors that do not comply. The organisation's disciplinary structures should be applied in this regard. Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004).

Monitoring and evaluation: Ethical performance has to be constantly monitored to be effective, (Rossouw & Van Vuuren, 2004). Feedback of ethical performance serves two purposes; on the one hand it provides valuable information for future interventions regarding ethics management, and on the other, it provides information needed to report on the ethical performance of organisations (Rossouw & Van Vuuren, 2004).

An ethics management system has now been formulated on the strategic level and appropriate systems have been designed to implement the strategy. It is now necessary to investigate how ethical principles must be applied into the daily activities of each employee of the organisation.

3.6.3 Institutionalisation of business ethics on an operational level

Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004:242), explains that the “key here is to ensure that ethical behaviour manifests itself in all jobs and interpersonal interactions.” Bennis quoted in Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004), asserts that “it is the job of every manager in the organisation to set the climate for ethical behaviour based on mutual respect.” In an environment where interpersonal relations are built on mutual respect people will be more open to talk about ethics. Managers should be role models to other employees regarding ethical thought, decision-making and the actions they take.

According to Rossouw (2000b:45) managers have a sufficient understanding of the processes and people that they have to manage. They are thus in a position to make a difference to organisational behaviour both of the individual and collective level. This can be achieved through interventions where they apply their knowledge and utilise techniques and processes as well as material and symbolic resources to achieve the desired change in organisational behaviour. Moral behaviour in business is significantly influenced by the way in which

managers use their managerial ability to influence moral behaviour in the organisational setting”.

The researcher has now investigated how business ethics should be institutionalised on the strategic, systems and operational levels. People on different levels need to be involved throughout this ethics management process. In this next section, the role players in the ethics management process will be investigated.

3.6.4 Role players in ethics management

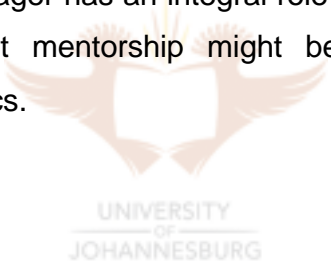
In figure 2.2, adapted from Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004:250), the nature of the relationship between the role players and the levels of ethics management interventions on the strategic, systems and operational levels are depicted. In the explanation of this diagram, Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004) recognises that this is a rather rigid structure of the different roles on each respective level of ethics management. There might be deviations to this structure depending on the size of the organisation, resources and existing ethical orientation. For example in a small sized organisation, the CEO can fulfil more than one of these roles.

There is not a single correct strategy or process for the institutionalisation of business ethics, but valuable guidelines exist in literature, as depicted in this section. *For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the operational level of ethics management interventions where the line manager plays an integral role.*

Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004:249) argues that “the role of the line manager is to make ethical values and behaviour, as defined by the code of ethics, real for all employees.” Line managers need to be continuously committed to ethical behaviour. This commitment, according to Van Vuuren (2004), goes beyond themselves, but also concerns the ethical behaviour of the employees reporting to them. To ensure that line managers buy into the imperatives of ethical behaviour, they need to be made part of the process of setting the ethical

standards of an organisation. Only then, will these ethical standards be promoted and enforced.

“Line managers’ ethics responsibilities commence with persuading their subordinates to behave ethically by explaining the value of ethical behaviour (the business case for ethics) and the risk and costs associated with unethical behaviour” (Rossouw & Van Vuuren, 2004). Managers should accomplish the above by using arguments based on good business principles, rather than to “pontificate” on ethics. It is the responsibility of managers to give their subordinates advice on preferred ethical behaviour. According to Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004), “managers have to incorporate ethical behaviour in key performance areas for purposes of performance appraisal, management and improvement”. Lastly, managers have the responsibility to encourage and stimulate ethics talk. Ethics must be made part of the everyday functioning of all employees and the line manager has an integral role to play in this regard. It is at this level (operational) that mentorship might be utilised as a vehicle to institutionalise business ethics.



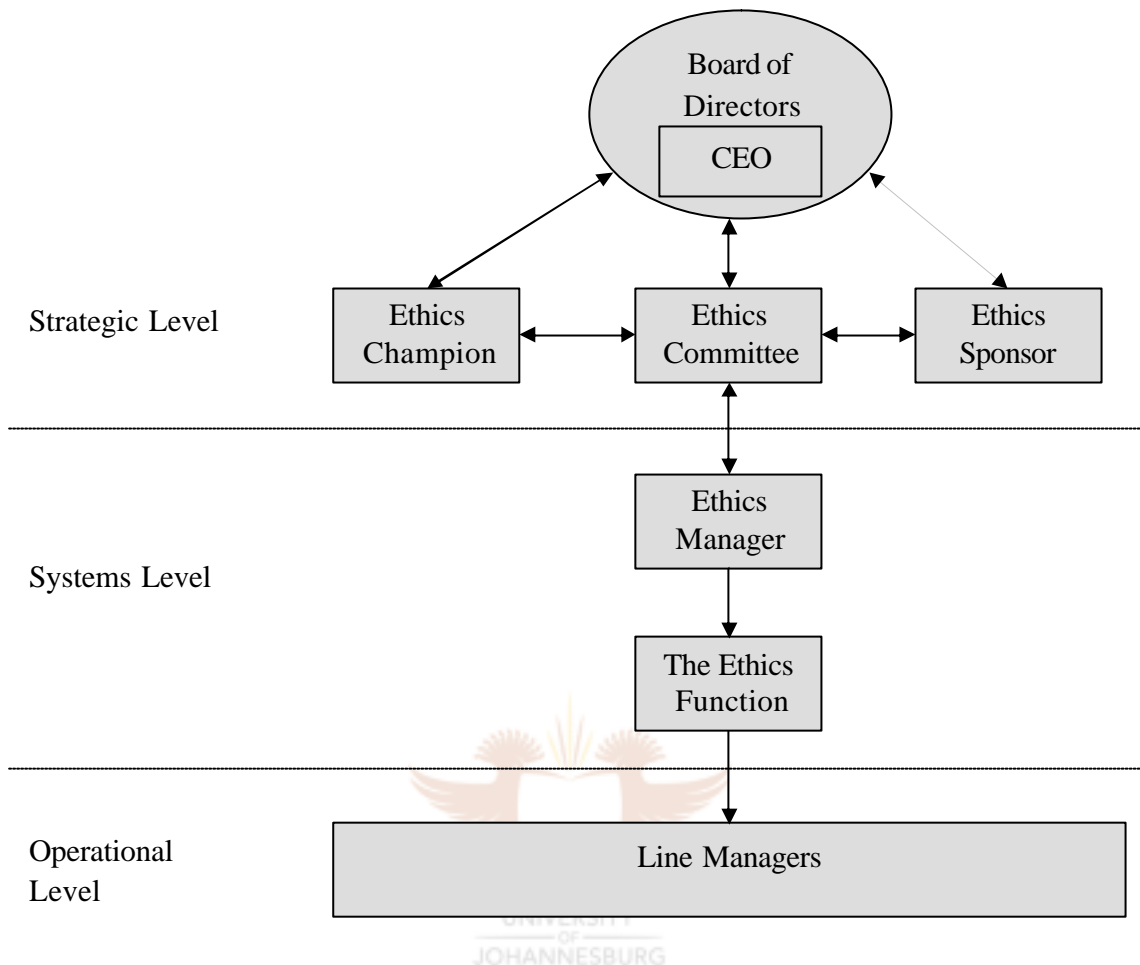


Figure 2.2: Managing ethics in organisations – The role players

Adapted from Rossouw & Van Vuuren (2004)

The institutionalisation must be seen as a gradual process, not a once-off action, tailor-made for a specific organisation. Although this process is not a quick fix solution to an organisation's problems, enough evidence has been provided as proof that the institutionalisation of business ethics can be extremely fruitful for any organisation.

In this section, attention was given to the framework for the institutionalisation of ethics in organisations. In the next chapter, the focus is narrowed to mentoring as a possible practical implementation instrument thereof.

CHAPTER 3

MENTORING

1. Introduction

The focus of this study as per the research question (paragraph 4, page 9), is “the extent to which mentorship can be utilised as a vehicle to institutionalise organisational ethical practices.” In the previous chapter, ethics was analysed and in this chapter the researcher will focus on mentoring, and more specifically the sub-questions (see paragraph 4, page 9): (1) What is mentoring? (2) What are the characteristics of a mentoring programme? and (3) Can ethical principles be transferred by means of mentoring?

The business world has been speeding in a new direction that tends to disregard the human focus. Technology, electronic communication and information transfer, globalisation and virtual organisations, just to mention a few, set a new trend in the business world. As Thomson (1999) indicates, the information age has isolated individuals and moved business from a relationship-based, to a technology-based entity. Certainly, business can survive, even thrive, in such an environment but can the individual survive?

Due to the increased speed, scope, and depth of change, people are confronted with a multiplicity of new demands on their mental ability and judgment, psychological stability, and emotional resilience on a daily basis. Rapid responses to the marketplace will be possible only in those organisations with continual advances in knowledge within their cultures. To achieve this, organisations and members alike must radically shift the way they think and act, and emphasis must be placed on learning. To cope with these demands, managers are faced with the difficult challenge of establishing and sustaining meaningful relationships in the workplace. In this regard mentoring can add

value, as it is a set of behaviours and skills that managers can use directly with their employees.

Mentoring means that efforts are made to challenge and develop staff to think and do for themselves and grow in their capabilities. The goal of mentoring is thus the growth and development of the protégé beyond intellectual and skills areas. While this goal may be less practical in some short-term mentoring programmes, the benefits of mentoring (which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter) are fully recognised (Beck, 1989; Edlind & Haensley, 1985; Runions & Smyth, 1985).

The word 'mentor' originated from Homer's *The Odyssey*. The protagonist, Odysseus had a close friend named Mentor who cared for his son for ten years while Odysseus travelled. Mentor acted in the role of parent, teacher, friend, guide, and protector to Odysseus's son (Jeruchim, 1992). The origin of the modern use of the term mentoring comes from the work of 18th century French writer Fenelon, who was an educator.

In the next section, the meaning of mentoring will be further explored.

2. Defining mentoring

Mentoring is a relationship between people in which skills, knowledge and attitudes are transferred from the trusted advisor to a protégé. Mentoring incorporates the notion that senior members of the organisation will provide wisdom and guidance to junior members. Mentoring is defined by the New Zealand Mentoring Centre (2002) as a formally structured, non-reporting relationship used to enhance professional practice, personal knowledge and organisational development. According to Kuo (2000), mentoring takes place in many ways. Sometimes it occurs as a direct one-on-one relationship of involvement, and other times it takes the form of a philosophy or methodology instilled in an organisation. Kuo further states that growing an organisation

requires the philosophical approach to mentoring, but that this must be combined with practical 'things to do' in order for the idea to take hold. Instilling a mentoring mindset within an organisation takes both time and perseverance.

Mentoring is thought to facilitate professional development by promoting the capacity to cope with difficulties and develop new competencies at the personal, interpersonal, and institutional levels. Having a mentor has been identified as a positive factor in career choice (York, Henley & Gamble, 1988) and in retention, promotion, and advancement (Blackwell, 1989; Ezell & Odewahn, 1980; Kram, 1985; Marioleas & Carrillo, 1991 and Zunz, 1991).

According to Bard & Moore (2000) several other definitions of mentoring are available. They argue that mentoring is about achieving personal growth and development. A further definition is that mentoring is a confidential, one-to-one relationship in which an individual uses a more experienced, usually more senior person as a sounding board and for guidance. Lastly, they state that mentoring is a protected, non-judgemental relationship, which facilitates a wide range of learning, experimentation and development. According to their definition mentoring facilitates professional development by promoting the capacity to cope with difficulties and develop new competencies at the personal, interpersonal, and institutional levels (Bard & Moore, 2000).

The above definitions indicate that the mentoring relationship is the foundation of mentoring. To understand this interactive relationship between a mentor and his/her protégé, one needs to investigate the meaning of the terms mentor and protégé.

A **mentor**, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is a trusted 'advisor'. A mentor is a person with expertise in a variety of areas of interest, who is willing to share his or her wisdom. Young (2003). Bell, in Harshman and Rudin (2000), describes mentors as leaders who engage in deliberate actions aimed at promoting protégés' learning. Many people use the terms 'advisor' and 'mentor'

interchangeably. However, a mentor is more than an advisor. A mentor guides a protégé towards growth and development, he/she becomes a trusted ally and guides the protégé through his/her career. According to Bell in Hinrichs (2001), a mentor is someone who helps someone else learn something the learner would otherwise have learned less well, more slowly or not at all. A protégé is someone that seeks guidance in developing knowledge, self-awareness and competence in early intervention Young (2003).

A **protégé**, as defined by Wickman & Sjodin (1997:2), “is the mentor’s student, generally a younger person interested in learning all that the mentor has to offer”. The protégé is someone the mentor regards highly enough to consider worthy of his or her time.

Faure (2003) defines mentoring as “a supportive learning relationship between a caring individual who shares knowledge, experience and wisdom with another individual who is ready and willing to benefit from this exchange, to enrich their professional journey”. This definition includes all the relevant actions linked to mentoring, and will *for the purpose of this study be used as a working definition*.

Now that mentoring is defined, it is necessary to define the term ‘coaching which’ is closely related, and sometimes used interchangeably, but not a synonym. According to Hudson (1999:47) **coaching** refers to a set of skills that are practiced in a professional manner and accompanied by a future-oriented point of view”. According to literature it seems as if coaches choose specific areas of expertise (for example, executive development, financial planning, team performance, entrepreneurship and community development) in which they want to coach. The definition of coaching provided by Skiffington (2002:2) is that “coaching is a conversation, a dialogue, whereby a coach and coachee interact in a dynamic exchange to achieve goals, enhance performance and move the coachee forward to greater success”. Parsloe (1999) defines coaching as a process that enables learning and development to occur and therefore, performance to improve.

Now that the definitions of mentoring and coaching have been dealt with, the relationship between mentoring and coaching needs to be clarified. It is important to emphasise that in this study the focus will be on mentoring and not coaching, although many refer to these concepts interchangeably. Skiffington (2002) differentiates between mentoring and coaching by stating that while there are obvious distinctions between mentoring and coaching, they share much in common, including some of the competencies necessary for success in both disciplines. Perhaps the simplest way to define the connection between the two roles is to view coaching as a style of relationship that can be employed in mentoring.

Skiffington (2002), indicates that these two processes share many similarities. Some of these similarities include that both can function as a career guide to review career goals and identify values, vision and career strength; both mentor and coach are role models; both require the ability to generate trust, to support commitment and to generate new actions using listening and speaking skills. While Skiffington (2002) addresses the similarities, the differences should also be noted in an attempt to draw a distinction between these concepts. The main differences are that mentoring invents a future, based on the expertise and wisdom of another, whereas coaching is about inventing a future from the individual's own possibilities. Mentors usually have experience at senior management level, and have a broad knowledge of organisational structure, policies, power and culture. An important difference is that mentors convey and instil the standards, norms and values of the organisation. Coaching is more about exploring and developing the individual's own values, vision and standards. Jensen (2003), states that coaches are appointed with a key focus area in mind, namely performance, whereas mentors concentrate their focus on the individual.

The above indicates that coaching is primarily about performance and the development of specific skills, whereas mentoring is broadly based and intuitive, focusing on developing capability and often includes longer-term help in career

self-management. The researcher is of the opinion that the main difference between mentoring and coaching lies in the fact that coaching focuses on achieving specific objectives in a preferred time period, whereas mentoring follows an open and evolving (dynamic) agenda and deals with a range of issues.

Therefore, the term mentoring will be used in this study, as mentoring encompasses coaching.

Although the working definition of mentorship provides a basis for understanding mentoring, it is necessary to investigate the nature of mentoring, for establishing its role in the transfer of organisational ethical principles.

3. The nature of mentoring

In the previous section, mentoring was defined and the related concepts clarified. To understand the full extent of the nature of mentoring the functions; mentoring relationship, mentoring programmes as well as the value of mentoring, will be further investigated.

3.1. Broad functions of mentoring

Mentoring has become an effective method for businesses to help employees with orientation, career advancement, problem-solving, coaching and support. In addition, mentors can assist employees to deal with the challenges associated with successful, productive, meaningful work life.

Kram in Torrington (1998), identifies two broad functions of mentoring: firstly career functions, which are those aspects of the relationship that primarily enhance career advancement; and secondly psychosocial functions, which are

those aspects of the relationship that primarily enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity and effectiveness in the managerial role.

3.2. The mentoring relationship

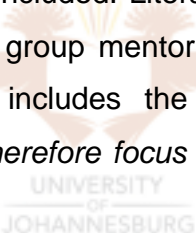
Mentoring relationships have proven to be key to a number of desirable outcomes in organisational life. For example, mentored individuals report more satisfaction (Fagenson, 1989), greater career mobility and opportunity (Scandura, 1992; Stumpf & London, 1981), and a higher promotion rate than those who were not mentored (Dreher & Cox, 1996). It is evident from literature that the mentoring relationship is built over time and not a once-off occurrence. Mentoring is not an all-or-nothing relationship, nor is it static in nature. Some or all of the roles may be provided and they can change, since the purpose of the relationship is to enable the protégé to acquire new knowledge, skills and standards of competence. Reiser et al. (1989) report that the most successful mentoring relationships are structured and organised. It is believed that mentoring relationships will be positively associated with performance, citizenship behaviours and individual intent. Mentoring involves a partnership where the point is to share and transfer knowledge, expertise and skills. It must be an intervention with the aim of building capacity to meet future leadership challenges and demands.

Certain attributes are common to all mentoring relationships, namely that mentoring is an intensified personal relationship in which (i) both mentor and protégé share enthusiasm for a particular domain or endeavour; (ii) the mentor's expertise and protégé's zest and thirst for the expertise combine to foster outstandingly creative accomplishments by the protégé; and (iii) the mentor's wisdom and experience shape the guidance and counsel given to a protégé for whom the mentor has particularly high expectations, which become uniquely well-defined as the protégé develops, not necessarily as a match or replication of the mentor. New Zealand Mentoring Centre (2002). Expertise in a specific

context does not qualify a person to be a mentor. Mentoring is a skill, which in itself needs to be developed.

3.2.1. Types of mentoring relationships

One-on-one mentoring is the traditional form of mentoring in which a senior level mentor assists a junior level protégé. Organisations that intend implementing mentorship programmes need to take certain aspects into consideration before implementation. These aspects includes the matching process-formation of mentor/protégé partnerships, the establishment of clear objectives, expectations and time lines, which are realistic for and understood by both parties. A agreement needs to be developed between the mentor and his protégé, key skill development areas need to be identified and an ongoing evaluation process that serves both parties needs to be included. Literature does address various other types of mentoring, for example group mentoring and multiple mentors, which serves different functions, but includes the same aspects as one-on-one mentoring. *The researcher will therefore focus on one-on-one mentoring for the purpose of this study.*

The logo of the University of Johannesburg is centered on the page. It features a stylized sunburst or flower-like emblem above the text "UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG".

3.2.2. Formal vs. informal mentoring relationships

Mentoring relationships can be described in terms of formality and length of intervention as indicated in figure 3.1 below.

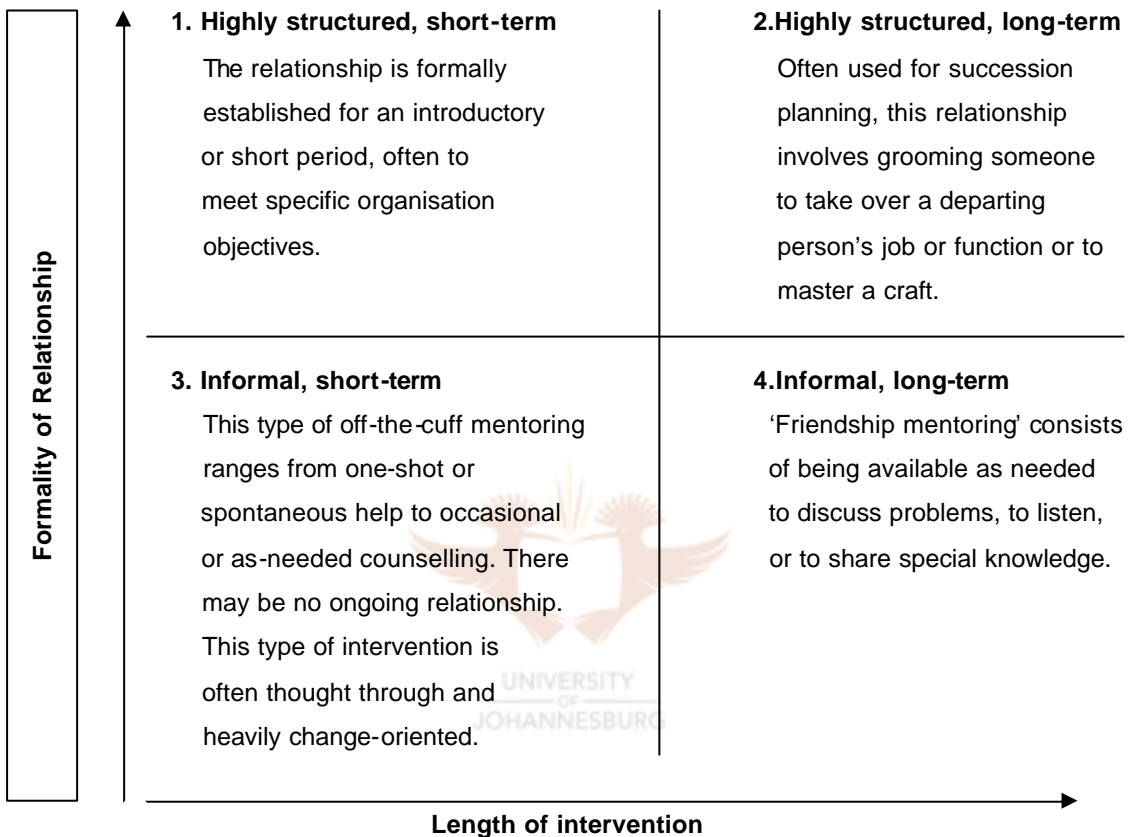


Figure 3.1: Mentoring relationships

(adopted from Shea 1998)

Mentoring relationships vary in terms of formality as well as length of intervention. According to Shea (1998) the two determining factors for these relationships are (i) the formality of the relationship, and (ii) the length of the intervention. The first quadrant of this indicates a formal relationship that continuous for a short period of time often addressing a specific objective. The second quadrant indicates a formal relationship that is highly structured and continuous over a longer period of time. The third quadrant reflects an informal spontaneous intervention over a short period of time. This may be a once-off occurrence. The fourth quadrant addresses an informal relationship that continuous over a period of time. Shea

(1998) also refers to this type of a mentoring relationship as 'friendship mentoring'.

3.2.3. Stages of mentoring relationships

Mentoring relationships typically go through various stages, though the sequence and pace may vary. Leisey (1993) provides the stages of a typical mentoring relationship in the table below. According to Leisey a mentoring relationship progress through four main stages. In the first stage, namely the exploration stage, the mentor and protégé establish whether there is a possible compatibility between them. In this regard, Leisey recommends certain actions to be taken. Secondly, the negotiation stage, gives the mentor and protégé the opportunity to set ground rules, establish goals for mentoring as well as clarifying expectations. The third stage is called the affirmation stage. This stage entails the duration of the mentoring relationship. The last stage better known as the termination stage is of crucial importance to the mentor as well as the protégé. Proper preparation needs to be done in this regard, to minimise disappointment especially for the protégé. Many mentoring relationships continue beyond this stage, but the roles may vary well then change (Leisey, 1993).

Table 3.1: Stages of mentoring relationships (Leisey, 1993).

Stage	Actions
Exploration	Assessment Finding out about each other
	Is there a match? Comfort level, personal/professional interests, personality, etc.
Negotiation	What do you and I want from this? What is important to you? Me?
	Establishing expectations, what are the 'givens' and negotiable... roles?
	Good feeling and comfort with relationship begins
Affirmation	Investment in the relationship begins
	Risk taking; willing to be taught as well as teach
	Continue to define and redefine relationship
	Having a reciprocal relationship
	Upholding responsibilities of the relationship
Termination	Done, hopefully by mutual consent
	One's commitment to program is over
(option:)	Some participants continue the relationship
	Protégé may now feel able to assume a mentor role with another individual

3.2.4. Qualities of successful mentoring relationships

The following qualities need to be present to ensure a successful mentoring relationship. Participation is voluntary which also means that the relationship can be terminated at any time without fear of punishment. The protégé can choose from a variety of qualified mentors. Mentors are selected based on their records of accomplishment in developing people, willingness to serve as a mentor, and evidence of positive mentoring, communication and listening skills. The purpose of the mentoring relationship is clearly understood by all involved. A minimum

level of contact between the mentor and the protégé is specified. People being mentored are encouraged to make contact with one another and network to discuss problems and share successes. The mentoring relationship is evaluated through interviews, questionnaires etc., information is gathered, analysed and interpreted and the results shared so that the appropriate corrective action can be taken. Staff development is rewarded which sends a signal that mentoring (as well as other developmental activities) is worth the time and effort Leisey (1993). The mentoring relationship offers the protégé a nurturing and confidential environment in which to ask questions, share concerns and learn from an individual having more experience in the topic (Young, 2003).

3.2.5. Roles and responsibilities within the mentoring relationship

A discussion on the mentoring relationship is not complete if reference is not made to the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and protégé within the relationship.



3.2.5.1. Roles and responsibilities of the mentor

Mentors can serve in a variety of roles, depending on the level of commitment in the relationship. Since the protégé has chosen to find a mentor, this person is most likely looking for a role model, a leader to look up to who has what he/she wants. Mentors can convey their aspirations and goals and share with the protégé the knowledge, skills and attitudes (competencies) necessary to get where he/she is. Henrichs (2001) in turn states that the mentor can assist the protégé assessing his/her strengths and weaknesses and determine which competencies need to be developed. A mentor can also help the protégé with developing a network by providing guidance and emotional support.

According to Henrichs (2001), the role of the mentor is to stimulate the person being mentored, to facilitate the ability to reason and be self-aware, to enhance the objective analysis of situations and the application of insights to the workplace, to unlock an individual's own potential to maximise their performance and to influence another to achieve important goals or outcomes.

A mentor should provide support and encouragement; assist the protégé to learn from his/her mistakes; demonstrate personal integrity, help the protégé to identify and work with his/her strengths and weaknesses; provide opportunities for the protégé to develop independence; have good communication skills - especially the ability to be an active listener and to provide feedback in an effective manner; assist others in a positive, constructive way; be someone the protégé feels comfortable with; be creative; provide the protégé with meaningful direction; and be able to provide the protégé with the information he/she seeks. According to Leisey (1993), protégés should be open to feedback and advice. They should also exhibit the commitment to advancing both themselves and the organisation.

Mentors should demonstrate the ability and commitment to obtain and share knowledge about the institution's environment and transfer knowledge of institutional politics. Mentors should further define expectations and provide advice regarding career advancement. Mentors are role models and should therefore lead by example and establish an environment in which the junior protégé's opportunities for advancement are maximised.

3.2.5.2. Roles and responsibilities of the protégé

The protégé should demonstrate a commitment to assuming responsibility for his own career development and actively initiate the mentor relationship. The protégé should participate in the development of a constructive mentoring relationship and facilitate the development of such a relationship.

3.3. Mentoring programmes

The focus of mentoring programmes is not only on job expertise but also on developing the kind of skills which are needed by anybody destined for growth and leadership and better performance (Jensen, 2003). Harshman (2000) states that while mentoring subordinates is one of the typical functions of an effective manager, the term mentoring is being used in a broader organisational context to describe particular human resource interventions. It is those interventions, often referred to as 'mentoring programmes'. Although there is a high degree of variability among the models, the purpose of mentoring programs seems rooted in the need to retain and promote promising junior-level employees.

A mentoring programme requires an investment of resources for it to become a natural part of 'the way we do things'. The typical mentoring programme consists of two phases, namely the planning phase, which gives attention to issues like time scheduling, screening and matching of mentors and protégés, as well as training of mentors and protégés. Key elements of this planning phase are planning and development, decisions on how the programme should be launched and who it should be aimed at. The responsibilities of the mentors and the protégés need to be clarified, as well as the methods for evaluating the success of the mentoring programme.

The second phase of a mentoring programme is the process implementation. Based on the preparation work in the planning phase, the interaction between a mentor and protégé takes place within a process framework. Henrichs (2001) describes a typical process of this nature as follows. Refer to table 3.2

Table 3.2: The mentoring process. (Henrichs, 2001)

Stage	Actions
Relationship building (stage 1)	Set boundaries Define expectations
	Determine goals
Assessment and analysis (stage 2)	Review current situation
	Determine how person being mentored would like things to change
	Undertake a gap analysis
Alternatives and action planning (stage 3)	Process approach
	Explore alternative frameworks
	Brainstorm ideas for developmental activities
	Compare the relative merits of each option
	Analyse the implications of each option
	Work out action plans
Application and appraisal (stage 4)	Person being mentored puts action plan into practice
	Review actions and results to check whether outcomes are consistent with goals/expectations
	Review decision taken and process to evaluate consistency with personal development goals
	Repeat action steps for remaining developmental issues
Progression (stage 5)	All the participants, including the organisation, agree on appropriate progression
	The person being mentored identifies own mentoring opportunities
	Identify further development activities.

3.3.1. Prerequisites of successful mentoring programmes

Not all mentoring programmes are successful. Organisations need to make sure that they adhere to the prerequisites of successful mentorship programmes. Mentorship programmes need to be based on solid business reasons. Examples of business reasons are to speed up development of future leaders or to share organisational knowledge. Visible support and involvement from top management must be obtained and a dedicated mentoring coordinator should be appointed. In most organisations informal mentoring relationships exist at the time of implementing a mentorship programme. Mentorship programmes should support any existing informal mentoring relationship within the organisation. Mentor and protégé training must be provided in terms of the mentoring process as well as the creation of appropriate and specific goals. For the best outcomes, mentoring requires training (of mentor and protégé) in the process, a basis of ethical principles and grounding in good practice standards. New Zealand Mentoring Centre (2002). Mentoring programme should be evaluated to ensure effectiveness. Lastly, privacy, honesty and integrity, must be maintained in the mentoring relationship, at all times.

3.3.2. Formal vs. informal mentoring programmes

Although the mentoring relationship can be described in terms of its formality (as described in the previous section), the literature also addresses mentoring programmes in this regard. Chao (1992) states that with respect to format, mentoring programs are most frequently described as either formal or informal. This distinction typically refers to the degree of organisational intervention into the mentoring process, particularly in matching mentors and protégés. Informal programs tend to avoid matching a mentor with a protégé, and leave the relationships to develop naturally. Organisational support for informal programs may include publicity for mentoring opportunities, facilitation of connections of mentors and protégés, some budget for mentoring activities, and on-the-job time allocated for mentoring activities.

Chao (1992) suggests that formal programs, which take an active role in the formation of the mentor-protégé relationship, generally include the supports found in the informal programs. Furthermore, they typically incorporate training for mentors and sometimes for protégés, a systematic process for matching mentors and protégés, a prescribed mentoring process, and more overt connection to the career progress of the protégé than is found in the informal programs. Informal mentoring is the most common form where a senior colleague takes a personal interest in a junior person's career advancement; sponsors, coaches, and gives exposure, while signalling to the rest of the organisation that the protégé is under someone's protection.

For the purpose of this study, the focus is on both formal and informal mentoring.

3.4. Value of mentoring

The value of mentoring is one of the aspects that needs attention in an attempt to define the nature of mentoring. In order to establish the value, the researcher will pertinently focus on the benefits of mentoring in terms of the organisation, the mentor and the protégé.

Over the years, it became evident that those organisations which are relationship-based entities, are distinctly more successful than those who are not. The payoff from successful mentoring programmes will be a mixture of easier recruitment for the best talents, more rapid induction of new recruits and improved staff retention. Mentoring might also be of value in that it reinforces cultural change and improves networking and communication. According to Kibby (2003), there are certain key elements of a successful mentoring programme. Mentoring programmes cannot be successful without the enacted support of the executive leadership of the organisation. Mentors need to be well trained before they embark on a mentoring programme. Formal mentoring programmes need to be co-ordinated and linked with the organisation's direction. The last, but

probably most important element is that buy-in of protégés, as well as mentors, need to be created to ensure the success these programmes.

Guest (2001) identifies the benefits of a mentoring program and states that these benefits are normally a mixture of elements. Some of these elements are easier recruitment of the best talent, more rapid induction of the new recruits, improved staff retention, improved equal opportunities performance and diversity management, increased effectiveness of formal training, reinforcement of cultural change, improving networking and communication, and the reinforcement of other learning initiatives. According to Guest (2001), the organisational benefits of mentoring manifest themselves in many and varied ways – greater productivity and profitability perhaps, but also improved communication, morale, two-way loyalty and reduced staff turnover.

Mentoring is a powerful and popular way for people (**protégés**) to learn a variety of personal and professional skills. It is a way of helping others understand more fully, and learn more comprehensively from their day-to-day experience. It works best when it is a confidential relationship, which affords protégés the opportunity to speak freely about any concerns they may have. The range of skills and other qualities required by mentors will vary according to the objectives of mentoring and the way in which the organisation concerned has chosen to meet them. The mentoring relationship provides specific benefits. Protégés benefit by learning and practicing new skills with a trusted friend', having multiple exemplars of appropriate behaviours from mentors, experiencing multiple interactions with individuals of different backgrounds, and learning and practicing the expected norms of the environment. In addition to the benefits that protégés gain, mentors gain improved self-esteem by modelling appropriate skills and knowledge to another peer, increased opportunities to interact with peers different from themselves, and mastered social competence.

Clasen and Clasen (1997) summarise some of the main benefits for protégés as providing high-level learning experiences, providing opportunities for talent development, aiding career exploration, promoting psychosocial development in areas of responsibility, self-directed learning, feelings of competence, sense of identity, ethics, and self-monitoring of feelings, and highlighting the connections between protégés interests and the larger world.

Mentoring gives **mentors** a broadened sense of responsibility and a sense of being trusted by the organisation. It is an opportunity where mentors get a chance to pay back past mentors of their own and a challenge of advising rather than directing their protégés. Mentors are also able to learn from protégés and the satisfaction of seeing someone grow. Henrichs (2001) states that as a manager or supervisor, meaningful mentoring partnerships can have positive 'spin-offs' for the manager's areas of accountability. Some of these might be making the manager's job easier when staff members build their levels of competence, thus enabling the manager to delegate more effectively to have more time to truly 'manage'. Other positive outcomes of meaningful mentoring partnerships are increasing productivity, as staff members know what the goals are and how to achieve them; developing a sharing of leadership responsibilities; and enhancing motivation through positive recognition and constructive feedback. He further states that these partnerships will facilitate creativity and innovation as staff members feel safe to take risks, reduce surprises and defensiveness in performance management and stimulate the likelihood of outcomes being achieved in a quality way.

Mentoring benefits both the **mentor** and the **protégé** in that it creates an opportunity for a mutual and long-lasting friendship, it consolidates and redefines personal ethics, and leads to renewed zest for the mentor (Edlind & Heansly, 1985). In addition, mentoring appears to serve a dual role in psychosocial development for both mentor and protégé (Levinson, 1978). It is believed that if implemented effectively, mentoring benefits the mentor, protégé and the organisation. Multiple benefits of mentoring have been cited in the literature such

as the development of emotional supports and friendships (Fishman, Stelk & Clark, 1997), improved self-esteem and confidence for mentor and protégé (Utley, Mortweet & Greenwood, 1997), an increased set of knowledge and skills (Harper, Mallette, Maheady, Bentley & Moore, 1995), and an improved social network (Fishman et al., 1997).

Three principles guide mentoring in process and outcome. Firstly, mentoring allows individuals to build reciprocal relationships. For example, Brown and Odom (1995) state that relationships between peers are necessary in order to reinforce and build foundations for future social interactions. Protégés who develop a firm foundation of appropriate social interactions are at less risk for developing social and behavioural difficulties. Guetzloe (1997) further suggests that mentoring provides a framework for positive social networks and relationships. Secondly, mentoring relationships are important for individuals to engage in for purposes of completing tasks or achieving outcome goals (Rockwell, 1997). Thirdly, according to Miller (1997) and Townsel (1997), mentoring could be a tool to reinforce and build appropriate social values and norms from the community's (this might be the business community) perspective. As part of the community's perspective, norms and values - such as honesty, sharing, and empathy - can thus be modelled and reinforced through mentoring.

4. TRANSFER OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Now that mentoring has been defined and the nature of mentoring clarified, an investigation needs to be done on 'how' the transfer of ethical principles takes place. As indicated in paragraph 3.3.2, the mentoring relationship is of utmost importance for successful mentoring. Ethics play a two-fold part with regard to mentoring. Firstly, ethical principles play a cardinal role in establishing and sustaining a meaningful mentoring relationship. This relationship should be built on principles such as honesty, trust and respect, to name a few. Secondly, mentoring could be used to entrench organisational ethical principles on a one-on-one basis throughout the organisation. If mentorship is an option to use as a

vehicle to institutionalise business ethics, it will be utilised on the operational level of institutionalising business ethics (as discussed in chapter 2 of this study). Ethical behaviour might then be an appropriate response, which can be internalised by the protégé by means of mentoring.

For the purpose of the study, a clear distinction should be made between the 'ethics' within the mentoring relationship and structuring the mentoring relationship to convey 'ethical principles'.

In modern terms, mentoring incorporates the notion that senior members of the organisation will provide wisdom and guidance to junior members. It is of absolute importance to train the mentor in skills and knowledge related to the mentoring of a protégé. With regard to this study, the mentor should, in addition to general mentoring information, be trained on ethical principles before the commencement of the mentoring process. If no training takes place, the relationship between mentor and protégé will lack mutual respect, commitment, and trust - key ingredients of organisational success. If mentoring is used by an organisation as a tool to institutionalise business ethics, the focus must be on business ethics as such when training mentors for mentorship. If mentoring occurs on an informal basis an awareness of the value of business, ethics is of utmost importance.

With regard to the above training of ethical principles, the mentor should receive training regarding personal and organisational values. Personal values are the core of a person's personality and play a large part in unifying that person's behaviours. Values influence the way individuals respond to people and events, direct and motivate them towards certain goals. There is an almost infinite list of potential values to explore in the mentoring relationship. These potential values might include equality, freedom, leadership, honesty, respect, independence, duty, power, loyalty, self-determination, confidence and success.

Behavioural change is the ultimate goal of the mentoring programme; mentors must know what motivates protégés and what they truly value. Mentors can work with protégés to discover, unearth and clarify their core values. Having discovered and clarified personal values, it is important that these be in harmony with those of the organisation. People want to make a difference in their work environment and peak performance is more likely to occur if there is a match between their personal values and those of the organisation (Skiffington, 2002). As values are a broad-based concept (examples like religious values and social values to mention a few), this study will focus merely on organisational values. It is therefore appropriate to provide examples of ethical organisational values, as it is the focus of the study. Ethical organisational values include dimensions of honesty, integrity, individual respect, etc.

According to Butler (2000) mentoring needs to be seen as a partnership that focuses on building an extensive knowledge base in an atmosphere of integrity and trust. To be effective and lasting, the two-way mentoring relationship works best as a shared voyage of discovery. Herein lies one of the key challenges – many mentoring initiatives have not stood the test of time and the people involved have become disillusioned, even bitter. An ideal environment encourages learning through mentoring. Great leaders often credit role models. An effective mentoring programme ensures that the workplace will be prepared for the future. Sharing experiences and skills enables smooth transitions for an ever-changing workforce. By mentoring, individuals can ensure their legacy and set a foundation. The benefits to newer employees are numerous. They are given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and potential as well as to learn from seasoned employees. In addition, the foundation is set for future success when mentors instil the goals and values of the organisation (Butler, 2000).

In the transfer of ethical principles, the mentor should distinctly and consciously take action. This process of transfer should be well planned, and in this regard initiated from the time the mentor receives his/her training for mentoring. Although the mentoring relationship should be built on ethical grounds (for

example trust, integrity and respect) for mentoring to be successful, the mentor must also integrate ethics into the day-to-day activities of the mentoring process. Examples of this integration are decision-making based on ethical principles, the ethical consequences of decisions made by the protégé, the interpretation of the organisations' code of ethics and ethical sensitivity.

A caring leader who practices equality inspires the entire workforce to embrace the values inherent in a democracy. The ideal work environment encourages team spirit. Effective leaders not only strive to achieve camaraderie among their subordinates, but also consider themselves an integral part of the team. When members of an organisation feel they have common purpose, reaching the goal becomes much more satisfying. The ideal work environment is one in which recognition for hard work and loyalty is a part of normal operations. Leaders have a responsibility to create an atmosphere in which truth is an elemental ingredient in daily operations. Along with truth come respect and credibility. An organisation that values truth builds cohesiveness and trust among its members as well as among those outside the organisation. Leaders who honour the value of truth gain the credibility that is essential in promoting a healthy relationship among themselves and their subordinates.

From the above it is clear that mentoring can very possible be used as a vehicle to transfer ethical principles. In chapter 4, the researcher will investigate whether organisations actually make use of mentoring to transfer ethical principles, by means of an empirical study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the previous chapters, an in-depth literature study was made of the concepts mentoring and ethics. From this theoretical study, the researcher identified the aim of the research, subsequent research questions and objectives, which is dealt with in this chapter.

The term 'research' as used in everyday language has a multitude of meanings. For example, some see it as the mere gathering of collection or information, or the moving of factual knowledge from one location to another, or the carrying out of investigations into a subject or problem (Collins English Dictionary, 1994:1316). In scientific inquiries the connotative meaning (Rossouw, 1994:17) of the concept must be applied. Thus the word 'research' in this scientific study pertains to: "The honest attempt to study a problem through the systematic process of collecting and analysing information (data). This is done to increase out understanding of the phenomenon in which we are concerned or interested" (Leedy, 1997:3).

The phenomenon of interest in this study is the utilisation of mentoring to institutionalise ethical behaviour. In this chapter, the researcher attempts to determine whether mentoring is used in the institutionalisation of organisational ethical behaviour, by making use of in-depth interviews.

As an introduction, a summary of a simplified research process as described by Neuman (2000) consists of the following steps. (i) choose a topic, (ii) focus research question, (iii) design study, (iv) collect data, (v) analyse data, (vi) interpret data, (vii) inform others. He further states that this is an interactive process in which steps blend into each other. A later step may stimulate reconsideration of a previous one. The researcher used the above process as guideline to this study. The process followed in this study is discussed in some detail in the following section.

RESEARCH PROCESS

The research process followed in this study is presented in Figure 1. Each step is dealt with in detail in the sections to follow. In the first three steps, the researcher attempts to define the research aim, specify research questions and determine the objectives pertaining to this study.

Once the first three steps were defined and clarified, the researcher proceeded with the fourth step, namely the research design. The research design is based on the outcome of the first three steps. To design the research, an in-depth study was made of the research paradigms. This enabled the researcher to make micro-decisions related to this particular study.

These decisions related to the context in which the research took place, the participants of this study, and the collection and analysis of the research data. The trustworthiness of this study is of utmost importance to the researcher, therefore much attention was given to quality control. Underpinning each step of the research process is ethical rigour, as indicated in Figure 4.1.

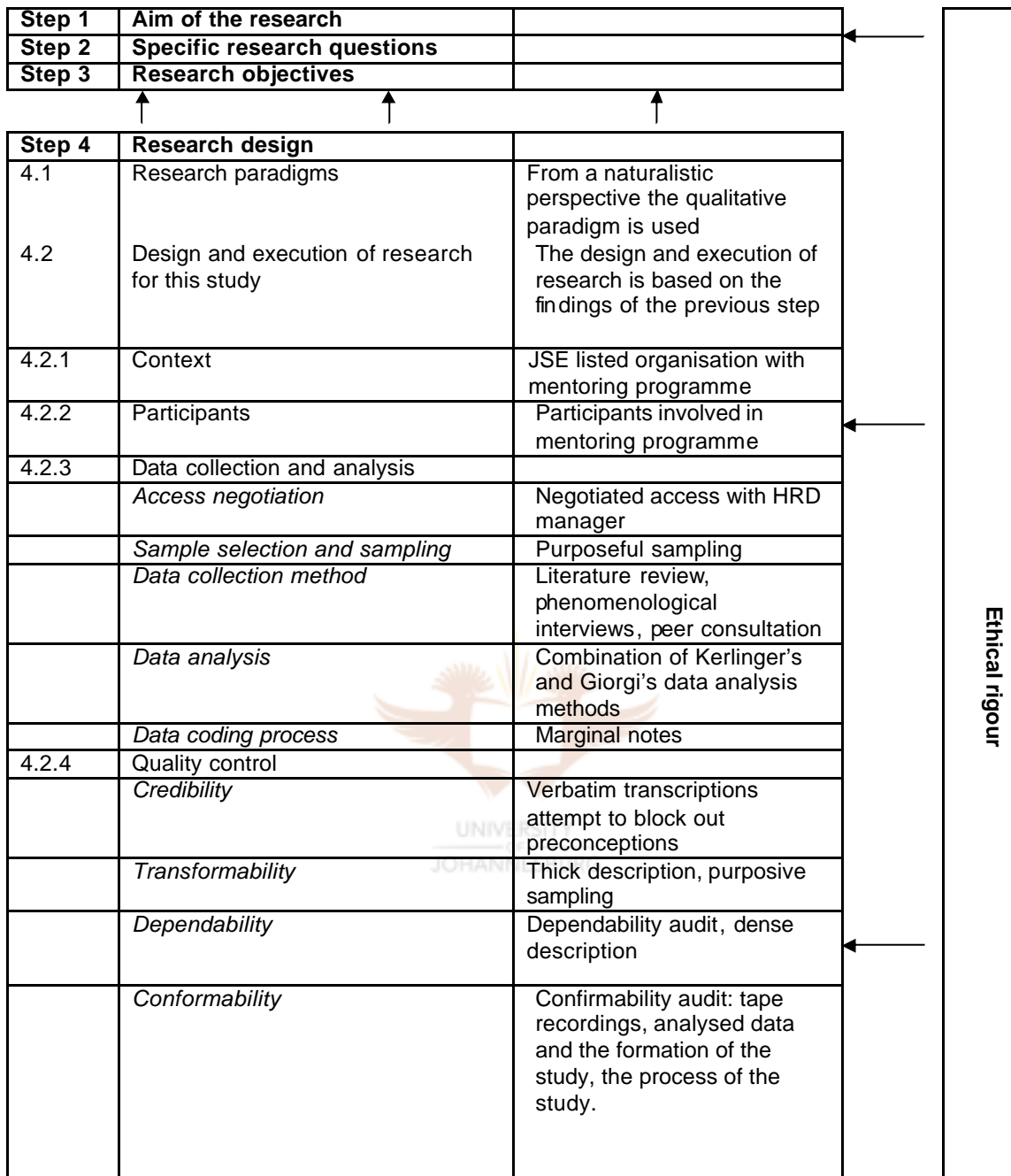


Figure 4.1: The research process

1. Aim of the research

The crux of any research assignment is the statement of the problem: it is with the formulation of the research question that research can begin in that specific field. Contained within the stated problem, the area of study is demarcated thereby ensuring that the research remains focused and manageable.

For the purpose of this study, the research question is to investigate *the extent to which mentoring can be utilised as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices*. The research question guides the researcher in determining the aim of a study. The aim of this study is therefore to *conduct an analysis of the extent to which mentoring can be utilised as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices*.

2. Specific secondary questions

Most research problems “are too large or too complex to be solved without subdividing them” (Leedy, 1997:55). A scrutiny of the research question revealed that distinct sub-questions arise. The sub-questions are formulated as follows:

- *Do organisations make use of mentorship as a tool to institutionalise ethical behaviour?*
- *Should mentorship be used as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices?*
- *What approaches to mentoring do organisations use to institutionalise ethical practices?*
- *Can mentorship be a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices, and if so, how?*

These research questions serve as guidelines for the objectives of this specific study. The following step in the research process is to specify research objectives.

3. Research objectives

Once the research question and the sub-questions have been formulated and stated in clear and precise terminology, the next step in the research process requires that the objectives of the inquiry be stated. The research objectives can be stated as follows:

- To analyse the extent to which organisations make use of mentorship to institutionalise corporate ethical practices.
- To investigate whether mentoring is an appropriate tool to utilise in the institutionalisation of corporate ethical practices.
- To gain an understanding of how organisations institutionalise corporate ethical principles, using mentoring.
- To answer the question as to whether mentoring can be used as a means to institutionalise corporate ethical practices, and if so how.

Once the aim, the question and sub-questions, and the objectives of the research have been established, the researcher needs to design a vehicle to execute the above mentioned. The research design, and the execution thereof, will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

4. Research design

A research design has two basic purposes (Kerlinger, 1986:280). It is (i) the exposition of how the researcher plans to approach the finding of an answer to the research question that has been presented in the inquiry, and (ii) to control any variance that could occur. Thus, the term 'research design' can be understood as "a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem (question)" (Mouton, 1996:107). These guidelines and instructions are the presentation of the systematic account of how the research process was conducted. *In planning the research design, determinants such as the collection and interpretation of the data, the paradigm, the context, time and labour is taken into consideration.*

4.1 Research paradigms

The next logical step in the research process is selecting a paradigm that would effectively and appropriately meet the requirements of the research as described in the research objectives (cf. 3). *For the purpose of this study, the qualitative and quantitative paradigms were analysed from a naturalistic perspective.*

There has been continuous debate in the sciences pertaining to the qualitative- and quantitative research paradigms (Holloway & Wheeler 1996:10, Johnson 1997:192). As Kerlinger (1973), claims, “There is no such thing as qualitative data. Everything is either 1 or 0”. Berg (in Miles & Huberman, 1994:40), on the other hand, expresses his opinion as follows, “...all data are basically qualitative”. Kaplan (1964) argues that in research both numbers and words are needed. Gherardi and Turner (in Miles & Huberman, 1994:40) suggest that the issue is one of knowing when it is useful to count and when it is “difficult or inappropriate to count at all”. Much of the literature pertaining to these research paradigms have created the impression of exaggerated differences existing between the two approaches (Bryman, 1995:93). There are a number of differences to be discerned between the two paradigms; however, some of these differences are not as rigorous as some researchers (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Lofland, 1971) make it out to be. Despite the number of differences between the two designs, there is “nothing inherently good or bad about any design type” (DePoy & Gitlin, 1994:24). Each design has its own strengths and weaknesses (Bryman, 1995) and is not superior to the other Bryman and Silverman (in Holloway & Wheeler, 1996:13). Each design has its value and “the merit of the design lies in its ability to answer” the specific research question (DePoy & Gitlin, 1994:24).

An exposé of the contrasting features pertaining to the two research paradigms will be discussed as presented by Bryman (1995), and Kuhns & Martorana (1982). It is important that the different dimensions be highlighted, as this divergent discussion enhances the reasoning for the subsequent choice of paradigm to be used in this study. The dimensions discussed are context,

relationship between the researcher and participant, holism, theories/concepts and research, and the research strategy.

- **Context**

In a naturalistic inquiry, the researcher does not attempt to manipulate, change or control the research settings or conditions. The inquirer rather desires to understand the phenomenon, which is being studied “in their naturally occurring states” (Kuhns & Martorana, 1982:7). The naturalist inquiry affords the researcher the opportunity to get close to the phenomenon under investigation. The qualitative researcher tries to gain an understanding of the setting through direct personal contact with the participants.

- **Relationship between the researcher and participant**

In quantitative research, the researcher’s contact with the researched may be ‘fleeting or even non-existent’, as the researcher may make use of data collection methods such as postal questionnaires and laboratory experiments where the researcher will maintain the role of an observer while others conduct experiments (Bryman, 1995:95). By contrast, the qualitative researcher does not desire a relationship of distance but rather a relationship of closeness. Since a subjective perspective is sought in naturalistic studies, the researcher desires to foster a close relationship with the informants. In other words, the researcher tries to see and understand the participant’s world through their subjective perspective. The relationship of closeness enhances the researcher’s understanding of the phenomenon. It further allows for a holistic description of the situation as perceived by the participant. In the quantitative approach, the information gleaned is portrayed statistically, as there is a relationship of distance between the researcher and the researched.

- **Holism**

The holistic approach functions from the Gestalt point of view, namely that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Holism is concerned with the examining of social entities in the field of study. The social entities in this specific study pertain to: the organisation, business ethics, organisational culture and so forth. In qualitative research, many aspects pertaining to the phenomenon are investigated. Researchers must also pay attention to the factors that may exert an influence on the phenomenon. These factors in holism, as in the context dimension, imply that “the meanings that people ascribe to their own and other’s behaviour, have to be set in the context”.

- **Theories/concepts and research**

The structure of the quantitative research process has its starting point in theory. Whereas in naturalistic studies the precursor is not theory but “real-world observations, dilemmas and questions...” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995:16). This starting point in qualitative studies reflects the respondent’s viewpoint of matters (Bryman, 1995:97). As Filstead (in Bryman 1995:97) maintains, the qualitative research process is primarily concerned with verifications of theory rather than the discovery thereof.

- **Research strategy**

In comparison to the structured approach of quantitative research strategies, qualitative research tends to be more open. In the quantitative approach, the information gleaned is portrayed statistically and relegated to matrices.

Since the research question pertains to understanding and describing a particular phenomenon (cf. 1 statement of problem) about which very little is known, the qualitative paradigm would appear to be most suitable for this inquiry. This inquiry is a process of discovery and learning Lofland (in Merriam, 1991:68) as the focus of the investigation is directed at the understanding of the situation from the participant’s subjective perspective (Field & Morse 1985:11; Krefting, 1990:214; Mouton & Marais, 1990:127). Furthermore, the study involves a

specific group of people who are asked questions particular to their experience of a mentoring programme Patton (in Crabtree & Miller, 1992:13; Merriam, 1991:22) as they have specific knowledge pertaining to the phenomenon being investigated (Field & Morse, 1985:12). The qualitative approach allows the researcher the opportunity to explore meanings, variations and perceptual experiences of the phenomenon from a rich and in-depth perspective of the subjects as observed and recorded through their words, actions, behaviours and practices (Crabtree & Miller 1992, Patton 1990). This method provides adequate information, appears to be cost effective and shows sensitivity towards the settings and resources (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

As Creswell (1994:57) claims, qualitative research is ideal when trying to “understand a social or human problem”. The entire method of inquiry is based upon obtaining a holistic picture of the phenomenon from a subjective paradigm. As Polkinghorne in (Rudestam & Newton, 1992:31) states, the qualitative approach is “especially useful in the generation of categories for understanding human phenomena and the investigation of the interpretation and meaning that people give to events they experience”.

As the aim of this study involves the exploration and description of social and human phenomena, the researcher proceeds to analyse exploratory and descriptive methods of inquiry.

4.1.1 Exploratory research

The exploratory method of inquiry allows the researcher new ideas and possibilities without being led astray or influenced by predetermined ideas and existing hypotheses (Mouton & Marais, 1990:43) *pertaining to concepts of mentoring, business ethics and the institutionalising thereof.* Exploratory studies seek answers to questions such as “Why does something happen?” or “What would happen if...?” (Abdellah & Levine, 1979:452). *The exploratory method is*

thus used to gain insight and understanding into the social and human phenomena, for example ethical behaviour.

4.1.2 Descriptive research

In descriptive research, the researcher aims at presenting the phenomenon under investigation as accurately as possible (Merriam, 1991:27; Wilson, 1987:9; Dane, 1990:6) and at discovering new facts (Abdellah & Levine, 1979:555). According to Schatzman & Strauss (in Wilson 1987:268-9), descriptive research is conducted in two ways namely, straight or analytical. In straight description, the analyst researcher may use categories or organisational schemes that are already existent in the literature pertaining to the inquiry. In analytical description, the inquirer attempts to create new categories when inspecting and coding the data. The new categories or classes will allow the researcher “to accurately and even insightfully characterise” the particular group under investigation (Wilson, 1987:268).

In this inquiry, the researcher applied the analytical description because the objective was to gain insight into and about ethics in mentoring relationships, of a particular group of people. Secondly, the inquirer presented a diverse account of findings, therefore having to create new categories to compliment the findings.

From the investigation in this section, the researcher came to the following conclusions that guided the researcher in the design and execution of this research. This research study is conducted from the naturalistic perspective and the qualitative paradigm appears to be most suitable. This research focuses on exploring and describing the phenomena in question, therefore exploratory and descriptive research is conducted.

4.2 Design and execution of research for this study

Based on the selection of the qualitative approach, the researcher attempts to design an approach for this study from a naturalistic perspective. Determinants in the research design include the context, participants, data collection and analysis, and quality control. These determinants are not discussed in order of importance (Leedy, 1997:109).

4.2.1 Context

In naturalistic research context is an extremely important factor. It is significant in the sense that the physical, historical, socio-economical ambience exerts an influence on one's outlook on life (Kincheloe, 1991:141). As Miles and Huberman (1994) argue, to be able to understand the context is of great importance because a person's behaviour must be understood in a specific context.

The study was conducted at a Johannesburg Stock Exchange listed holding company. This company manages businesses in the electronics and low-voltage electrical engineering sectors supplying value-added products, systems and solutions to local and international growth markets. During 2003, this company introduced an employee-mentoring programme, which took the form of a developmental process aimed at guiding less experienced employees by other, more experienced employees, or mentors.

Naturalistic researchers further believe that it is by using of the participants "own words and meanings and experiencing their experiences that the investigator comes to know the context" (DePoy & Gitlin 1994:219). *For the purpose of this study, the interviews conducted with participants were transcribed verbatimly, to ensure that their own words, meanings and experiences are used in the analysis thereof.*

4.2.2 Participants

Disputes among renowned researchers have arisen concerning the usage of the terms to describe the person being interviewed. Researchers such as Crabtree & Miller (1992:57) prefer the use of terms such as informant and/or participant. Field and Morse (1985:138) differentiate between the terms informant and participant. Boucchard in (Krathwohl 1993:326) makes a distinction between the vocables 'respondent' and 'informant'. For the purpose of this study, the researcher adheres to the reasoning of Morse (1994b), DePoy and Gitlin (1994:182), who claim that these four terms all refer to individuals who agree to become part of the research. Each of these terms reflects a different way that the individual participates in the study.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher refers to the individual as follows: (i) respondent, because they have to respond to specific questions posed; (ii) participants and (iii) informants because they are providing and informing the researcher with viewpoints pertaining to their experience of the mentoring process.

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It is essential for a research that the researcher obtains a viewpoint of the participant's world or reality (Spradley in Crabtree & Miller 1992:34; Field & Morse 1985:21). This perspective allows the participant to express his/her opinions, expressions, biases, understandings and information concerning the phenomenon being explored. In other words, the participants' viewpoint is phenomenological (DePoy & Gitlin, 1994:130), because the participants' "experience is understood as only that which is perceived and experienced by them". The subjective perspective supplies the researcher with the insider's (internal) viewpoint of the participant. Headland et al. (1990:86) further claims that by taking the participants perspective into consideration, the researcher has a better understanding of the participant's attitudes, motives, interests and personality. The subjective perspective allows participants to speak reality as only experienced by them (DePoy & Gitlin, 1994:130). Through this approach,

the researcher attempts to see reality as the respondent perceives it (Crabtree & Miller, 1992:71).

In this study, the researcher attempted not to interfere with participants' attitudes, viewpoints, motives or perceptions.

4.2.3 Data collection and analysis

The aim of any phenomenological inquiry is to try to describe as accurately as possible the experience of the subjects concerning the phenomenon which is being investigated, and “not to generate theories or models nor to develop general explanations...” relating to the phenomenon (Field & Morse, 1985:82). To cite Patton (in Marshall & Rossman, 1995:82), “Phenomenology is the study of experiences and the ways in which we put them together to develop a world view”.

A phenomenological approach is adopted for the following reasons. This method of data collection is most frequently used in exploratory and descriptive inquiries. Secondly, the phenomenological approach allows the researcher to study the subject's experiences as he/she has experienced them (Omery, 1983:50). The researcher hopes to develop a picture of the *Lebenswelt* (Kvale, 1983:184) of the participants through inductive interviews, rather than study cause-and-effect relationships of the phenomenon (Creswell 1994:12). In other words, the aim of the phenomenological approach, as in this study, is to try to understand the social and psychological phenomena from the subject's point of view (Huysamen, 1994:167). These direct experiences of the participants will be taken at face value (Cohen & Manion 1994, Field & Morse 1985).

In order to collect and analyse data for this study, the researcher had to gain access to the site, select a sample for this study, choose a data collection method, and analyse and code the data gathered. These aspects will now be discussed.

4.2.3.1 Negotiating access to the site

Gaining access to the site is a critical aspect of naturalistic inquiry, as it requires strategising and negotiation (DePoy & Gitlin, 1994). The researcher is considered an 'outsider' and has to obtain permission to enter the field.

The permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Human Resource Development manager of the company where interviews were conducted. The researcher took it upon herself to make contact, and arrange appropriate times and locations for the interviews to take place.

According to Ferreira and Puth (in Mouton, 1988:174), several factors should be taken into account when selecting a site. These factors would include accessibility to the site; the ability to conduct interviews and discussions in private and be relatively free from outside disturbances such as interruptions and noise; the suitability of the site for recording. All these factors were asked to be taken into consideration when the locations were chosen.

The researcher contacted the HRD manager telephonically for an appointment to discuss the research to be conducted. Secondly, the researcher acquired convenient dates for the interviews to commence. The first contact between the respondents and researcher was on the day the interview was conducted. The respondents were briefed on the reason and format of the interview by means of a short introduction. They were given the opportunity to decline participation in the study. None of the respondents declined participation. Each respondent then signed a letter of consent. Once all these formalities were attended to, the interview commenced.

4.2.3.2 Sampling

The term sampling is defined as “The process by which a smaller group (a sample) is selected from among the members of a larger group (a population) so that the characteristics of the smaller group can be used to estimate the characteristics of the larger group” (Vockell, 1983:356).

Purposeful sampling implies that only information-rich cases are selected and studied in depth. Phenomenologists depend on in-depth interviews to obtain their information, and it is therefore important that the participants who participate in the interviews are purposively selected (DePoy & Gitlin, 1994). As Patton in (Leedy, 1997) contends, purposive sampling is applied as it helps to “increase the utility of information obtained from small samples”.

Purposive sampling is of significance to this study as only those subjects who have been exposed to mentorship relationships were approached to participate. Since interviews were used to obtain information (phenomenologist) regarding participants experience of ethics in mentoring, the participants were purposively selected for the purpose of this study. The method of sampling applied in this research can be described as purposive and convenient.

It is purposive because statistical evidence or confirmation is not being sought (Miles & Huberman, 1994:27). It is convenient, as this method will provide the researcher with the selection of appropriate participants (Abdellah & Levine, 1979:704). Purposive sampling is essential to this study, as it helps the researcher to gain insight into, understand and learn more about the phenomenon under investigation. Merriam in (Leedy, 197:48).

Members of the sample group had to meet the following criteria. They must have been involved in the mentoring programme for more than six months. All the interviews were conducted in English, although it was a multi-cultural sample. Considerations such as gender, age and religion were not taken into account.

4.2.3.3 Data collection methods

In naturalistic research, the inquirer ‘draws on and combines a variety of data collection strategies’ (DePoy & Gitlin, 1994:216). Examples of these include phenomenological interviews (Wolcott, 1994:10), document analyses, consultations with experts, literature control in order to obtain a rich description, and a deep understanding of the phenomena being investigated. Through the combination of these data-collection strategies, the qualitative researcher describes the ‘viewpoint of the person under study’ (Schmidt in Krefting, 1990:214). *For the purpose of this study phenomenological interviews, literature review and peer debriefing were use as data collection methods.*

- **Literature review**

The literature review consists of information published and unpublished, which relates closely to the area of inquiry. Both primary and secondary sources will be included in the literature review. The literature control was undertaken for the following reasons. Firstly, it is very useful to conduct a literature review prior to the investigation because it enables the researcher to know what research has been conducted relating to the issue under investigation (Morse in Holloway & Wheeler, 1996:24). Secondly, to explore existing knowledge and practices, thirdly, this study was undertaken to ensure that effective questions were developed for the interviews.

In Chapters 2 and 3 of this study, the researcher attempted to identify themes, categories and subcategories pertaining to the field of investigation, as well as describe the differences and similarities found. Based on these findings, the researcher decided which themes, categories and subcategories are relevant to this study.

- ***Phenomenological interviews***

There are various methods of data collection in naturalistic inquiries: participant observation, interviews, the studying of materials prepared by others relating to the field of inquiry (Wolcott, 1994: 10), researcher-designed instruments as well as content analysis of human artefacts (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993:158).

Researchers such as Benn and Hughes (1956), and Ackroyd and Hughes (in Schurink, 1988:136) describe phenomenological interviews as the most “important data collection instrument in the social sciences...” and phenomenological interviews are repeatedly used in exploratory and descriptive studies. This type of interview is a powerful method used by qualitative researchers to gain an understanding of the phenomenon being investigated from a participant's perspective (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:361). Furthermore, the participants are allowed to express themselves in their own natural language and at the same time express themselves from within their own unique paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 1988:155) without any reservation and/or interference from the inquirer. The phenomenological interview must be seen as a conversation with a purpose (Uys & Basson, 1991:62; in Marshall & Rossman, 1985:80)

According to Stroh (in Burton, 2000), researchers considering qualitative interviewing as research methodology, should plan the research well for it to be effective. He further states that it is important to know what sort of data interviews produce and, from that, the ways in which qualitative interview material can or cannot be used to generalise findings. Ackroyd and Hughes (in Mouton, 1988:136) claim that the interviewing process “is the most important collection instrument in the social sciences, and is itself more than a mere tool”. Thus, the term ‘interview’ can be defined as “the conversation with a purpose” (Dexter, 1970:136). When conducting interviews, it is the duty of the interviewer to guide and direct the inquiry towards the specific topic of research (Field & Morse, 1985:66).

Social scientists commonly conduct interviews to learn about beliefs, attitudes, reported behaviours, or experiences prevalent in a population. These interviews often involve the use of structured questions with closed-ended responses. Open-ended questions can yield useful information, especially when researchers need to explore complex issues that do not have a finite or predetermined set of responses.

The format of the interview allows the researcher the opportunity to try to gain direct access “to what is inside a person's head” Tuckman in (Cohen & Manion, 1994:273). It also affords the researcher and the respondent the opportunity to move “back and forth in time, reconstruct the past, interpret the present and predict the future” (Lincoln & Guba in Erlandson, Harris and associates, 1993:85). The phenomenological interviews take the form of semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interview format is more flexible and open. Although the research problem governs the questions asked, the researcher decides upon the content, sequence and wording. This format allows the researcher the opportunity to pose a few predetermined questions, and at the same time allows for a considerable amount of “flexibility concerning follow-up questions” (Merton, Fiske & Kendell in Dane, 1990: 129). This in turn allows the researcher the opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings that may arise during the questioning. Furthermore, this approach allows the researcher the opportunity to take each respondent through the same set of questions in a systematic fashion.

The semi-structured format proves to be of value when the subjects included in the inquiry consist of a purposively selected group who are familiar with the research topic, because this allows the inquirer to explore “more fully the opinions and behaviours of [the] respondents”. This allows for “more and varied detail” (Dane, 1990:129) in the accounts of the life-world of the subjects (Huysamen, 1994:174).

The researcher should be aware that factors such as speech, status, dress, grooming, age, race and frame of mind can affect and influence responses of the participants (Krathwohl, 1993: 198). *Special attention was paid to the aforementioned and the necessary precautions were taken to try to counteract any negativity. The interviewer was aware that her perspectives and biases may affect the outcome of the interview; therefore, when interviewing commenced, the researcher attempted to suspend all forms of biases.*

For the purpose of this inquiry, the researcher used the phenomenological interview as a source to obtain the necessary data, because it is considered as the most important data collection instrument in the social sciences, and phenomenological interviews are repeatedly used in exploratory (cf. 4.1) and descriptive (cf. 4.2) studies. The researcher prepared several open-ended questions to guide the participant on the topic that is being investigated. Two sets of interviews were conducted. Five interviews were conducted with mentors, with a set of questions, and five interviews were conducted with their protégés, with their set of questions. The questions asked were directed towards the collection of information relating to the topic of investigation.

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The questions posed to the mentors were as follows:

Biographical information:

- *How long have you been involved in this mentoring relationship?*
- *Is it the first mentoring relationship you are involved in?*
- *What is your relation, regarding your position, to the protégé?*
- *How often do you have contact with your protégé?*
- *Is the mentoring relationship a positive or a negative experience for you?
Why?*
- *What is your goal for being involved in the mentoring programme?*

Main question: Do you ever discuss ethics with your protégé?

*If the answer to the main question is: **YES***

- 1. Is it expected of you to formally address ethical issues?*
- 2. Is it expected of you to informally address ethical issues?*
- 3. What do these discussions include?*
- 4. What training and skills did you acquire to enable you to be comfortable in discussing ethics with your protégé?*
- 5. Describe **how** you use mentoring to convey ethical company values?*

*If the answer to the main question is: **NO***

- 1 Do you think ethical issues should be addressed, if so how?*
- 2 Is it expected of you to formally address ethical issues?*
- 3 Is it expected of you to informally address ethical issues?*
- 4 What should these discussions include?*
- 5 What training and skills would you need to acquire to enable you to be comfortable in discussing ethics with your protégé?*
- 6 Describe **how** you think mentoring can be used to convey ethical company values?*

The questions posed to the protégés were as follows:

Biographical information:

- *How long have you been involved in this mentoring relationship?*
- *Is it the first mentoring relationship you are involved in?*
- *What is your relation, regarding your position, to the mentor?*
- *How often do you have contact with your mentor?*
- *Is the mentoring relationship a positive or a negative experience for you?
Why?*
- *What is your goal for being involved in the mentoring programme?*

Main question: Does your mentor ever discuss ethics with you?

*If the answer to the main question is: **NO***

- 1. To what extent can you benefit from discussions on ethics?*
- 2. Describe what should be discussed by a mentor regarding ethics?*
- 3. When would you be comfortable discussing ethical matters with your mentor?*
- 4. What would prevent you from discussing ethical issues with your mentor?*

*If the answer to the main question is: **YES***

- 1. Describe the discussions your mentor has had with you regarding ethics?*
- 2. Describe the extent to which you have benefited from discussions with your mentor on ethics?*
- 3. What makes you comfortable discussing ethical matters with you mentor?*
- 4. How, according to your viewpoint, is ethics transferred by means of your mentoring relationship?*

- **Peer consultation**

The researcher continuously consulted professional peers outside the context of the study who have professional and general knowledge of the field of investigation. They were asked to listen to ideas, concerns and issues forwarded by the researcher relating to the field of investigation, and to offer comment pertaining to the requests.

4.2.3.4 Data analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to transform the acquired data obtained from the phenomenological interviews into thick and rich descriptions of the findings. An analysis involves not only the translation of the information but also the interpretation thereof. Data analysis is the means by which a researcher brings "order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995:111). In the qualitative research approach, the analysis of data

is an interactive process, and not linear (Crabtree & Miller, 1992:71). Researchers make use of one of the methods of analysis as described by Merriam (1991:158-159), Patton (1990:384) and Abdellah & Levine (1979:357), namely the computer analysis or the hand method. The analysis consists mainly of words. *In this study, the analysed results contain words and/or phrases obtained from the raw data. These words and/or phrases are arranged into themes, categories and subcategories to illustrate and substantiate the findings of the inquiry.*

Data analyses and the interpretation thereof must not be conceived as a single process, but rather as two separate processes. As Patton (1987: 144) contends, analysis is “the process of bringing order to the data, organising what there is into patterns, categories, and basic descriptive units”. The term ‘interpretation’ can be conceptualised as “attaching meaning and significance to the analysis, explaining descriptive patterns, and looking for relationships and linkages among descriptive dimensions” (Patton, 1987:144). The following two methods of data analysis will be discussed that guided the analysis of data in this study.

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- ***Kerlinger's method of content analysis***

Berelson (1952:18) defines content analysis as “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”. This method identifies meaningful themes, categories and subcategories in the analysed data.

- ***Giorgi's method of data analysis***

According to Giorgi (in Omery, 1983:57), five essential steps should be followed when analysing the data. (i) The inquirer should read the entire description of the experience in order to get a sense of the whole. (ii) The researcher should then read the entire typed interview again with the specific aim of identifying ‘constituents’ pertaining to the relevant study. Omery (1983:57) describes the

constituents as follows: “These constituents are not elements, the definition of which implied that one builds on the other, eventually forming a whole. Rather these units are discriminate, together making up the whole meaning of experience”. (iii) Thereafter all superfluous categories and subcategories are eliminated and the researcher uses only those categories and subcategories that are meaningful to the study. (iv) These remaining units are then clarified by relating them to each other and the whole. (v) Lastly, the identified categories and subcategories which are still in the “concrete language of the subject” (Omery, 1983:57) are transformed into the “language of science” (Omery, 1983:52).

Both of the methods of data analysis were included, as they are used in combination in this study. Because data analysis is an eclectic process (Tesch, 1990 in Cresswell 1994:53), this inquiry will adopt the transcript-based analysis methods described by Krueger (1994:143). A transcript-based analysis infers that data analysis can only begin once the audiotaped recordings have been verbatimly transcribed. The verbatim transcriptions of the recordings forms an essential part of the data analysis, as the researcher tried to incorporate and include all meanings and nuances of the subjects. Verbatim transcriptions of the interviews provide rich forms of data (Maxwell, 1996:95).

The entire verbatimly-transcribed descriptions of the questions presented to the respondents were read through (Kerlinger) to obtain the sense of whole (Giorgi). The interviews were read again (Giorgi) with the purpose of identifying the major units of analysis (Kerlinger). All categories and subcategories that were not considered meaningful were eliminated (Georgi), while the remaining categories were counted and assigned to the various themes (Kerlinger).

The research design is flexible as it allows the researcher to formulate and reformulate the acquired data when trying to describe as accurately as possible the experiences of the subjects in relation to the phenomenon being investigated. Themes, categories and subcategories may be modified and changed as the analysis of the information proceeds.

4.2.3.5 Data coding process

The researcher analysed the transcribed interviews using marginal notes, as this method allowed the researcher to underline and note all frequently recurring words, ideas and phrases that are relevant to the study. Field and Morse (1985:137) argue that the identification of such elements aids the identification and analysis of the underlying patterns in the data. This in turn helps develop categories, which will elucidate and fit the acquired data (Bryman, 1995). *Once all the data from the interviews were collected and transcribed, the next stage entailed the coding. The verbatim transcripts were read through several times in order to try to obtain a sense of the whole. During the above process, the researcher jotted down notes, comments and queries in the margins.*

4.2.4 Quality control

Marchall and Rossman (1995:143) contend, that “all research must respond to tenets that stand as criteria against which the trustworthiness of the project can be evaluated”. Lincoln & Guba (in Marshall & Rossman, 1995) state that these tenets must be rephrased into questions. The preference for these tenets is due to the questions that qualitative researchers ask, and the fact that qualitative studies concern themselves with empirically, socially located phenomena as subjects actually experience and perceive them (Krefting, 1991). The following tenets will be discussed namely: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

4.2.4.1 Credibility

Miles and Huberman (1994:278) state that with the tenet of credibility “we arrive at the crunch of the question”, that is the truth-value. In other words, credibility is concerned with the degree of confidence in the ‘truth’ of the findings pertaining to a particular study. Credibility refers to the truth as it is known, experienced, perceived and understood from the point of view of those involved in the study (Leininger, 1994: 105) as well the researcher who adopts “a stance of neutrality with regard to the phenomenon under study” (Patton, 1990:55).

In this study, it pertains to the individual interviews (participant’s perspective as well as the context in which the interviews will be conducted).

The credibility aspect is guaranteed by a process in which the participants' experiences are 'discovered' as they actually experienced and perceived them (Krefting, 1991:215). Credibility is further enhanced when the researcher describes and interprets her experiences, thereby showing her involvement (Koch in Holloway & Wheeler, 1996:164).

In this inquiry, credibility is ensured by the fact that verbatim transcriptions of the individual interviews were used, and the fact that the researcher attempted to block out all previously acquired knowledge and preconceptions surrounding and pertaining to this investigation.

Peer consultation is another strategy applied by the researcher to enhance the credibility of the study. Regular discussions were held with peers who have a general and in-depth understanding of the study. They were required to listen to ideas and concerns about the study, and asked to provide the necessary feedback and guidance. The feedback from peers served as aid to the researcher (i) in identifying validity threats, biases and assumptions on the part of the researcher (ii) as well as flaws in the logic of the researchers arguments and methods

4.2.4.2 Transferability

Transferability is the next criterion applied to assure rigour in qualitative research. This tenet raises the issue of whether conclusions drawn from one naturalistic inquiry can be transferred to another context and/or setting and still retain the particular meanings, interpretations and inferences (Miles & Huberman, 1994:279). The objective of naturalistic research is not to “produce generalisations, but rather in-depth understandings and knowledge of phenomena...” (Leininger, 1994:107). Maxwell (1996:96-7) differentiates between two types of generalisability: internal and external. Internal generalisability “refers to generalisability of a conclusion within a group or setting studied, whereas external generalisability refers to its generalisability beyond that setting or group”. External generalisability is often not a crucial issue in naturalistic research (Maxwell, 1996:97) whereas internal generalisability is. The descriptive, interpretative and theoretical validity of the conclusions depends on internal generalisability.

Naturalistic researchers are of the opinion that generalisation is not always possible because each research situation consists of a particular researcher who interacts in a particular manner with particular informants (Sandelowski, 1986:30). As Krefting (1991:216) argues, each situation is unique, and the particular group studied may not relate to others, thereby limiting the opportunity for generalisation of research findings and the drawing of conclusions, which may therefore not be transferable. To cite Guba (in Johnson, 1997:195), “Naturalistics eschew generalisations on the grounds that virtually all social behavioural phenomena are context bound”.

Since the assumption is made in the beginning of the study [cf. 4.1 Descriptive research] that the findings are descriptive in nature, transferability will not be an issue. Provided that the original researcher presents sufficient descriptive data to allow the comparison, he or she has addressed the problem of applicability adequately. The audit trail (Halpern in Morse, 1994a:24) will also contribute to

applicability as this enables another researcher to follow the cognitive development of the study as it develops. Transferability is not the responsibility of the original researcher; instead it is the responsibility of the person who wants to transfer the findings to another context or setting. The only requirement of the original researcher is that he or she presents sufficient data to allow another researcher to draw comparisons (Krefting, 1991:217, Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290).

The techniques applied in the study for improving the construct of transferability are thick description and purposive sampling that will be discussed in the following sections.

- ***Thick description***

The notion of thick description is used to enhance the construct of transferability. As Denzin (1989:31) contends, “thick interpretation attempts to uncover the means that inform and structure the subject's experiences”. In other words, thick descriptions afford the reader the opportunity to go to the heart of the subject's experience that is being interpreted (Denzin, 1989:32). The thick description of the aforementioned will afford researchers the opportunity to compare and determine whether the findings of this inquiry may be applied to their own contexts. *The researcher attempts to describe the setting or context in detail as well as the negotiations for access to the site.*

- ***Purposive sampling***

As previously discussed in this chapter, the researcher made use of purposive sampling. A strategy applied by naturalistic inquirers to enhance the construct of transferability is that of purposeful sampling. Purposive sampling is a form of sampling applied by the researcher where he/she “deliberately [selects] the sampling units that are to be included in the study because he [or she] feels that they are representative of the target population” (Abdellah & Levine 1979:333).

Thus, purposeful sampling ensures transferability because the sample is representative of the population.

4.2.4.3 Dependability

Dependability is the third tenet proposed by Lincoln and Guba in (Marshall & Rossman, 1995:145). This construct is concerned with “whether [the] process of the study is consistent, reasonably stable over time and across researchers and methods” (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278). In other words, dependability determines whether the findings of a specific inquiry would be consistent should they be replicated with similar subjects in a similar context (Krefting, 1991:216).

Krefting (1991:218) identifies the following strategies to improve the criterion of consistency in the tenet of dependability. Dependability is improved by the strategies of leaving an audit trail, triangulation, code and recode procedure, dense description and using a reflexive journal (Krefting, 1991:218). *To enhance the criterion of dependability in this research the following constructs were applied: dependability audit and dense description.*

The tenet of dependability was enhanced by the application of the technique of the ***dependability audit***. This technique implies that the researcher provides sufficient documentation and detail about the development of the research so that other researchers may follow, judge and reconstruct the process by which the inquirer reached his/her conclusions and decisions (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, Morse in Merriam, 1991:216). The audit trail consists of the following documentation as identified by Halpern in (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:319-320): raw data (interviews), data reduction and analysis (analysis of transcribed interviews) and data reconstruction (themes and categories).

4.2.4.4 Confirmability

This is the fourth and final alternative for achieving trustworthiness in qualitative research. “Confirmability refers to the repeated direct participatory and documented evidence observed or obtained from primary informant sources” (Leininger, 1994:105) by the researcher. In quantitative research, the researcher attempts to be as objective as possible; however, this is not possible in naturalistic inquiries due to variables such as the researcher being the key instrument in collecting and interpreting data. The emphasis of neutrality in naturalistic research is moved from the researcher to the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:299). The neutrality of the data, and not the neutrality of the researcher, is most important. Pitman & Maxwell (in LeCompte, et al., 1992:758) emphasise that the researcher should maintain the tradition of non-judgemental learning that is so characteristic of naturalistic investigations. In other words, the findings of the investigation should not be the result of the biases of the researcher but the results of the inquiry. *For the purpose of this study a confirmability audit were applied to improve confirmability. This audit includes all forms of raw data (tape recordings), theoretical notes (analysed data and the formation of the study) and process of the study (entails the methodology).*

Confirmability is established when the reader is able to assess the adequacy of the research process and judge whether the findings came directly from the data. *Confirmability is strengthened in this study as the researcher leaves an audit trail, thereby enabling the reader to judge the methodological and theoretical decisions of the study. This aids the reader in deciding on the trustworthiness of this study.*

5. Ethical rigour

As indicated in the diagrammatic presentation of the research process, ethical rigour is an element, applied in each step of this process. The researcher is therefore of the opinion that ethical rigour should underlie the core of this study.

A code of ethics is considered as a safeguard to protect the participants involved in the inquiry. Ethical behaviour on the part of the researcher is essential in any inquiry. This becomes clear when one reviews the behaviour of researchers in cases such as the Goldziener Contraception Case (1969), Project Camelot (1963), the Springdale Case (1950s) (in Cohen & Manion, 1994:347) and the Tuskegee Study (1932) (in Smith, 1975:79). The Nuremberg Code or Nuremberg Articles was the first internationally accepted effort to set up formal ethical standards (Wilson, 1987:32) regarding research on humans. This code requires informed consent in all cases, as well as the application of the four basic rights: the right not to be harmed, the right to full disclosure, the right of self-determination and the right of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality. It is essential that the researcher take these considerations into account because he/she must always bear in mind that he/she is studying the actions, reflections, perceptions and experiences of other people.

A document regarding ethics in research, as proposed by the faculty of economic and management sciences, at the Rand Afrikaans University (South Africa), states that researchers has a set of ethical obligations. These guidelines are to:

- Do value-adding research
- Set high standards in research
- Familiarise themselves with research and reporting methodologies.

This document further states that researchers should be ethically accountable and therefore aspire to:

- Achieve objectivity and maintain integrity
- Record and disclose their own data
- Follow ethical publishing practices
- Be accountable to society
- Be sensitive to and respect the right to privacy of their subjects
- Be sensitive to and respect the right to anonymity and confidentiality of their subjects
- Be sensitive to and respect the right to full disclosure about the research (informed consent)
- Protect subjects from harm (physical, psychological and emotional)
- Protect the integrity of the environment.

The following ethical standards were applied in this inquiry to safeguard the participants. The researcher fully disclosed the reason for the interviews, arranged interviews at times which participants deem to be convenient, assured respondents of confidentiality and acquired permission from each respondent to tape the interview. The researcher disclosed the methods and techniques used in this study, fully reported on findings, acknowledged sources used for the purposes of the study, obtained informed consent (in writing) and did not expose subjects to substantial risk or personal harm.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, attention was paid to the research design and method that will be used to gather the necessary information pertaining to this study. An attempt was made to describe the facets of this research process in detail, and justification was presented for the preferences made in this study. The next chapter will deal with the results of the transcribed interviews. The researcher will interpret the findings, link findings to literature study, and make recommendations for further research.



CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Introduction

The goal of this study, as formulated in chapter 1, was to establish whether mentoring could be used as a vehicle to institutionalise business ethics. The study focused on the micro-level of business ethics: the ethics and ethical behaviour of individual members of organisations, rather than ethics on the meso and macro levels. An initial literature review to gain an understanding of business ethics on the one hand and mentoring on the other hand, was undertaken and an overview of the two areas of interest was reflected in chapter 2 and chapter 3 respectively.

To answer the following specific research question: *To what extent can mentoring be utilised as a vehicle to institutionalise corporate ethical practices?* an exploratory qualitative research approach was employed to gain insights from participants involved in mentoring. The chosen research methodology was comprehensively discussed in Chapter 4 and the most important findings from the study are now reported in this chapter. Based on insights from the initial literature study in the first place, and on the results of the empirical study in the second place, a model is also presented to capture the findings of the study in a format that can serve as a guideline for (i) organisations implementing mentoring programmes, (ii) designers of mentoring programmes and (iii) tertiary institutions involved in management training. Recommendations for further research are made and a reflective analysis on the study is presented in the final analysis.

2. Identification of themes and categories

Primarily through the process of data analysis as suggested by Giorgi and Kerlinger (1983) (Chapter 4) the captured data from the 10 interviews was analysed and subsequently interpreted. Key-phrases-in-text were utilised as the units of analysis and categories, themes and sub-themes were identified on the basis of similarity and dissimilarity. The process was initiated without any preconceived ideas about categories, themes or sub-themes and a grounded theory approach was followed throughout.

Data generally appeared to cluster within two main categories: (i) mentoring and (ii) ethics in mentoring. Themes and sub-themes emerged within each of these categories. The number of responses did not determine whether a category, theme or sub-theme would be included; inclusion depended solely upon the relevance of the response to the study. It also has to be made clear that categories, themes and sub-themes should not be seen as exclusive: a degree of overlap existed in most instances and a holistic (Gestalt) approach was followed in the final interpretation to illuminate important links and relationships between different concepts. For the sake of clarity, the two categories will be discussed separately. Thereafter an integrated view will be presented.

2.1 Mentoring

Within the first main category (mentoring) three themes were identified:

1. Formal mentoring programme
2. Mentoring relationships
3. Benefits of mentoring.

Theme 1: Formal mentoring programme

With reference to the first theme (formal mentoring programme) the following key-phrases-in-text quoted below reflect the opinions of the respondents regarding different aspects of an existing formal mentoring programme in the company. Five sub-themes were identified.

Sub-theme 1: Content of the formal programme

- We are trying to formalise the process
- New approach to formal training
- One of the modules we talk about is values
- We run a module knowing myself
- In the program we encourage people to discuss the bigger, holistic issues
- Process
- One module handled ethics
- The first time when we sat on the programme of knowing myself, we were given a session where we could sit and think about the things that we once were taught when we were children, the things that were upsetting to us when we were children, the things we were scared of. And it was out of this programme through interaction and opening up, we were given a session where we could individually in the class stand up and open up and talk more about these things
- How to approach people, what their certain problems are
- Most mentoring things that we were studying, some of them was family-related, some of them was work-related
- We have done a whole lot of exercises that were sort of eye openers, particularly where we had done things that had to do with ourselves
- This has given a bit more structure especially, when you go through the different modules

Sub-theme 2: Participants' experience of the formal programme

- Programme made me feel much more confident work-wise and individual-wise
- Through the mentorship programme i was better able to restructure everything pertaining to my life
- In terms of mentorship, it has helped me to be able to focus on the positive side of things rather than the negative side of things, which I was in the past
- I will teach them and from there i would like them to do it on their own...and from there check the discussions with the mentors and mentees
- I learnt about interaction with people, to see other peoples viewpoints and to take cognition of differences in backgrounds
- Since I've been to this mentorship course, we learn how to treat people

Sub-theme 3: Pairing of participants

- Forced marriages
- HR select mentoring pair
- I think our names were pulled from a hat. Not that I was negative, but I thought it a bit strange
- I didn't have a choice
- I think if this mentorship course was not there I would not have related to John

Sub-theme 4: Goal for the formal mentoring programme

- Specific business benefits
- I am involved to gain experience and knowledge
- Positive experience
- Gives you the opportunity to build somebody else
- Enable protégé to reach his full potential
- To see him proceed to a level that suites him
- I don't know why I am on this programme myself
- Goal of mentorship programme is to groom them to become managers tomorrow
- My goal for mentorship is to make mentees feel free

Sub-theme 5: Training of mentors

- I cannot see the value of training mentors to become better mentors
- Important for mentor to be trained on ethical issues
- My mentor was not trained for this course, we studied together here

From the analysis above it was clear that the formal mentorship programme of the company continues for approximately one year and consists of various modules, like knowing yourself, 'personal finances' and 'interpersonal skills', and. The mentoring pairs met once a month, where one module was addressed and discussed. For the purpose of the formal mentoring programme, the human resource department of the organisation chose mentoring pairs.

For the purpose of this programme, the human resource department chose the mentor-protégé pairs, and the reason for this particular choice was unknown to both mentor and protégé. The participants in this study clearly had no say in the pairing process. Both mentors and protégés were also unsure of the organisation's reason for implementing the formal mentoring programme, although a few mentors thought career advancement might be the reason. No

training was provided for mentors or protégés in terms of mentoring. Contradicting thoughts about training of mentors came to the fore. Some mentors were of the opinion that mentoring training would not ensure 'better' mentors. On the other hand, some participants believed that they would have benefited from training.

Three important aspects were noticed from the responses:

(i) It was particularly apparent that the pairing process followed a rather coincidental path. This is in contrast to the conventional wisdom reported in the literature review that suggested organisations consider established informal mentoring relationships when pairing candidates for a mentoring programme. It was argued that the dynamics of 'forced pairing' relationships might be incompatible, and may lead to mentoring being unsuccessful. It is possible for informal mentoring relationships to exist before entering a formal relationship.

(ii) It was also noticeable that even if the organisation had a goal for the formal mentoring programme, neither mentors nor protégés were well aware of it.

(iii) Another important aspect of the formal mentoring programme that was not addressed by participants was any form of evaluation of the mentoring programme. The literature overview presented Chapter 3 argued strongly for some form of evaluation (formative and summative) of such an intervention. Certain outcomes need to be set for such a programme and a measuring tool should be used to determine whether these outcomes were met.

In order to later present an integrated model to capture most of the important findings of this study it was at this stage deemed useful to re-phrase and summarise the information gleaned from the above under the following headings to cover all of the important aspects believed to be relevant to a formal mentoring programme: See Table 5.1

Table 5.1: Aspects related to a formal mentoring programme

- Purpose of a formal mentoring programme
- Outcomes of a formal mentoring programme
- Pairing of candidates in a formal mentoring programme
- Content of a formal mentoring programme (e.g. a module related to codes of ethics)
- Evaluation of a formal mentoring programme
- Benefits of a formal mentoring programme

Theme 2: Mentoring relationship

With reference to the second theme (mentoring relationships) the following key-phrases-in-text quoted below reflect the opinions of the respondents regarding the different aspects of the coaching relationships in the company. Four sub-themes were identified.

**Sub-theme 1: Pre-requisites and characteristics of mentoring relationships**

- Communication in this relationship is most important.
- We have contact on a constant basis where he will come up and say I have got this problem or help me with this.
- We do discuss certain things, but it is in a very informal manner.
- The mentorship relationship opens up a better trust relationship, to be able to talk about things.
- Rudolph and I have built up a lot of trust between the two of us in this relationship.
- You need to have two-way communication that will lead to a effective relationship.
- We share a lot of things work-related, confidential things, and we help each other with problems, we can rely on each other.
- We have a very close relationship.
- Maybe it's our personalities that helps our good relationship.
- You should trust to have a relationship. If you can't win the trust of your mentee, the relationship is not going to work.

Sub-theme 2: Relationship development

- I think because both of us understand each other, that our relationship can only progress from here.
- I think the mentoring relationship is an ongoing thing.
- It will continue, I'm quite positive about that. Because it's been on such an informal basis beforehand I think its going to be very easy to continue afterwards.
- I think the ideal way to grow and develop is through a mentor who can assist you.
- It is a relationship which develops on a natural basis.
- It is about the dynamics thereof.
- Relationship develops.
- This is a relationship you have to build.

Sub-theme 3: Mentors role in mentoring relationship

- I have to coach him in that direction.
- I have a very close relationship with my mentee.
- My door is open at all times.
- I want to school him.
- For me it is really important to have a good personal relationship with my mentee.
- My mentee learns through me as an example.
- Rudolf assists me with job-related issues.
- He helps me to put theory into practice.
- He is always available on the phone if I need anything.
- He is a good example to follow if it comes to things like interpersonal relations, conflict management and decision-making.
- His door is always open to me whenever I need any kind of assistance.
- I can give her advice and assist her on a personal basis.
- In this type of relationship you learn from them as well.
- As mentor, you share your life's view and experiences with somebody.
- Trust relationship.
- Share that with each other.

Sub-theme 4: Protégés experience of mentoring relationship

- I learnt a lot in this relationship.
- I learnt about interaction with people.
- I have learnt much more of him as a person.
- The relationship with my mentor is beneficial to bounce ideas off.
- We can discuss anything.
- I suppose the mentorship programme and especially the relationship with Rudolph made me feel much more confident in what I'm doing, work-wise and individual-wise.

The mentoring relationship was regarded by most as the 'golden thread' that runs through the mentorship process. The implied implication was clearly that, without a mentoring relationship, mentoring could not take place. It also seemed that effective two-way communication was regarded as a prerequisite for a mentoring relationship to be successful. In this study, most participants indicated that their mentors followed an open-door policy, and that they have informal discussions on a regular basis. What distinguishes these informal discussions from the training in the formal mentoring programme is that 'theory' is applied in the first whereas informal mentors tend to use real life situations to assist them in solving problems and making decisions.

It was further noted that the forming of a mentoring relationship is a natural process. It is a process where a senior person in an organisation gives advice, assist and model job-related and personal 'know-how' to a junior employee. If a protégé chooses a mentor in an informal mentoring relationship, it would be someone that the protégé looks up to, feels comfortable interacting with, is willing to assist, and finds trustworthy. The mentor need not necessarily be the protégé's direct supervisor, but can be any person in the organisation, depending on the aim of the organisation's mentoring programme.

These responses from the participants were mostly in line with the ideas from the literature review reported earlier which suggests that the mentor should be a good example with regard to interpersonal relations, decision-making and conflict management. It was also argued that these informal relationships could possibly continue when a formal mentoring relationship is established and that organisations should consider when the pairing of mentors and protégés takes place. An alternative scenario might be when a new mentor is assigned to a protégé. Mentors and protégés interviewed for this study, were also of the opinion that a mentor would have a better understanding of the role if he/she had been a protégé in a mentoring relationship.

Because the formal mentoring programme continues for approximately one year, participants felt that they were 'forced' to persist in the mentoring relationship for at least that period of time. Participants indicated that they often initially did not feel comfortable within the relationship, but that the relationship grew over time.

Once again, to assist in the development of the integrated model later in the discussion, the following headings were considered to cover all that need to be taken into consideration when considering effective mentoring relationships. See Table 5.2

Table 5. 2: Aspects related to mentoring relationships

- Pairing of mentor and protégé
- Process of relationship building
- Prerequisites for effective mentoring relationships
- Characteristics of mentor for a successful mentoring relationship
- Characteristics of protégé for a successful mentoring relationship.

Theme 3: Benefits of mentoring

From the interviews conducted, it was clear that multiple benefits of mentoring exist. These benefits pertain to both the formal programme and informal mentoring relationship. Three sub-themes will be discussed and appropriate responses are again quoted directly.

Sub-theme 1:

- There are business benefits. You know it's less problems, more efficient and competent staff.

Only fleeting references were made to the fact that mentoring can benefit the broader aspects of an organisation's functioning if implemented effectively. Limited information regarding the planning of the mentoring programme (formal or informal), the organisation's goal for mentoring, the rationale for implementing the process and what the actual process is, were obtained from the participants. On the operational level though, participants identified two benefits, namely that mentoring develops employees and that this leads to more competent and efficient employees. From the responses one has to assume that either very little thought had gone into the benefits an organisation could derive from mentoring, or the respondents had limited knowledge in this regard.

Sub-theme 2: Benefits of mentoring for the mentor

- It is a benefit for me, from a personal feel good feeling that you are doing something for somebody and that you mean something for someone else.
- You learn from your mentee as well.
- I have learnt from my protégé as a person.
- I take pressure of myself. I want to school him. The more he can do for me, the less I have to do and I can really manage my department, which I'm not doing now.
- I learnt about interaction with people.
- For myself, it is very satisfying, it feels good.
- Because I feel fantastic.

Although mentoring focuses on developing protégés, it appears as if mentors also benefit from mentoring in various ways. Mentors felt that if they mentor a protégé effectively, their own workload can reduce meaningfully. Protégés do not make as many mistakes, and they are better at problem-solving and decision-making. Therefore, mentors have a vested interest in the success of their protégés. Mentoring gives mentors an added benefit of feeling good about themselves, as they play an integral role in the holistic development of their protégé. Most of the mentors interviewed for this study, indicated that they feel good because of what they contribute to the lives of their protégés. Lastly, mentoring contributes to the mentor's learning curve, as it is not only the protégé that has developed, but also the mentor.

Sub-theme 3: Benefits of mentoring for the protégé

- We encourage people.
- Develop the person as a holistic person.
- As I say the whole confidence thing, self-esteem, self-worth improved much over this time.
- Gives you work related guidance.
- It made me grow as a person.
- Assist him to reach his full potential.
- We help each other with problems.
- This mentorship encouraged my dream and it has helped me to see myself better than before.
- It helped discover myself.
- Mentorship is all about being a person and being able to look forward to achieving in life.
- And guidance-wise he helped me.
- You know, he has changed me.

From the interviews, it was clear that protégés benefit most from mentoring. The protégé is holistically developed. This means that the protégé does not only acquire job-related skills, but gains skills, knowledge and expertise in his/her personal and work life. Thus, personal and career growth takes place. The protégé is developed by means of a transfer of knowledge and skills from the mentor to the protégé. The mentor takes personal interest in the protégé, and provides him/her with advice and assistance. It was made clear that mentoring is a positive experience for protégés that leads to increased confidence, increased problem-solving ability, increased self-esteem, increased self-worth and independence. Mentors assist and guide protégés in developing their decision-making and problem-solving capabilities. Refer to figure 5.3 as a summary of the benefits of mentoring for organisations, mentors and protégés.

As was done in earlier sections of the discussion the following headings were considered relevant for inclusion in a final explanatory model to cover all aspects related to the benefits of mentoring. See Table 5.3

Table 5. 3: Aspects related to the benefits of mentoring

For the organisation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competent staff • Efficient staff • Knowledgeable staff
For the mentors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds to mentors learning curve • Reduces mentors problem-solving lead • Vested interest in protégés success • Added benefit of feeling good about him/herself
For the Protégés	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor takes personal interest • Advice, assistance • Transfer of knowledge and skills • Holistic development of protégé • Leads to increased confidence • Increased self-esteem, self-worth • Gain experience, independence • Personal and career growth • Increased problem-solving ability

In summary then, the three main themes (and sub-themes) identified above, will later be incorporated into an integrated model to explain the findings that emerged within Category 1 (Mentoring).

2.2 Ethics in mentoring

The second main category into which the interview data was clustered dealt with the issues pertaining to *ethics* in mentoring specifically. It appeared as if ethics in mentoring was believed to manifest itself in two ways. Firstly, attention was drawn to the ethical behaviour of the mentor and protégé within the mentoring relationship. This is later referred to as the ethical relationship. Secondly, focus was placed on the transfer of organisational ethics, by means of mentoring, in an attempt to institutionalise business ethics. From the interviews conducted, it became clear that without an ethical relationship mentor and protégé, the transfer of organisational ethics could not take place. An ethical relationship was

therefore viewed a prerequisite for ethical transfer to take place. The interrelatedness of these two dimensions of ethics in mentoring will feature throughout the following discussion.

Within this second main category (Ethics in mentoring) four themes were identified:

- Concept of ethics
- Codes of ethics and organisational transfer
- Ethics training in the formal mentoring programme
- Ethics in the mentoring relationship.

Theme 1: Concept of ethics

Verbatim quotes below reflect the opinions of the respondents in relation to the concept of ethics in mentoring.

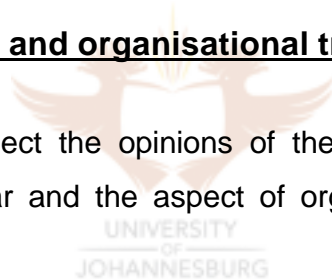
Concept of ethics

- It is trust, integrity, reliability, responsibility, empathy of the guy next to you or somebody comes to you with a problem.
- It's a spiritual thing.
- It is certainly not an intellectual thing.
- A change of heart will lead to ethics.
- You should always look at working the better of the bigger picture.
- Ethics is to serve the bigger picture and unfortunately in the society that we live in is very materialistic and people look after their own images.
- What is expected of people to behave.
- Ethics plays a part in decisions.
- It's basic decency in treating people.
- Ethics you know is what's right and what's wrong.
- Is behaviour appropriate or is it inappropriate?
- Value system includes honesty and trust.
- Universal honesty, integrity.
- Ethics is more moral.
- Moral things we talk about but not ethical things, but it's their perception.
- Everybody doesn't think along the same lines.
- Yes moral things we talk about but not ethical things, but it's in their perception.
- Ethics from your angle and from my angle might be worlds apart.

From the above it was clear that the perception of the term ethics is not uniform. Most participants though were of the opinion that ethics is “what’s right and wrong.” One would have expected that all the participants, because they are employees of the same holding company, should have been informed of the same set of ethical principles applicable throughout of the company. Although all employees were, to some extent, aware of the existence and importance of business ethics, most were of the opinion that unethical behaviour is present in all organisations. Some participants were of the opinion that it is basically impossible to change a person’s personal value system, whereas other participants felt strongly about the fact that it is of utmost importance to change employees’ personal value systems to ensure a change in ethical behaviour within the organisation itself.

Theme 2: Code of ethics and organisational transfer

Verbatim quotes below reflect the opinions of the respondents in relation to codes of ethics in particular and the aspect of organisational transfer related thereto:



Sub-theme 1: Code of ethics

- No, I have not read it, but yes it does exist.
- So currently there isn't one but they started the process now.
- Set specific guidelines.
- I don't think we have a...in fact I don't think we do. We do have a sort of code of conduct.
- But the code of ethics is a universal perception.
- You can set legal rules, but ethics is more moral.
- And the code is a marketing tool to the outside world to say what we are doing.
- If top management sets the code of ethics it will probably not be easy to get the buy-in of all employees. It would probably be important to get their (employees) input to start with.
- I don't think Joshua knows the content of it, it is one of those documents.
- Given a piece of paper is worthless.
- They don't have one that I know of.
- It's amazing, we don't have one.

Sub-theme 2: Organisational transfer

- I don't know what it says.
- I think the code of ethics is something that is a spin off and coming out of corporate governance.
- At this stage it is handled more on a rules and regulations point of view rather than an ethical point. Companies normally combine the two.
- Forced down code of ethics.
- If you don't live by it, it is going to become a document.
- We've got a zero tolerance attitude.
- I don't think everybody knows the content of the code.
- Managers don't convey what is required of the employees, perhaps the problem is communication.
- The company's code of ethics don't, if personal, I don't believe you can ingrain ethics in a permanent person at a later stage.

Some participants were of the opinion that a code of ethics is a 'universal perception'. In their opinion all organisations should have a uniform code of ethics. They thought that in South Africa though, organisations now have codes of ethics as spin-offs from the emphasis on corporate governance. This leads to some organisations forcing a set of ethical principles on employees. The code of ethics then becomes a set of legal rules and regulations that organisations have to ensure their employees adhere to. Some participants thought their particular organisation makes use of the code of ethics as 'window dressing' or a 'marketing tool' to impress the outside world.

Contradicting responses were found related to the institutionalisation of business ethics via the code of ethics. Some participants were of the opinion that the size of an organisation influences the institutionalisation of ethics. Large organisations follow the enforcement approach with regard to their code of ethics and have great difficulty transferring ethical values and principles. One of the reasons for the above is the fact that these organisations tend to be impersonal. Organisations smaller in size find it easier to institutionalise ethics, as they function on a more interpersonal basis. A few participants felt that the size of an organisation should not play a role in the institutionalisation of business ethics.

From the interviews conducted, it was unclear whether a code of ethics in fact exists in the organisation being studied. It was quite clear, though, that even if a code of ethics existed in this organisation, it is not communicated clearly and effectively to the employees of this particular organisation. One participant made specific mention of the fact that a code of ethics should be a 'living document'.

For ethical transfer to take place, it was generally believed that top management must be committed and seen to be 'living' the organisation's code of ethics. The participants were further of the opinion that an ethical top management does not necessarily ensure an ethical workforce, the reason being that there are often somewhat impersonal relationships between top management and staff and limited communication between members from the different organisational levels. For the effective transfer of business ethics to take place, well-established one-on-one relationships need to exist between supervisors and employees (or mentors and protégés). The conviction was expressed that appropriate ethical behaviour should be part of the everyday life of all employees. In the specific organisation studied, it was believed that a zero tolerance stance towards unethical behaviour was maintained despite the fact that the consequences of unethical behaviour might not have been formally communicated to employees.

It was generally argued that the top management of this organisation does not manage ethics at all. Top management were expected to support and commit to the process if success were to be expected. The formulated code of ethics needed to be communicated to all employees. From the above discussion, it should be clear that the organisational context creates the setting for ethical transfer to take place in an organisation. Figure 5.1 below reflects this notion.

Figure 5.1. Context for organisational transfer of code of ethics



Theme 3: Ethics training in the formal mentoring programme

Verbatim quotes below reflect the opinions of the respondents related to the aspect of ethics training in the formal mentoring programme.

Theme 3: Ethics training in the formal mentoring programme

- We had discussed ethics in the mentorship course. There was one module that handled it. It was about how to approach people, what their certain problems are.
- Formal training programs can't help you in an ethical dilemma.
- Conveying ethics is not a theoretical exercise.
- I feel it is important for a mentor to be trained on the companies ethical principles, and ethics in general.
- If I had training I would be able to transfer this ethical conduct.
- I learned about your interaction with people on the mentoring course.

Most participants of this study were of the opinion that formal ethics training of employees needs to take place. During training, the employees should be informed of what the organisation stands for in terms of expected (and rejected) ethical (unethical) behaviour. Ethics training could address the organisation's code of ethics as well as universal concepts like honesty, integrity and interpersonal conduct. From the interviews conducted it was evident that formal ethics training alone, does not ensure a corporate culture of 'living' the code of ethics. It is therefore imperative that the organisation implements processes on the operational level to ensure the institutionalisation of ethical behaviour.

Participants of this study were of the opinion that the formal mentoring programme could serve as a platform for ethics training. In this regard, mentors should be trained on the code of ethics, to enable them to transfer ethics knowledge and skills to their protégés. Apart from the theoretical training on ethics, the mentoring relationship makes it possible for mentors to use everyday examples, to illustrate appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

From the interviews conducted, it was clear that the organisation does not formally make use of mentoring to transfer ethical principles. Little attention is given to ethics in the formal mentoring programme. The programme consists of various modules, and in only one of the modules, ('knowing yourself') values are addressed to some extent. This module makes it easier to talk about ethics as the mentoring relationship develops. The mentors interviewed, were of the opinion that the formal mentoring programme would be the ideal platform to address ethical issues (in particular the code of ethics). Certain concepts needed to be covered during ethics training. These concepts are summarised below (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: Aspects related to ethics training in the formal mentoring programme

- Formal ethics training in terms of code of ethics
- Formal ethics training in terms of organisational values
- Formal ethics training for mentors and protégés
- Training with regard to code of ethics, organisational values, organisational culture and interpersonal conduct
- Training with regard to excepted and rejected ethical behaviour
- Should address consequences of unethical behaviour

Theme 4: Ethics in the mentoring relationship

The verbatim quotes in the table below reflect the opinions of the respondents in relation to ethics in the mentoring relationship.

Sub-theme 1: The ethics within the mentoring relationship

- If you believe in ethics, you're going – it's mother's milk – what's going through the mother is going through the child, what's going through the mentor is going through the mentee.
- He has got trust in me.
- There must be trust in the relationship.
- I value his decisions and he values my decisions.
- Yes, I see my mentor as an ethical person.
- You need to spend a lot of time together.
- You've got to be completely open with each other.
- More specifically that ethical relationship.
- Yes if the right ethics are been shown, by an ethical person.
- If my mentor is going to behave unethically, it is definitely going to impact on me.
- You need to develop a rapport with each other, so that you are comfortable when you talk about some things.
- Maybe the personalities facilitate that.
- My mentor should be ethical.
- You have to be ethical in a sense that I have to see you as my role model.
- I need to believe in you.
- I believe, once I have belief I know that in my heart it tells me that believing in you, you also can help me reach my goal.
- You really have to set a good example.

Sub-theme 2: The organisational ethics transferred by means of mentoring relationship

- To be able to discuss ethical aspects, I think you need to spend a lot of time together and you've got to be completely open with each other.
- Trust the other person.
- You need to discuss and model ethics.
- Ethics can be transferred by means of mentorship.
- Mentorship can help to assist the person in an ethical dilemma.
- Because our relationship is building, we can easier talk about ethical things.
- My mentor made me more aware of ethics.
- He taught me how to handle conflict.
- When ethical questions arise and that's when the mentor can persist.
- Share with her ethical things.
- Communicate the values of the company.
- Once you build that relationship, then you can talk about ethics, otherwise not.
- I still believe that if you have this one on one relationship, that your chances are better to create a good person or a person that believes in ethics and values .
- By mentoring her, I am reinforcing her in terms of ethics.
- Lack of communication.
- Decency in treating people (with dignity).
- A mentor must example ethics.
- Managers don't convey what's required.
- Trust, integrity, responsibility, empathy for the guy next to you.
- In our relationship I treat my protégé the way I would like to be treated.
- I wouldn't say we have touched on ethics, but I think sometimes it comes naturally in discussing business issues, and discuss what people – what is expected of people to behave and things like that. The values that one would attach maybe to a company .
- One would be in a position to understand how one is expected to act under certain conditions.
- Dealing with customers .
- You need to behave in an appropriate manner.
- So for the code to be effective we need to talk about it and we need to be aware that it is there and we need to know how it affects us as employees.
- So what happens is that you will find yourself acting those things and behaving according to what has been discussed and it helps you to bridge yourself along the way.

Participants confirmed that for ethics to be transferred, a solid mentoring relationship should have been established. Two factors were identified namely, (i) the ethics within the mentoring relationship and then (ii) the organisational ethics transferred by means of mentoring.

In terms of the **first factor** (ethical relationship) participants indicated that a mentoring relationship should be built on ethical principles for them (protégés) to feel comfortable to talk about ethics. Thus for mentoring to be effective, and ethics to be conveyed, an ethical mentoring relationship needs to exist. The relationship should be built on ethical principles like trust, honesty and integrity.

Protégés are of the opinion that they need to see their mentors as ethical people for the mentoring relationship to be effective. The mentor should therefore be an ethical role model and example to his/her protégé.

Related to the **second factor**, participants indicated that mentors need to build a relationship with protégés to be able to address (talk about) ethics. It appears that the stronger the mentoring relationship, the easier it becomes to talk about ethics. Very little talk about ethics can take place if a one-on-one relationship does not exist. According to participants, this one-on-one relationship can create a better person (protégé) that believes in organisational ethics. A shared mindset regarding the organisation's ethics is a prerequisite for effective ethics transfer within the mentoring relationship. If a mentoring relationship exists, talking about ethics comes naturally and is entwined in all aspects of that relationship. A holistic approach to ethics should be followed, and therefore ethics is not just an add-on topic that needs to be addressed. Mentors lead by example and therefore act as role models. Protégés need to see their mentors as ethical persons, for ethics to be conveyed. If a problem arises, the mentor addresses it in terms of ethical behaviour, and the consequences thereof. The mentor assists his protégé in work-related as well as personal ethical dilemmas.

The organisation where interviews were conducted does not expect of mentors to formally discuss organisational ethics, however mentors do discuss ethics informally. Mentors agreed that it should be done and that it is important. Ethics as a formal topic is not discussed, but appropriate and inappropriate behaviour is discussed on an informal basis. If a problem of inappropriate behaviour occurs, the mentoring relationship is used as a platform to discuss ethics. Informal ethics talk is important but mentors and protégés need a code of ethics as a guideline for these discussions.

Ethics talk therefore mainly takes place within the mentoring relationship, although the researcher is of the opinion that training and discussions on organisational ethics should also be addressed within the formal mentoring

programme. For the transfer of ethics to take place, the mentoring relationship needs to meet certain requirements. These requirements are summarised below (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Aspects related to the ethics in the mentoring relationship

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical mentoring relationship • Informal ethics talk and share ethical experiences • Create ethical awareness • Transfer ethical principles • Discuss consequences of unethical behaviour • Build a one-on-one relationship • Follow holistic approach to ethics • Ethical relationship makes ethics talk easier • Mentor is an ethical role model • Transfer of organisational ethical principles in everyday working life

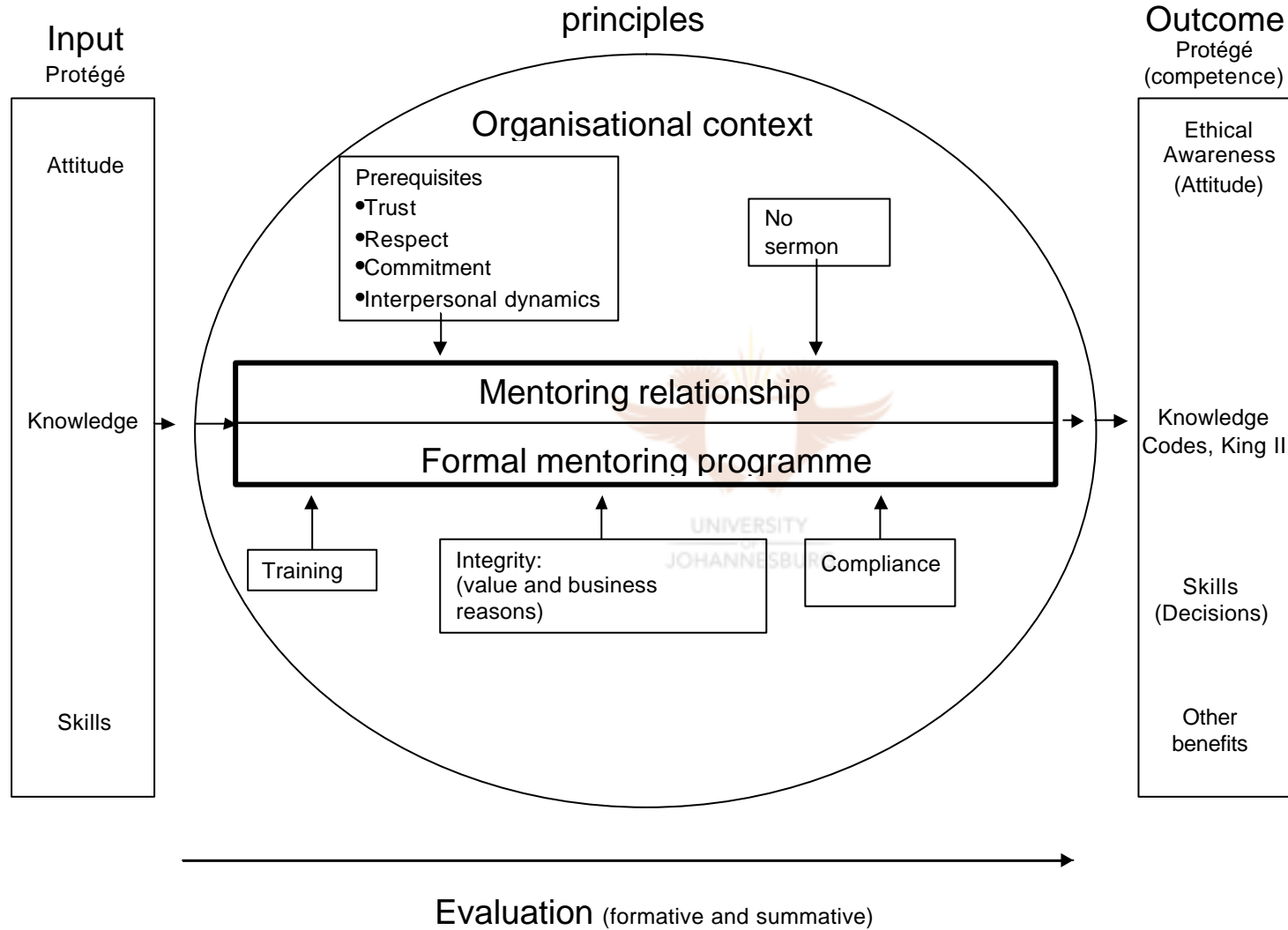
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2.3 An integrated model and integrative summary of results

The above sections dealt with mentoring and ethics on an individual basis, but to serve the purpose of this study, it is of importance to integrate these two processes. From the information identified during the analysis of the interviews conducted (Tables 5.1 – 5.5) and related literature study, the following model (Figure 5.2) is proposed to aid understanding of the usefulness of mentoring as an intervention to institutionalise business ethics.

Figure 5.2: An integrated model of business ethics and mentoring

Mentoring as a vehicle to institutionalise organisational ethical principles



The model consists of Tables 5.1 to 5.5 put together. However, it was believed that certain aspects of this approach were still lacking and therefore information from the literature study was used (Chapter 2 and Chapter 3) to complete the model. The model was built on the systems approach. On the input side is the protégé with his knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding organisational ethical principles when entering the mentoring relationship. As a result of exposure to the formal mentoring process (programme and relationship) the expected output is a protégé with (i) an attitude which portrays ethical awareness (ii) skills which include a thorough knowledge of organisational ethics (organisations' code of ethics and principles as set out in the King II report) (iii) skills that will make him competent to take decisions, solve problems and interact within the expected ethical standards of that particular organisation.

The formal mentoring programme normally takes place on a monthly basis and continues for a period. (In the case of the organisation studied the time period was one year). The core of the mentoring process is the mentoring relationship that has developed. Mentors should be well chosen in terms of their suitability to convey ethical messages. Mentors and protégés should also be compatible in terms of personality, thus enabling ethics talk to take place within the mentoring relationship. Organisations need to ensure that the organisational context is conducive to the development of such a relationship as well as for business ethics to be institutionalised. To create such an environment organisations need to have a code of ethics, a plan to institutionalise business ethics in all levels of the organisation and a culture of integrity. The above all takes place within the organisational context.

The formal process as well as the mentoring relationship needs to be monitored and evaluated throughout the mentoring process. This would give the ethics manager an indication as to the extent to which the mentoring process enhances the institutionalisation of ethics within that particular organisation. It would furthermore indicate possible improvements that organisations can make in

terms of the mentoring process. (e.g. the pairing of participants, the training of mentors and protégés and the content of the formal mentoring programme).

The outcome of mentoring as discussed previously in this section would largely be determined by the mentoring intervention. If this intervention is well planned, implemented and evaluated, it can lead to numerous benefits to the organisation, mentors and protégés.

3. Implications of findings

The implications of the findings are discussed from three perspectives:

- Implications for organisations implementing mentoring programmes
- Implications for designers of mentoring programmes
- Implications for tertiary institutions involved in management training.

3.1 Implications for organisations implementing mentoring programmes

The results of this study clearly indicate that mentoring **can** play a significant role in the institutionalisation of organisational ethics. For mentoring to play a successful role in institutionalising business ethics, the organisation must have a code of ethics that serves as an ethical guideline to all employees. The most effective approach to follow in institutionalising organisational ethics would be the integrity approach (as discussed at length in chapter 2). Without top management support and commitment, business ethics cannot be institutionalised and mentoring will not be successful.

Mentoring should be a well-planned and implemented process. Mentors should be formally trained on the company's code of ethics as well as the ethical

requirements of a mentoring relationship. The pairing of mentoring participants is of utmost importance. Ethical transfer will take place if the protégé perceives his mentor as ethical. The mentoring process consists of the formal mentoring programme and the more informal mentoring relationship. During the mentoring programme formal ethics training will create an awareness of the organisation's code of ethics, as well as the ethical expectations they have of their employees. On the other hand, a one-on-one mentoring relationship that develops between a protégé and an ethical mentor over time, paves the way for the transfer of ethical principles to occur.

Introducing a mentoring programme in an organisation should be a process that is well thought through and well planned. Mentoring offers numerous benefits to organisations of all sizes, if it is correctly implemented and followed through. Mentoring is addressed in literature, which should enable organisations to plan such an intervention effectively. In terms of ethics, the literature is clear on the importance and necessity thereof. Although the institutionalisation of ethics in organisations is a new field, the topic (importance, process, benefits and problems) has been investigated in some detail. From the literature as well as the empirical study conducted, it is evident that these two interventions implemented by organisations to improve their effectiveness, are typically not integrated.

The intent of this study was to highlight the role of mentoring in institutionalising business ethics. This intervention takes place on the operational level of the institutionalisation process. Organisations that already implement mentoring programmes may very well consider using mentoring for creating an ethical awareness, educating employees on ethics in general as well as the organisation's ethical code, and through the mentoring relationship ensure that employees incorporate business ethics in their everyday work life.

3.2 Implications for designers of mentoring programmes

Designers of mentoring programmes can now possibly design these programmes not only as interventions for career advancement, but also to assist organisations in the institutionalisation of their business ethics. In the planning process, certain elements of the ethical transfer need to be built in. The formal mentoring programme should make provision for the training of mentors on the organisation's code of ethics, how ethical transfer takes place, and what their role is in this transfer process. Ethics is not just another add-on module in the mentoring programme, but should be integrated in all aspects of mentoring. Protégés need to be trained to create an awareness of ethics as well as to familiarise protégés with the content of the code of ethics.

The most important component of the mentoring process is the mentoring relationship. This is where the institutionalisation takes place. If designers of mentoring programmes are involved in the pairing of mentors and protégés, attention should be given, as the choice of mentoring pair is the basis for the mentoring relationship. Designers should lastly incorporate evaluation interventions when planning a mentoring programme to ensure that ethical transfer takes place.

3.3 Implications for tertiary institutions involved in management training

Organisational ethics should be part of every student's syllabus when studying towards a managerial qualification. This study implies that mentoring can assist organisations greatly in the institutionalisation of their ethical code. Subject content would have to cover ethics and the institutionalisation thereof extensively. On the operational level, mentoring would then be added as a possible method to assist organisations in ensuring effective institutionalisation.

The integrated model would assist students in understanding the role mentoring can play in the institutionalisation process.

4. Recommendations for further research

It is in conclusion of this study appropriate to make certain recommendations for further research.

- To what extent this descriptive and interpretative material is applicable to other mentorship relationships taking place in other organisations, only further studies and research can determine.
- The evaluation of the nature of implementation and the impact of mentoring as an organisational ethics intervention.
- The development of an integrated curriculum (degree and post degree) in the training of managers with regard to the role of mentoring in the institutionalisation of business ethics.
- To what extent mentoring programmes can be used when the aim is to fast-track junior employees in organisations.
- To investigate whether organisations have improved in their attempt to institutionalise business ethics and whether organisations are moving towards the integrity approach.

5. Reflective analysis

If I had to conduct this research again, there would be certain aspects that I would address and execute differently. In the area of research, limitations necessarily apply. In the case of this specific research, the following restrictions were noted: this study focused on qualitative research only. Triangulation, i.e. qualitative and quantitative research, might have been an alternative. The interviews conducted were done with a specific portion of the population. Ideally,

a random selection of employees who had undergone mentoring, in a variety of organisational sectors, could have been interviewed. Another option would have been to conduct a comparative analysis pertaining the impact of mentoring on organisational ethical behaviour. Limited information was gained about the true dynamics of a mentoring relationship in terms of ethics, and in retrospect could have received more attention in this study. A more comprehensive analysis could be considered for further research.

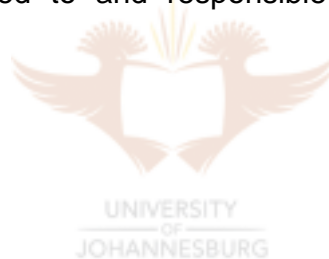
6. Closing thoughts

As depicted in chapter two of this study, business essentially has to become an integral part of any organisation. It should be a planned, participative and well-communicated process that takes place from strategising right through to the operational level of any given organisation. On an operational level, business's ethics need to become part of each employees working life to ensure institutionalisation. Various interventions to enhance institutionalisation of business ethics on an operational level were dealt with in Chapter 2 of this study.

From this study, it became apparent that mentoring could be used effectively to enhance the institutionalisation of business ethics on the operational level. Mentoring is not a new concept and much research has been conducted on this topic. The reasons for organisations implementing mentoring in their organisations might differ, but most organisations find the mentoring process - if wellplanned, implemented and followed through - to be beneficial. Well-documented research on the process, content, advantages and disadvantages are available to prospective researchers. The fact remains that depending on the organisation's goal for introducing a mentoring programme, each mentoring programme needs to be tailor-made for that specific organisation and participants.

It is thus possible for organisations to make use of mentoring as an intervention and to ensure that their employees are aware of ethics. It creates a platform for ethics talk to take place. An ethical mentoring relationship paves the way for senior staff (mentors) to transfer ethical principles, as well as being role models in this regard. This type of transfer takes place formally and informally. As the respondents of this study commented, more effective ethical transfer takes place in the setting of a one-on-one relationship with an ethical trusted advisor (mentor).

What remains to be seen is whether organisations realise the true value of institutionalising business ethics. Only when top management become committed and ethical themselves, can it be expected of their employees to follow suite. Hopefully this study may add to the intervention possibilities that are at the disposal of those committed to and responsible for ethics management in organisations.



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