

THE FEASIBILITY AND BENEFITS OF
A PARTICIPATIVE APPROACH TO CHANGE
WITHIN POWER SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

Document 1 – Topic Exploration & Research Proposal:

Understanding how Strategic Level Issues Impact Individual Acceptance of Change

Document 2 – Critical Literature Review & Conceptual Development:

The Feasibility and Benefits of a Participative Approach to Change within Power Solutions

Document 3 – A Qualitative Interpretative Report:

Facilitating Adaptability to Information Systems through a Participative Approach

Abstract

This thesis comprises of 3 documents and is concerned with a participative approach to change within an organisational setting. The organisation in question is Power Solutions which is a business unit of Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions. Document 1 aims to explore the key issues that influence people's ability to adapt to a changing organisational environment. Through an initial review of literature, the significance and effect of organisational culture, change management strategy and leadership style is questioned.

The comprehensive review of the literature in Document 2 seeks to understand the feasibility and benefits of adopting a participative approach to organisational change within Power Solutions. Using an information systems project as an example, the results of the literature review indicate that organisations which initiate a participative approach to change need supportive organisational characteristics, leadership and the commitment of individuals in order to sustain such an initiative.

Document 3 uses the themes generated from the literature review to support the findings of a qualitative case study. The research explores the feasibility of adopting a participative approach to change for the implementation of the Primavera information system within Power Solutions. This investigation focuses on how a team of individuals involved in the Primavera Project experienced events. The analysis explores management and non-management team member perceptions to understand whether Power Solutions' organisational characteristics and leadership assist or impede a participative approach. The research uses an inductive process in which theory is developed from the data. This enabled the researcher to capture the rich subjective perceptions and meanings that people apply to events that have occurred in the Primavera Project.

The analysis revealed that personnel within Power Solutions, although extremely flexible and adaptable to change in their core business activities, are less adaptable to information systems change. This is specific to non office based individuals who have less exposure to technology such as Engineers. Communication was an emerging theme that developed from comments concerning a lack of clarity of the strategic direction of Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions in general. This, together with an alignment of the business and information systems strategy is recommended to encourage the participation of all stakeholders thus gaining their commitment to the Primavera Project.

Document 1

Topic exploration and research proposal

**Understanding how strategic level issues impact
Individual acceptance of change**

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Introduction

The aim of this study is to understand the key issues that influence people's ability to adapt to a changing environment and how change management strategy and approaches can affect individual commitment in the context of business unit integration.

The challenge is to integrate business strategy, processes, systems and ultimately individuals into a newly formed business unit – Power Solutions.

To this end, the research will use several situational case studies to understand how different approaches are used to facilitate the acceptance of change.

Referencing the literature reviewed to-date, I will question the significance and effect of organisational culture, change management strategy and leadership style. These elements together with the application of different approaches in unique situations will form a holistic view of the overall issues which need to be addressed.

1. Organisation & managerial context

1.1 Background

The purpose of my role in Business Improvement at Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions is to increase added value by challenging current processes, and facilitating change to support improvement projects. To achieve this I use a variety of methods and techniques from a range of disciplines including; change management, problem solving and project management.

Through the process of this research I will address the business transition issues brought about through a company merger and the subsequent need to integrate two business streams. This paper discusses the effect on people using various case studies. The case studies detail how different approaches are used to encourage people to adapt to unique situations.

It is anticipated that material will be sourced from a number of disciplines including change management, organisational behaviour and leadership theory.

1.2 Company Background

Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions (BBUS) is one of twenty-one operating companies forming Balfour Beatty Plc. With an annual turnover of approximately £600m and over 5200 employees it is the UK's largest multi-utility service provider across electricity, gas, and water sectors. The company is divided into three business units; Power Solutions, Utility Solutions and Integrated Solutions servicing clients including National Grid, United Utilities, Central Networks and Severn Trent Water (Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions, 2007).

The Power Solutions business unit specialises in high voltage large scale electrical contracts and has four business streams comprising overhead power line services, underground high voltage cabling services, a fabrication and manufacturing plant

and joint venture electrical contract with National Grid, called National Grid Alliance.

2. Issue and justification

2.1 Drivers of change

BBUS was formed on 4th November 2007 from two operating companies; Balfour Beatty Power Networks and Balfour Beatty Utilities¹.

In 2005 a client perception survey was conducted. The results highlighted customers confusion due to the separate points of contact between the two Balfour Beatty operating companies. The merger of the two organisations gave one focal point for client contact and the opportunity to move into other market segments. This is summarised in the following quotation from Phil Brookes, BBUS Managing Director:

The merger of our utilities businesses will reap many rewards in terms of simplifying our customer points of contact, allowing us to build on our existing customer base and maximising future opportunities whilst aligning the company more closely with its customers' requirements.

Phil Brookes (MD, BBUS)

(Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions Utility Businesses
Join Forces at Balfour Beatty, 2007)

This topic investigates and draws conclusions of this strategic decision with a specific focus on the Power Solutions business unit. Power Solutions was formed from two separate autonomous operational divisions; Transmission and Cabling. The integration of these two businesses will require changing of mindsets to adapt to new structures, processes and systems. Some of these issues are shown in Fig. 1.

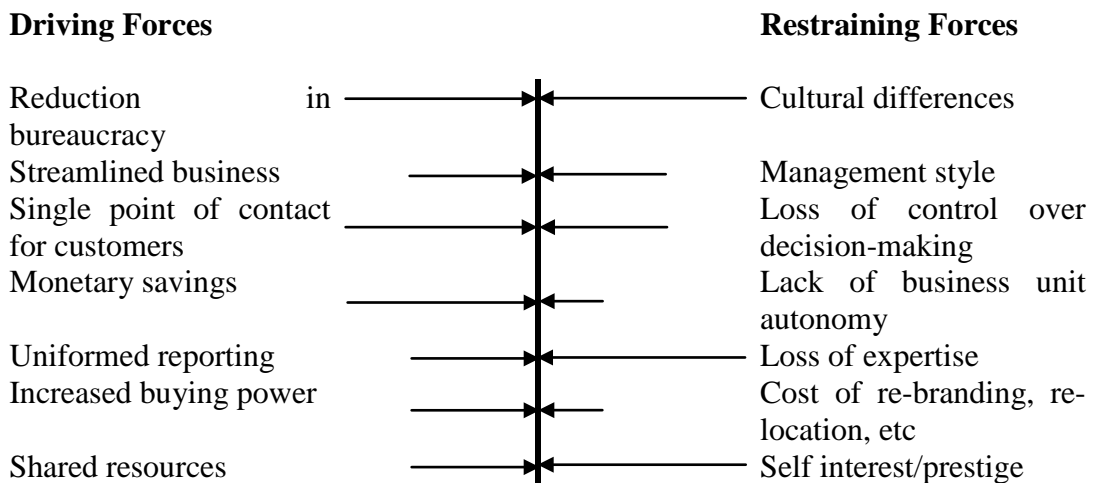
¹ See attachment 1 for further information regarding company history.

This research will be particularly helpful in:

- Understanding the most influential factors affecting individual acceptance.
- Understanding the best approaches and techniques to use in a variety of situational issues.

The following Force Field Analysis indicates some potential areas for investigation developed from my own understanding of the current organisational situation.

Fig. 1 – Power Solutions Integration - Force Field Analysis



adapted from 12Manage (no date)

2.2 Justification

This topic is of particular relevance and will have a significant impact on the development of team relations and shared culture, within BBUS Power Solutions business unit.

The study will be a valuable contribution to both the organisation and in my daily working environment. Through application to practical situations, I will develop an improved understanding of the approaches and techniques available. It is anticipated that the findings from this research will be of benefit to the organisation in progressing the current change programme and provide ‘lessons

learned' for future change initiatives. The study will also be of interest to other managers dealing with a variety of change issues, particularly those interested in the effect on individuals. I also envisage that it will be of interest to professional associations and the academic community.

2.3 Aim

To understand the implications and impact of change management strategy on employee acceptance.

2.4 Objectives

- a. Determine what change management strategy has been adopted by management and propose reasons for this choice.
- b. Understand the dominant organisational culture and how this may affect individual acceptance.
- c. Recognise the prevailing leadership style and how this may affect individual acceptance.
- d. Understand, through interaction and collaboration between groups, how strategic level factors (as indicated in a, b and c) influence individual acceptance of change.
- e. Apply group and individual interaction techniques as a means of developing an improved situational understanding.

3. Overview of literature

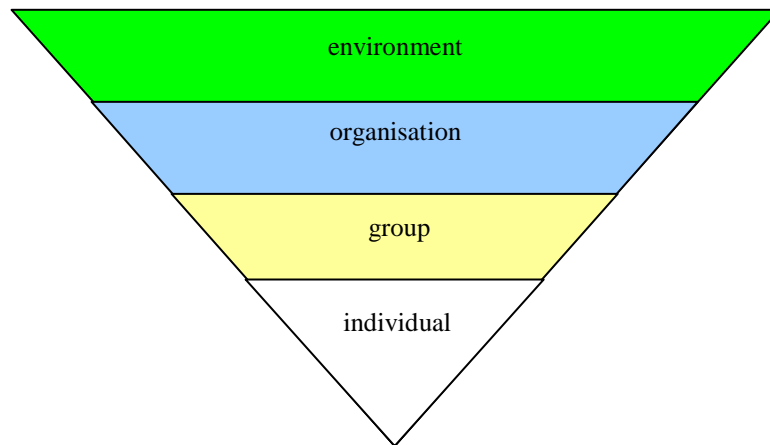
3.1 Introduction

Initial investigation into current literature has helped to identify the most appropriate disciplines to consider and reference in relation to the chosen topic and issues. I have found that information from the areas of change management and organisational behaviour to be of particular relevance. Works by Hayes, Lewin, Clegg and Walsh and Mullins have been helpful in improving my understanding of the topical issues whilst Saunders, Fisher and Todd have proved invaluable references in terms of the structuring and content development of Document 1. I am keen to begin exploring and cross-referencing the literature to develop a deeper understanding of the theories proposed by key authors such as Burke and Litwin, Kotter and Schlesinger and Dawson.

In their paper 'A Causal Model of Organisational Performance and Change' Burke & Litwin (1992) argue that factors such as strategy, leadership and culture have a greater influence on change whilst, others suggest that the emotional involvement of the people is a key influencer (Hayes, 2002 citing Harrison 1970, p.189). Mullins (2002, p.21) posits that acceptance of change depends whether the organisations objectives are attuned with the needs of the individual. These two schools of thought tackle change issues from the top down and the bottom up and it occurred to me that these different view points, on change issues could be complimentary to one another. Herold, et al. (2007) consider the relationship between the context of change and individual commitment which appears to justify my idea further.

At this point it is useful to draw a distinction between the organisational levels in terms of how behaviour can be influenced. Here I refer to the 4 levels of change proposed by Mullins (2002, p.21) which are;

Fig 2 – Organisational Levels



adapted from Mullins 2002, p. 21

This study is concerned with the influence that organisational level factors have on individual acceptance of change by initiating team interventions at group level.

3.2 Change Management Strategy

Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) cited by Hayes (2002, p.161) suggests that change management strategy can be either collaborative or directive. A collaborative approach lies to the right of the continuum whilst a directive approach is at the left. The directive approach is associated with fast change with little or no involvement of others. Collaborative approaches are slower and attempt to minimise resistance. The more the strategy used is to the left of the continuum, the less likely it is that participative methods are used. The main style chosen is dependant on the context of the situation, the culture of the organisation (Kavangh & Askanaky, 2006) and the urgency of the change (Hayes 2002, p.162).

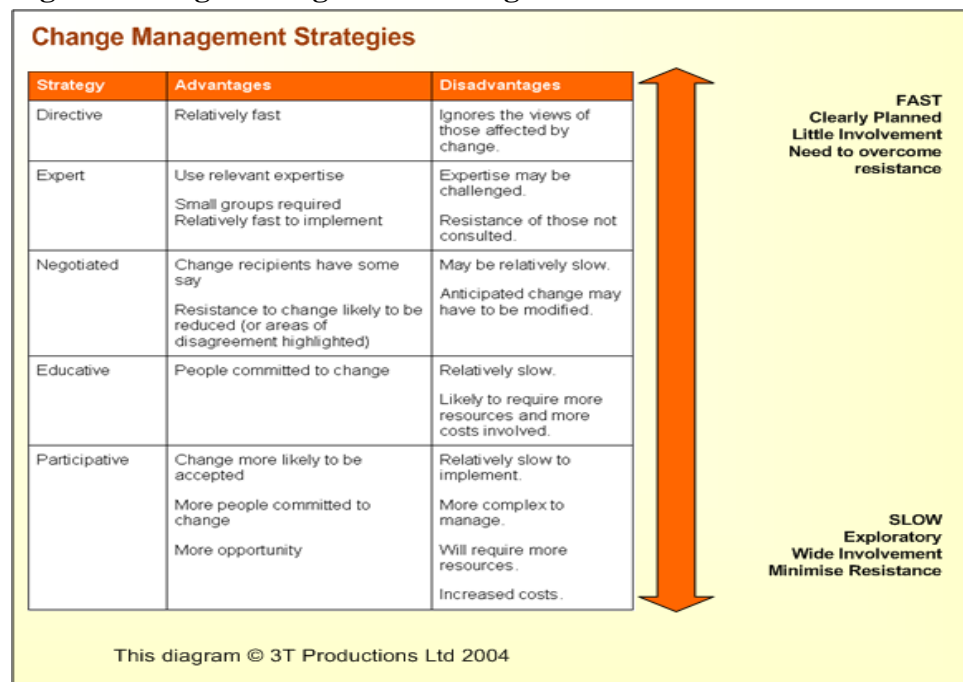
More recently Beer and Nohria (2000) use the terms Theory E and Theory O to describe the types of change management strategy. Theory E is change brought

about through economic value where change is driven from the top down whilst Theory O's grounding lies with the organisations capabilities driving change from the bottom-up. The Theory O approach focuses on intangibles in which culture and human capability is developed by reflecting and making iterative changes based on the feedback received. Theory O changes are viewed as 'soft'. Like Kotter & Schlesinger they do not advocate that one is better than the other merely that the choice is dependant on the situational factors.

However, Witchalls (2007) does recommend that people are more likely to accept change if they have more control over the situation, suggesting that involvement, participation moreover empowerment is a key factor to successful change.

Fig. 3 expands on Kotter and Schlesinger's approach. In practice several approaches may be used throughout the change process (Hayes, 2002, p.161).

Fig. 3 – Change Management Strategies



JISC InfoNet Change strategies and approaches (no date)

Clegg and Walsh (2004) propose that the 'push' and 'pull' method (as used in operational settings) might be usefully applied to change management. Push, like participation is initiated from the top down (or experts) and is the dominant archetype in most organisations whereas 'pull' might be likened to a collaborative approach which is generated from the bottom up. Whilst agreeing with much of Clegg and Walsh's ideas, they seem very utopian in terms of practicality. Even the authors suggest that the change of mindsets would be difficult to promote. Using the Waterfall Model as an example, they propose that time lapses between stages generate a dis-continuum (Clegg & Walsh, 2004). However I would propose that the rapid prototyping method is an iterative process which increases user contact and improves time lapses between software development phases. Thus although their point regarding participation is a valid one, the analogy is inappropriate.

3.3 Leadership Style

Senior management support is vital to the effective performance and success of an intervention (Harrison, 1992). The commitment and support shown by senior management will stimulate personnel to adopt a congruent approach. Leaders who demonstrate people-oriented leadership characteristics are more likely to succeed in making individual and organisational changes (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) citing Fry (2003). Harrison (1992) identifies two leadership styles that which is task-orientated and people-oriented. Task-oriented leaders are competent, dominant and centralise decision-making and planning. In contrast, people-oriented leaders give high priority to teamwork and user participation in the decision-making process. However a people-oriented approach can not generally be adopted in instances where there is an urgent need for change (Harrison, 1992).

3.4 Culture

One of the earliest authors to classify types of culture was Charles Handy. Handy likened these cultural types to greek gods. The Zeus culture is an organisation which is ruled by one person, normally the founder of a firm. The Athena culture is one that has a project orientation. Typically this type of culture would be

prevalent in businesses which are more innovative such as Microsoft or Egg. The Apollo organisation is driven by rules & procedures and finally the Dionysian culture where people have the freedom to develop their own ideas and employ some artistic licence. Handy does not posit that an organisation was simply one culture or another but a mixture of two or more cultural types which have one dominant culture (BBC Learning English: The handy guide to the gurus of management: programme 2, 2001).

Further distinctions can also be made between culture and climate (Burke & Litwin 1992; Cartwright, et al. 1999 citing Glick 1985) suggesting that culture and climate exist at different organisational plains. Culture is associated with what Burke & Litwin refer to as transformational change and stems from a change in strategy requiring fundamental changes and new behaviour from employees whilst climate concerns incremental changes motivational, needs and values at an individual or group level (Burke & Litwin, 1992).

3.5 Types of change interventions

Change initiatives have a broad scope. Witchalls (2007) identifies these situational factors as organisational, product, process and behavioural issues which can be applied at organisational, group or individual levels (shown in Fig. 2). With many change initiatives involving a technological solution it is easy for those introducing change to become focussed on the hard tangible elements (Witchalls, 2007) such as project planning and control. Whilst these issues undoubtedly aid the change process, it is my view that the intangible factors affecting change such as leadership style, organisational culture and team collaboration are critical elements without which any change initiative is bound to fail in terms of being accepted by organisational members.

A distinction was made earlier in this paper to collaborative and directive change management strategies and the fact that the use of approach depends on the problem or issue in hand. Hayes (2002, p.182) citing Cummings and Worley (2001) define the issue types as: Human-process, techno-structural, human-resource management and strategic.

Human-process interventions focus on people and process and how the organisations goals are realised. This will include problem solving, making decisions, leadership and communication through facilitation, T-groups and team building. Techno-structural interventions focus on streamlining processes through use of BPR and job design and include socio-technical and motivational approaches. The case studies used in this research will be a mixture of human-process and techno-structural interventions (Hayes, 2002, p.183).

3.6 Motivation to change

This section discusses what I consider to be one of the key factors at the individual level that helps influence acceptance of change and as such can not be left unmentioned.

There is no one solution to the question of how to motivate people because the variables for each person and situation are so different (Handy, 1993; cited by Mullins, 2002, p.424), but Mullins (2002, p.425) suggests that it can be understood by learning what people think and how they feel.

Mullins (2002, p.426) identifies two different types motivation theory; process theory and content theory. The former takes a realist approach by analysing the relationships between variables, to understand how behaviour begins and is subsequently directed and sustained whilst the latter takes the interpretivist view and attempts to understand the needs, strengths and goals that drive to achieve those needs. A well known example of content theory is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

3.7 Involvement, participation and empowerment

Regardless of the reason for change, whether it is initiated to improve quality, reduce costs or meet customer requirements (Clegg & Walsh 2004); if people understand why they need to change then they will be more willing to participate and make the transition a success (Witchalls, 2007). Authors such as Saacks (2007) and Smollen (2006) take the people aspect one stage further and feel that the whole concept of developing people is about changing behaviour and sustaining the change, this being the most complex business challenge (Kotter, 1996; cited by Saacks, 2007). Smollen (2006) identifies that emotions play a major part in that transformational change and suggests that change leaders need to assess responses to change at all levels.

These three words, particularly involvement and participation are often viewed by most in practice as being one in the same thing. I now draw a distinction between the three and my own definition follows:

An invitation to a meeting will 'involve' someone, I could sit and listen to all what was said around me but if I were to interact, give feedback or even input suggestions then I would be 'participating'. Empowerment goes to the next level, here I am taking responsibility for my actions. Whereas participation is initiated by an expert, facilitator or manager (Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Howcroft & Wilson, 2003), empowered employees take it upon themselves to recognise issues, solve problems and initiate change. However more often than not it is only a 'feeling' of participation that is generated (Davis & Olsen, 1985; cited by Howcroft & Wilson, 2003), suggesting that management use participation figuratively rather than in practice.

4. Research Methodology

The aims and objectives of this research were introduced on page 4. In this section I will discuss how these questions will be addressed at various points throughout the course of study.

My aim is to present a holistic view in recognition that the integration process will involve a variety of multi-faceted interventions. In order to get an improved understanding of the effect of the key influencers, it will be necessary to use several case studies. This approach allows for use of different perspectives on the individual aspects whilst recognising that they are all part of a bigger picture.

4.1 Research Philosophy

Initially an interpretivist stance was favoured as the research philosophy. However since developing the research approach and design and learning the approaches of authors who have conducted this type of research, I have recognised that the topic and its content is more suitable to realism.

The Realist approach focuses on what can be seen and establishes linkages between issues (cause and effect). Realism draws comparisons through use of qualitative data collection, whilst an interpretative approach attempts to make sense of the linkages themselves through discussion and interaction with others (Fisher, 2007, p.47). The positivist makes interpretations about the data they have observed and collected and work with a methodology in which generalisations are made through replication (Saunders, et al. 2003, p.83).

4.2 Research Approach

I anticipate taking an open-minded inductive approach to the research in which data is collected and theory is built (Saunders, et al. 2003, p.87). This will allow for eventualities which I may not have anticipated through lack of prior knowledge or preconceptions.

4.3 Research Design and Strategy

I envisage that the information acquired from Document 3 will form a basis, by identifying the main themes, for comparison and survey statistics drawn in Document 4. Findings from both documents will determine the structure and methodology to develop Document 5.

Through the literature review, I have found that most studies of this kind tend to be longitudinal (Kavanagh and Ashkanasy, 2006; Dawson, 1994, p.5). Kavanagh and Ashkanasy's study was over a six year period, whilst Dawson draws on case studies over a longer period of twelve years. However it would not be feasible to conduct a study over a six or twelve year period within the time constraints of the DBA and will therefore aim the study over 1 year period. Within this time frame several cross-functional projects will be discussed, which, from a holistic perspective will be longitudinal study.

4.3.1 Case study

The research focus will be on a section of a single organisation; the Power Solutions business unit, using a series of cross-functional projects as examples. The case study method is seen as a useful way of generating different stakeholder perspectives (Fisher, 2007, p.61) which is commonly used in organisational behaviour studies. Another major benefit is in applying theory to practice (Mullins, 2002, p.15). Case studies are either broad in range, in that several case studies may be referred to or in-depth focussing on one particular situation, to describe how they are conducted (Fisher, 2007, p.59).

It is the intention to use different case studies to demonstrate how views develop over the course of the integration of Power Solutions which is anticipated to last over a twelve month period.

The context and background of each project will be explained as the integration of Power Solutions progresses. I anticipate that the majority of the research will be descriptive but a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used to

assess the situation from different angles. This is best achieved through use of multiple data collection techniques such as in-depth semi-structured interviews and observation.

4.3.2 Action Research

Action research may prove beneficial in promoting information gathering, facilitation of change and involvement of others. Being a collaborative and incremental approach is a facet of the action research method (Saunders, et al. 2003, p.472) which I feel is very suitable for this study particularly as I will be heavily involved in many of the example projects to facilitate change throughout the integration process. . This strategy also lends itself to various data collection methods both qualitative and quantitative (Fisher, 2007, p.53) and the cycles of research, practice and problem solving (Burgess, 2006, p.421). As a consequence data is presented from different perspectives (Fisher, 2007, p.53) which increases data reliability.

4.4 Data Collection Methods

4.4.1 Document 2

The literature review will form a basis for the research conducted in Documents 3, 4 and 5 and will helpful in gaining a theoretical understanding to enable me to meet the objectives highlighted on page 4. I therefore propose to review literature pertinent to:

- Change management strategy
- Culture and climate
- Leadership styles
- Approaches to situational change
- Individual factors effecting acceptance of change including:
 - Resistance
 - Motivation
 - Group collaboration

- Participation
- Intervention types

I also anticipate uncovering new issues which I may not have considered previously.

4.4.2 Document 3

The following qualitative data collection methods will be used in Document 3.

- un-structured one-to-one interviews will be conducted with senior management to determine the change management strategy adopted in order to reach a conclusion to objective (a). These interviews together with any supporting documentation available.
- The theoretical concepts will form a basis for the ‘themes’ or subject headings for semi-structured interviews which will be conducted on a one-to-one basis with a cross-section of people from different functional areas and organisational levels.
- Observation methods will be used in group sessions and meetings to identify the key issues or themes voiced by personnel in a group environment.

4.4.2.1 Interviews

Data collection will begin with unstructured in-depth discussions with senior management to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategy. The author is considering interviews with the Power Solutions Operations Director and the Network Strategy Director.

It is recognised that voice recordings would be very useful in this type of interview and the participants permission will be requested in advance of the interview. It is also worth noting that the recorder can be switched off at any stage throughout the interview (Fisher, 2007 p.69).

4.4.2.2 Documentation

At this stage it may also be useful to review secondary data which will include previously published organisational communications in the form of memos and notices and employee surveys to help clarify the current organisational situation.

4.4.2.3 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured (or in-depth) interviews are beneficial in obtaining rich data particularly when the participant is at management level. Saunders, et al. (2003) suggest that management are more eager to attend an open discussion rather than to complete a questionnaire. This is particularly relevant if the topic is regarding their current role and environment.

It is difficult to anticipate the themes regarding the semi-structured interviews at this point of the study as themes will be based on (a) the information following the discussion with senior management and (b) the information gained through the literature review.

4.4.2.4 Observation

Use of observational techniques will focus on both undesirable and required behaviour. This method will help put a different perspective on the issues involved which would not come to light in formulated survey or questionnaire. However, Hayes (2002, p.94) advises that the observer must be aware of mis-interpretation and bias when categorising findings. These observations could also be grouped into categories (Fisher, 2002, p.163).

4.4.3 Document 4

Following Document 3 I will:

- Categorise the qualitative data into themes
- A pre-survey focus group could then be arranged to get further acquainted with the issues and development of the survey questions.
- Devise a survey and questions based on the themes identified
- Run a pilot of the survey to test responses and redefine any ambiguous questions
- Identify causal relationships between themes
- At this stage, time permitting it may also be useful to conduct a comparison of secondary data.

4.4.4 Document 5

The resulting qualitative analysis from Documents 3 will be developed further in Document 4 (quantitative analysis). The key factors provided from Document 4 will then be tested using an action research method using two scenarios.

5. Research ethical issues and organisational political issues

5.1 Ethical Issues

Ethics as defined by Saunders is:

“The appropriateness of your behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work, or are affected by it.”

(Saunders et al., 2003, p.129)

Concerns regarding ethics will develop when the research process is underway upon contact with individuals. There is a need to constantly consider ethics throughout the course of research in respect of those who are asked to participate in interviews, surveys or focus groups and those who the results might affect (Saunders et al., 2003, p.129).

I plan on conducting my research in an open and honest manner, which addresses the key ethical issues. In particular I feel that informing participants of the reason for the research and the anticipated outcomes is ‘best practise’. With reference to clarifying the reason for the research, I am conscious that disclosing the reason for study may result in the participant hiding their true feelings (Fisher, 2007, p.65). The only instance where I feel that it may be advantageous to not disclose the reason for research is in situations where observational techniques are used. To address this issue, I propose to send a transcript of the observations to all who were involved for approval before inclusion into the document. With respect of the anticipated outcomes, I will be taking care to ensure that the information will not be used to the detriment of the individuals or groups participating in such a way that would compromise their position.

5.2 Political Issues

Historically the Power Networks operating company has allowed semi-autonomy to its separate divisionalised businesses; Cabling and Transmission.

The repercussions of the BBPN/BBUS merger means that this autonomy, is now challenged and it is anticipated that 'self preserving' political issues could develop amongst individuals which could be detrimental to the welfare of the organisation (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979).

5.3 Access

Saunders et al. (2003, p.118) refers to several criteria which should be considered regarding access:

- Allow sufficient time to arrange discussions
- Make the best use of existing contacts/colleagues
- Explain the purpose of the research
- Describe the benefits to the organisation
- Make it easy for person to reply to your questions
- Establish credibility

The research will be conducted within a business unit of my own organisation thus reducing many of the problems associated with access. I have also discussed and have the full backing from senior management who have sponsored me for the DBA.

The majority of the personnel involved in the research are existing contacts who I have good working relationships with and are in several different functional areas of the business. Saunders et al. (2003, p.119) highlight that contacting existing colleagues or friends this is the best method of overcoming access. This also useful in establishing trust that any information provided will be confidential and in developing a good track record for other new contacts which may be approached. However it is recognised that research is an iterative process of

learning and reflection and that plans are likely to be adapted to the situation as appropriate. Therefore there may be occasions where the issues listed above should be re-considered.

5.4 Timing

Producing a schedule of meetings well in advance, is particularly applicable for when arranging interviews with senior management. This is also necessary when arranging group meetings. The schedule should also allow for participant responses and interviewee preparation time.

5.5 Confidentiality

Fisher (2007, p.69) identifies the importance of making a clear distinction between confidentiality and autonomy to participants. Opinions voiced throughout the course of this research will be kept entirely confidential.

The information collected will not reveal information sources but will distinguish, if necessary, between age, sex and functional area. I am mindful that these distinctions not be used in such a way as to identify or single out certain groups or individuals.

6. Outcomes

This research is principally a practical study which challenges organisations to be more informed and conscious about the choice application and consequences of the change strategy adopted in the context of business integration.

6.1 Business benefits

On a business level this research will have an immediate impact on the organisation in:

- promoting a collaborative approach
- revealing how management and the organisation is perceived
- encouraging focus on key issues
- questioning best practice
- highlighting issues that might not have otherwise been recognised or realised.

Future uses include:

- Process and results could change senior management opinions regarding how change is dealt with in future.
- Will help organisation to understand and anticipate issues which might arise in future change efforts.
- Findings and recommendations will be of benefit to other Balfour Beatty operating companies

6.2 Professional and Personal benefits

On a professional level research into this topic will provide the opportunity to gain new transferable skills which will make me more marketable in terms of career progression. I also see this as an opportunity to establish a new network of contacts via the university and within my organisation whilst also developing a rapport with existing contacts.

On a personal basis the research is a new challenge in an area which is of genuine interest. It is also an opportunity to learn new concepts, share ideas and develop new and improved ways of working practice.

I anticipate expanding my knowledge and skills in such disciplines as; change management and organisational behaviour. In particular I see benefits in terms of:

- knowledge and experience that will enhance current and future career
- developing research skills
- challenge of applying theory to practice
- opportunity to challenge current thinking
- improving my understanding of complex situations

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Attachments

Attachment 1 Company History

Attachment 2 Project Plan

Company History

Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions

Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions was established in 2007 following the merger of Balfour Beatty Utilities and Balfour Beatty Power Networks, forming the largest utility solutions provider in the UK.

Balfour Beatty Power Networks

Balfour Beatty Power Networks grew from two long established companies in the UK, an electrical contracting company formed in 1899 by James Kilpatrick and an engineering company Balfour Beatty, formed in 1909. Following decades of growth the companies were first linked in 1949 as James Kilpatrick and Son Ltd share capital was bought out by Power Securities who main subsidiary was Balfour Beatty. Acquired by British Insulated Callender Cables, James Kilpatrick and Son Ltd and Balfour Beatty became Balfour Kilpatrick in 1971. In the year 2000, Balfour Beatty Power Networks emerged as an independent company once more and doubled its turnover in this period; establishing a significant power business in the UK and abroad.

Balfour Beatty Utilities

During the last decade Balfour Beatty Utilities was born out of two companies, John Kennedy and Kenton Utilities & Development Limited. In 2001 and 2002 Balfour Beatty acquired John Kennedy and Kenton Utilities respectively.

With effect from 1st January 2003 Balfour Beatty Utilities was formed as a new operating company, to integrate the gas and water utility services.

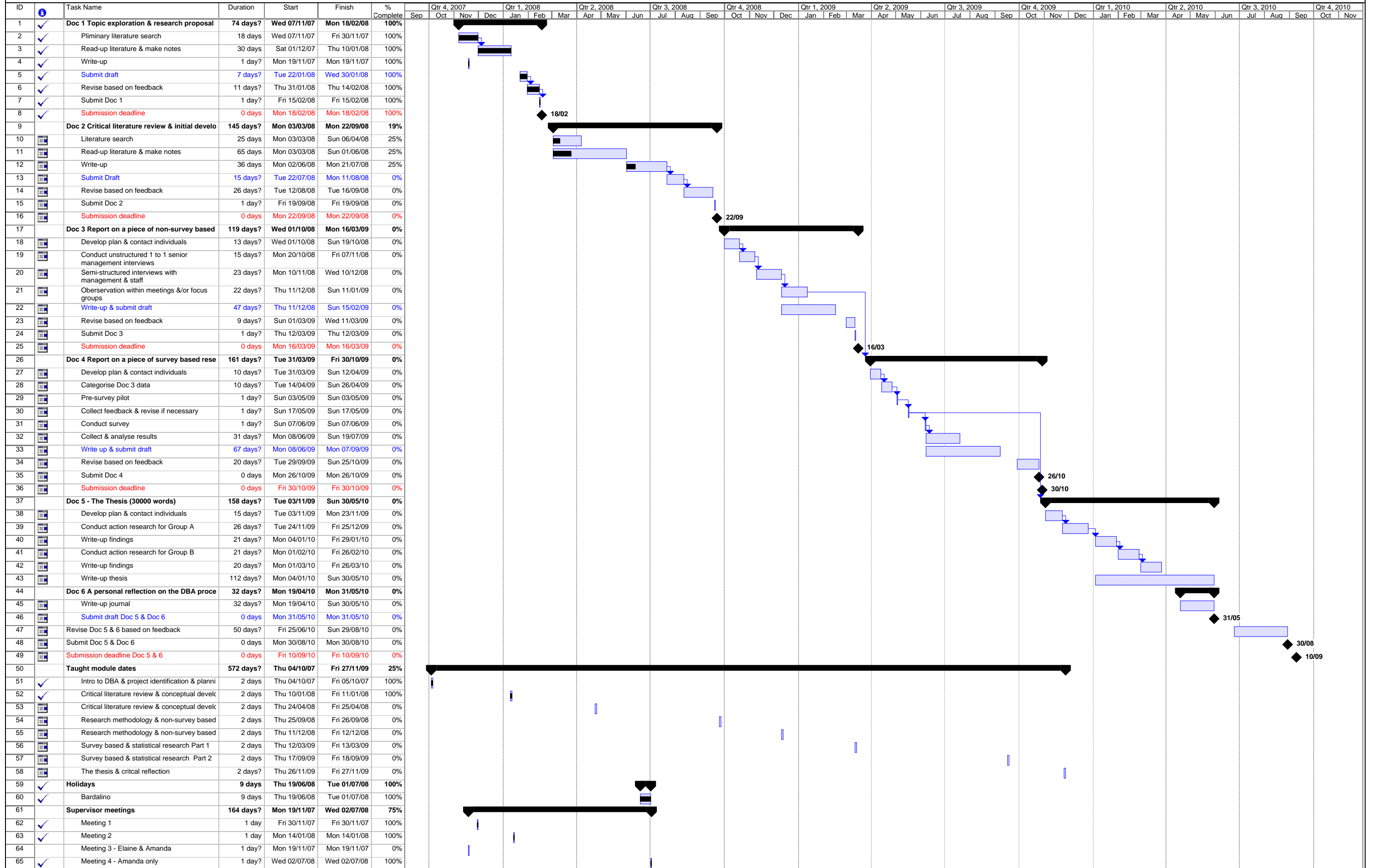
The company provided a complete asset management solution to most of the major utility companies in gas, clean water and wastewater sectors. They also help clients maintain, repair and refurbish their utilities network across the UK.

Balfour Beatty Group

Balfour Beatty is a world-class engineering, construction, services and investment business, well positioned infrastructure markets which offer significant long-term growth. Balfour Beatty was founded in 1909 by George Balfour, a Scots mechanical engineer, and Andrew Beatty, an English chartered accountant.

The company described itself as "general and electrical engineers, contractors, operating managers for tramways, railways and lighting properties and for the promoting of new enterprises."

The company subsequently moved into civil engineering when it was commissioned to build a five-mile long aqueduct at Kinlochleven in 1917. To find out more about Balfour Beatty Group log onto www.balfourbeatty.com



Project: Project1
Date: Mon 24/10/11

Task Progress Summary External Tasks Deadline

Split Milestone Project Summary External Milestone

Document 2

**Critical Literature Review
& Conceptual Development**

**The feasibility and benefits of a participative approach to change
within Power Solutions**

**Louise Shipley
N0202426**

**Doctor of Business Administration
Cohort 9 – 2007/10**

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Chapter 1 – Introduction & Background

1.0 Introduction

This study investigates the feasibility and benefits of adopting a participative approach to organisational change within Power Solutions, which is a business unit of Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions. In its most basic form, there are two types of organisational change - authoritative and participative. An authoritative approach is controlled from the top most leadership downwards through the organisational hierarchy, whilst participative change is driven from the bottom upwards by educating staff and involving them in making the decisions for changes which will have an affect on their working environment, consequently giving them ownership of this change (Likert 1961, p.223). Thus ‘participation’ in the context of this study refers to more than simply “taking part in an activity” (Heller 2003, p.144). Participation is more accurately described as being the process of democratic decision-making (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Lewin, 1948), which encourages the involvement of all interested parties who are affected by the result (Mumford, 1983) to work co-operatively across all organisational levels (Likert & Likert, 1976).

The senior management team within the Power Solutions business unit have recognised the need to integrate and simplify the business unit’s processes to provide a more efficient way of working that will help to meet the challenges faced in a time of business growth. Currently these processes are fragmented, which is the result of a vertical organisational structure that tends to involve different people at different stages of the process (Clegg & Walsh, 2004). For example, the project planning¹ and monitoring process falls across several

¹ A management function involving the formulation of one or more detailed plans to achieve the optimum balance of needs or demands with the available resources. The planning process identifies the goals or objectives to be achieved, formulates strategies to achieve them, arranges or creates the means required, and implements, directs, and monitors all steps in their proper sequence.

functional areas including Estimating², Engineering Design³ and finally within Operations⁴ where the work is conducted. In the current way of working, an Estimator would evaluate the project costs and timescales based on the available resource to create a quotation that forms part of a tender document. The Estimator would gather this information by liaising with Engineering Design and Operations. This is a time consuming task that is often difficult to achieve within the tender submission time constraints imposed by the client. The process is heavily dependant on the effectiveness of those involved to communicate accurate information to the required deadlines. If the information has not been passed to the Estimating department at the agreed time the Estimator may have no alternative but to use their own best judgement based on their experience and information sources. This lack of visibility of the process as a whole can lead to inaccuracies in the estimated timescales and conflict amongst functional areas (Clegg & Walsh, 2004). Visibility of the whole process to all areas will avoid timescale overlaps between functional areas and allow direct access to costing information. The use of a participative approach to change would encourage people at all levels of the organisation to work together, in a collaborative fashion (Eriksson & Sundgren, 2005) that would improve their appreciation of the issues faced in different functional areas thus reducing conflict (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979; Lewin, 1948; Likert & Likert, 1976, p.7). Furthermore a participative approach can reduce resistance (Bartoli & Hermel, 2004; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979) and improves the chances of commitment to change (Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006) through an improved situational understanding.

It has been suggested that the success of a participative approach is dependent on changing the mindset of those involved (Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Lewin, 1948), the trust held by leadership (Allen et al, 2007; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Heller,

² The computation of a price with regard to time and resource requirements upon which a quotation is based

³ The process of developing structures both overhead and underground that transfer electricity

⁴ Jobs or tasks which are performed typically in one location. Operations transform resource or data inputs into desired goods, services, or results, and create and deliver value to the customers.

2003) and the organisation's operating characteristics (Likert, 1961; McGregor, 1960; Menon, 2001). Through further investigation of these issues, this paper questions if a participative approach to change is feasible in the Power Solutions business unit and if so what benefits such an approach will bring. The investigation is aided by reference to a current initiative within the business unit to improve and integrate the project planning and resource management process. This improved process will be facilitated through the implementation of a new information system called Primavera⁵. Throughout this paper the term 'information system' is used to define a computerised or electronic data store.

1.1 Organisational Background

Power Solutions is one of three operational business units within Balfour Beatty (BB) Utility Solutions. BB Utility Solutions was formed in July 2007 through the merger of two BB operating companies, namely BB Power Networks (BBPN) and BB Utilities (BBU). BBPN was a long established organisation with business streams in electrical overhead lines, (both in the UK and joint ventures⁶ abroad), underground cabling, an alliance⁷ formed with National Grid (NGA) and a steelwork fabrication and manufacturing plant called Painter Brothers. BBU was a relatively newly formed BB operating company providing services and maintenance for gas and water.

Movement in the industry towards multi-utility provision from a common client base meant that the synergies between the two businesses became more apparent which resulted in a merger of the two organisations.

⁵ A project and resource planning application consisting of a single electronic data store, which is accessible to any company user who requires project information.

⁶ A contractual business undertaking where both parties share equal responsibility, and a mutual right to control and share in the profits of the enterprise.

⁷ A contractual business undertaking where one partner takes the lead role in the contract whilst the other partner contributes its core strengths to the venture. Each partner retains their own independence.

BBUS has 5900 employees and produced revenue of £700m in 2008. 2400 employees' work within Power Solutions and £300m of the revenue is attributable to the business unit. The organisation is now the third largest operating company within the Balfour Beatty group in terms of turnover, which consists of thirty-two operating companies. The Power Solutions arm of the new BBUS business incorporates the majority of the BBPN business streams and has seen considerable growth in its international market in the last year, which is forecast to increase by 50% in 2009.

1.2 Organisational Setting

The BBPN and BBU merger has, understandably, resulted in a great deal of change in terms of processes, information systems and people. Whilst many of the organisational functions such as Finance, Information Technology and Human Resources have been combined and centralised at the BBUS head office, functions such as estimating, planning, engineering design and operations are incorporated and managed within the business unit. Business growth, both in the UK and internationally (including a Canadian alliance with ATCO, an alliance with National Grid in the USA and existing business in Indonesia and Australia) makes the need to set in place common processes and information systems even more critical.

The Power Solutions business unit combines several different work streams⁸ that prior to the company merger were separated into divisional units (these were referred to earlier in this document as electrical overhead lines, underground cabling, Painter Brothers and NGA). Each of these work streams had their own working methods for estimating, planning, design and operational functions. There is a great deal of commonality in these functions, particularly in the first three areas, and developing standardised processes will result in a more efficient

⁸ A set of activities requiring unique competencies and skill sets of those conducting the activities & unique materials for the completion of the operation.

way of working that will present one common approach to the client who will be able to access the information directly from the information source. For instance, the Primavera information system mentioned earlier in this paper will provide one central source for all project information including resource across all regional areas in England, Wales and Scotland. This will improve resource visibility so that under resourced projects can be allocated available resource from another part of the country thus enabling more effective resource balancing, resulting in reduced stand-by⁹ costs. The Primavera project is a good example of how one process; namely the project planning and management process has an effect on several functional areas, different organisational levels and the outcome is critical to a variety of stakeholders including the client. It will take time for those involved in the change to adapt to this new way of working because many of these individuals have been using their own methods for many years without any significant change. Therefore a change management approach which gives people the opportunity to be involved in improving their own working practices and facilitates ownership of the processes and information systems could help people to adapt to this and future changes. In an effort to involve people in this change, a Primavera Steering Group (PSG) was formed which consists of four senior managers and also has representation from non-management. Both management and non-management represent different functional areas and locations of the business. There is also a Primavera Project Team (PPT) that consists of a Project Manager and non-management staff. The PPT is responsible for recommending process improvements in the Planning process. They are also trained in the use of the Primavera software, so they are able to align suggested process improvements to the Primavera software functionality.

⁹ Paid time for which a person is available to work but is not able to work because they are waiting to be given a specific job to do.

1.3 Research Focus & Key themes

Document 1 summarised the overarching themes to be addressed in support of the chosen topic. This included an initial review of literature, research methodology, ethical issues and overall outcomes.

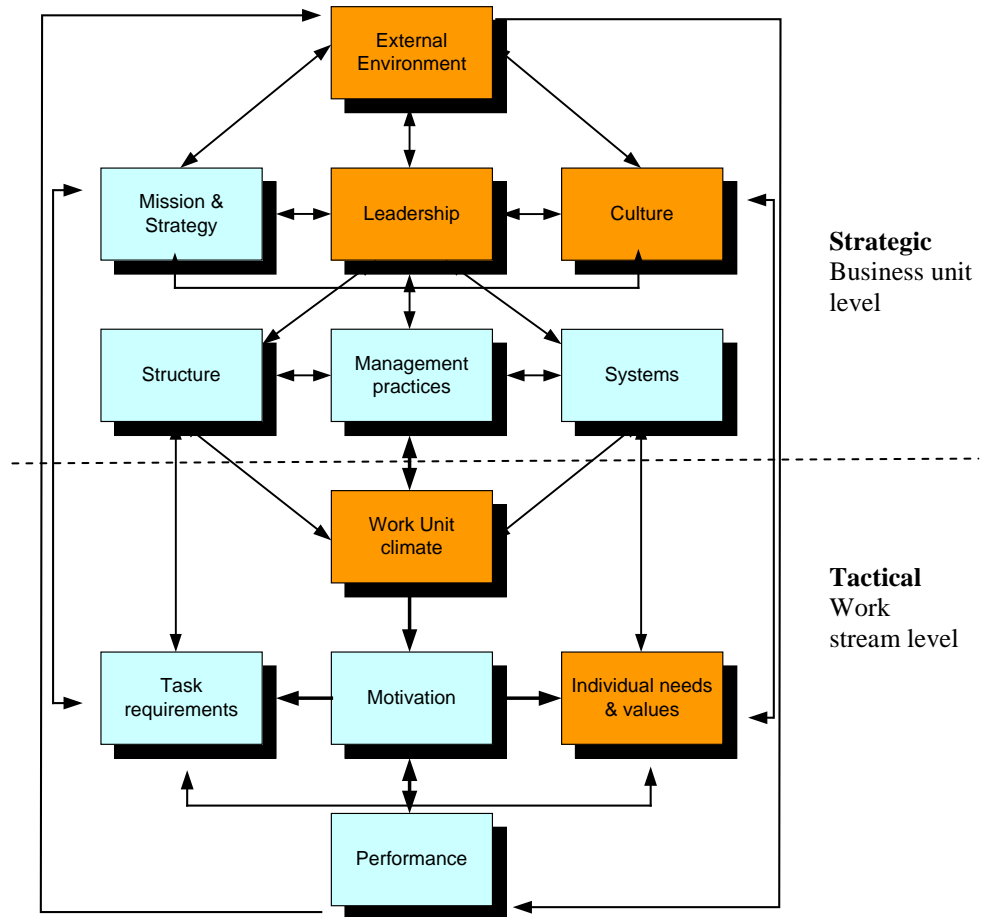
Document 1 was submitted as a proposal and approved with the following aim:

To understand the implications and impact of change management strategy on employee acceptance of change.

The literature review in Document 1 highlighted some of the issues and influencing factors on the choice of change management strategy and its effect on individual acceptance at both management and non-management levels. These issues were determined through a 'Force Field Analysis' of the driving and restraining forces for change and included the style of leadership, organisational culture, the types of intervention used and the amount of involvement and participation in the change.

The Burke & Litwin (1992) Causal Model of Organisational Performance and Change was initially referred to in Document 1 and is now used to help justify why these issues are key to the focus of this study. The model (shown in Fig 1.1) is useful because it attempts to depict all aspects involved in organisational change and their influences on each other. Burke and Litwin propose that although the outcomes of change are difficult to predict, consistencies in the elements involved in change do exist and this is evident in both theory and practice. Thus the model depicts the factors involved in change and the cause and effect relationships linking them.

Figure 1.1: The Burke-Litwin (1992) causal model of organisational performance and change



(adapted from Burke & Litwin 1992, p. 528)

The model proposes that changes to the external environment lead to changes in the internal organisational environment. The differentiation between these influencers, are useful in providing a framework for this study. The proposition is that the elements shown at the top of the Burke-Litwin model, such as Leadership and Culture are applicable to the business unit level and will influence the elements at work stream level, which are shown at the lower end of the model. Therefore it is necessary to clarify the positioning of these business unit level

elements within Power Solutions. To assess the feasibility of a participative approach, leadership, culture and the organisational environment will be discussed. Although this study acknowledges the criticality of strategic factors, it is suggested that a more balanced view should be taken and proposes that both strategic and tactical issues are facilitated by each other. Therefore without the support of these elements, participative methods such as group decision-making and communication would not be possible. In some respects the model is a rather simplistic view of change, which undervalues the internally focussed tactical, work stream change drivers. However, the model is useful in depicting the variety of issues concerned in the process of change and sets the scene for the questions raised later in this text. It is also useful in drawing our attention to what are termed 'hard' and 'soft' approaches to change. Burke & Litwin (1992) suggest that management are mainly concerned with the 'hard' factors (shown on the left of the model) such as structure and task requirements whilst behavioural scientists tend to focus on the 'soft' issues (shown on the right of the model) such as culture and individual needs. Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) identify leadership behaviour, management strategies, culture and the interventions selected as key elements of organisational life that they feel should have greater focus in terms of change. If we follow with these distinctions then this paper should be viewed as taking a behavioural science perspective. Based on the previous discussion, Fig. 1.1 shows the main focus areas for this paper. These areas are highlighted in orange.

It is proposed that Power Solutions would benefit from the introduction of a participative approach that will aid in the business unit's intentions to improve the visibility of information and collaboration both internally and externally. Thus the aim and objectives of Document 2 are further refined to focus on a participative approach to change which promotes active involvement in the decision-making process at all organisational levels. It is recognised that a failing of many change projects is due to a lack of opportunity for feedback, the subsequent learning gained through this feedback and the collaboration of the

people who are actually expected to adapt and maintain the process. Thus Chapter 3 of this paper focuses on participative decision-making and communication and feedback methods including an investigation into responses to change. More often than not, the people who set the strategy and design for the new way of working are not the people who adapt and maintain it (Clegg & Walsh, 2004) hence a participate approach to change will ensure that those most affected by the change are considered.

In light of this re-focus, Chapter 2 will address the following questions:

- Is the organisation environment conducive with a participative approach?
- What is the context and urgency of change within the business unit?
- Can leadership facilitate participation?

Chapter 3 will discuss:

- How will Power Solutions' intent to improve visibility and collaboration be enhanced through this approach?

1.4 Re-defined project aims and objectives

Aim

To understand if a participative approach to change is feasible within the Power Solutions business unit and the benefits it can offer.

Objectives

The overall objectives have been amended to reflect the revised aim:

- Determine if the organisational operating environment and culture is supportive of a participative approach to change.
- Establish if leadership is supportive of a participative approach to change.
- How can visibility and collaboration be improved within Power Solutions?

Chapter 2 – Key Questions & Assumptions

2.0 Is the Power Solutions Business Units Environment Conducive to a Participative Approach?

2.0.1 Participative Approach and Organisational Fit

In order to understand the feasibility of a participative approach one must first attempt to understand the organisations unique characteristics. The way in which an organisation manages and controls its business will have a significant impact on the success or failure of the change approach chosen. It is therefore important to have a clear understanding of the organisation together with the types of approaches to change available. Likert (1961, p.223) makes a clear distinction between two extremes of organisational management and control; ‘authoritative’ or ‘participative’. Likert expanded these operating characteristics of the organisation further by defining them as; exploitive authoritative, benevolent authoritative, consultative and participative group. These characteristics are explained in more detail below.

- **Exploitive authoritative** is the most extreme representation of an organisation. Change is driven by fear and threats, the workforce normally show hostile attitudes to peers, subservient attitudes to superiors and resistance towards the organisation’s goals. There is very little communication moving from the top of the organisational hierarchy downwards and from the bottom of the organisation upwards. The decision-making process is made at senior level and the flow of information comes from the top of the organisation only. Teamwork is non-existent and the team interaction that does occur is minimal and is always conducted with distrust. In this environment productivity is normally poor.
- **Benevolent authoritative** is an environment where motivation is driven by ambition. The competition for status causes a negative atmosphere that can

occasionally be hostile towards peers and condescending towards subordinates and so there is often conflict. The majority of information flow comes from the top of the organisational hierarchy downwards with only a moderate amount of communication of the organisations objectives and little upward communication.

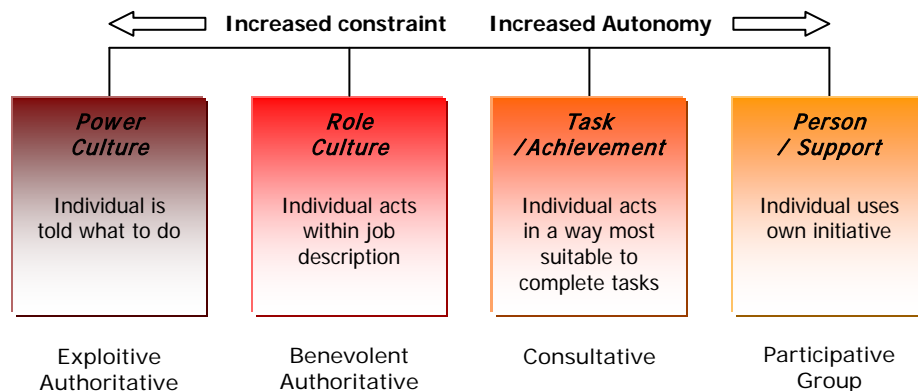
- The **Consultative** system of organisation has a moderate amount of trust with some interaction amongst teams. Subordinates have a moderate influence on organisational goals. The flow of information is mostly from the top of the organisation downwards but there is some evidence of peer-to-peer information sharing and some examples of upward information flow. General decisions regarding policy are made at the top of the hierarchy whilst more specific decisions are made at lower levels. Informal groups may be present which could either support or resist the formal organisational goals.
- A **Participative group** shows positive attitudes towards achieving the organisations goals. The workforce take responsibility for their actions and work in a co-operative manner across all organisational levels, with good communication channels especially from the bottom of the organisation upward and between peers. Groups are integrated through processes across different functional areas. Both formal and informal groups work towards the organisation's goals. In this environment, the workforce feels able to question communications and decisions because of the psychological closeness of the supervisor and subordinate (Likert, 1961, p.223).

In light of the organisational background, (as discussed in Section 1.1, p.3) and the researcher's experience of the organisation having worked in a managerial position for almost four years, the Power Solutions business unit could be described as a 'consultative' organisation. This type of organisation allows the workforce to have some influence in the decision-making process, which demonstrates a moderate amount of trust by management. Information flow mainly comes from the top of the organisation downwards although there is evidence of information flow between peers and upwards. There are indications

within Power Solutions that organisational members would support a participative approach. For example, as discussed previously in Section 1.2, p.5, two work groups have been established for the Primavera project. The Primavera Steering Group (PSG) meets on a monthly basis to agree actions and approve proposed solutions. The group consists of several organisational levels, functional areas and roles and encourages feedback and expression of views of lower organisational members. Secondly a Primavera project team (PPT) has been formed which again has a mixture of functional areas. The members of this team formulate solutions to the actions set by the PSG. This project team consists of planners from different work streams and locations and will continue as a Planning Forum when the implementation of the Primavera project is complete. Through this example it is clear that the ‘consultative’ characteristics demonstrated by Power Solutions are conducive with a participative approach.

It is probable that Power Solutions’ organisational characteristics have developed from the collective values and beliefs of the organisational members (Schein, 1980, p.107), and have been established over a prolonged period of time. These values and beliefs are described as the organisation’s culture (Mullins, 2002, p. 25). It has been suggested that an organisation’s culture can fall into four distinct categories (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006), which are shown in Fig. 2.1.

Fig 2.1: Cultural Types aligned with Organisational Characteristics



(Adapted from Kavanagh & Ashkanasy 2006, p.85)

The organisation's culture can be influenced by a number of things but the main influencers can be identified as; the organisation's history, its size, location and environment (Mullins, 2002, p. 804). The individual work streams within Power Solutions have been established for many years and have a distinct cultural history. For instance, the underground cabling work stream has existed as an entity in its own right for over 50 years and the overhead line and the manufacturing plant, Painter Brothers have also been established for many years. Interestingly, all of these work streams have previously been part of other Balfour Beatty operating companies and are therefore familiar with the changes that occur as a result of a merger. Despite these mergers the work streams have still maintained their own identities. In terms of location, the work streams have traditionally been placed near to the client sites, which are in different parts of the country. Therefore, there will always be some variation and uniqueness in the organisation's culture. This cultural variance leads one to question if it is possible to orchestrate a participative approach within the Power Solutions business unit as a whole. After all, one would assume that for change to be successful it needs to be implemented at all organisational levels or else this could lead to a cultural differentiation (Landrum et al, 2000; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). This cultural differentiation is termed 'sub-culture'. Sub-cultures are focussed at work group level (Lok & Crawford, 1999) and exist independently of culture (Martin & Siehl, 1983). In the context of this study culture is positioned at the business unit level whilst sub-culture is at the work stream level. The Burke-Litwin model (Fig. 1.1, p. 7) refers to subculture as 'work climate'. In fact sub-cultures are not as undesirable as they first appear. Evidence shows that this tactical level sub-culture has more impact in creating a motivated atmosphere. Lok & Crawford (1999) found that organisations with supportive sub-cultures showed a higher level of employee commitment than bureaucratic style organisations. Furthermore, they propose that sub-culture has a greater influence over commitment than the wider organisational culture suggesting that sub-cultures are supportive in promoting acceptance to change rather than a hindrance. It is more realistic to assume that a sub-culture will exist and is a highly influential factor

when considering the most effective approach to change because successful change will be affected by, and have a direct affect on, the organisations sub-culture (Mullins, 2002, p.807).

With the aid of the classifications shown in Fig. 2.1, p.13, it is possible to position the culture of Power Solutions as a whole as a 'task/achievement' culture. This classification is based on the researcher's prior knowledge of the organisation and the researcher's experience of working with mixed teams such as the Primavera Steering Group and Primavera Project Team. Research conducted by Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) showed that in organisations where change was introduced gradually, individual's perception of culture moved from a task culture further to the right of the model shown in Fig 2.1. This, they say, is evidence that a shift in culture can occur over time when a merger is implemented over an extended period such as BBU and BBPN. Assuming that Power Solutions currently demonstrates the characteristics of a 'task/achievement' culture, and the research conducted by Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) is valid, then a participative approach should encourage progression to a 'person/support' culture.

In view of the distinctions made with regard to the characteristics of the organisation, one could assume that approaches to change have developed in a similar way. It is generally considered throughout the literature that there are two organisational perspectives when considering approaches to change. These are termed 'hard' and 'soft' approaches. The 'hard' approach is based on financially driven incentives and by the top-down influence of leaders. 'Hard' change involves organisational restructuring and downsizing, whilst the 'soft', bottom-up approach involves the workforce in generating solutions, reflecting on those changes and making small adjustments (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Clegg & Walsh, 2004). The 'hard' approach is associated with fast-paced, transformational change. The 'soft' approach typically takes longer to implement because there is a greater amount of participation from those involved in the change. Beer &

Nohria (2000) term these different approaches, Theory E (Economic capability) and Theory O (Organisational value).

Referring back to the Burke-Litwin model (Fig. 1.1, p. 7), the ‘hard’ approach is associated with the left side of the model, where aspects such as structure, process and systems are heavily valued. The focus is on financial incentives such as reward schemes. In a ‘hard’ change initiative, consultants might be employed to implement the new change whilst a ‘soft’ approach is concerned with encouraging participation and creating positive individual attitudes that uses communication and feedback mechanisms to make an assessment. In a Theory O environment, consultants may be commissioned, but their purpose would be to facilitate the change process rather than enforce it. These types of organisations, like the Power Solutions business unit, have “*long-held, commitment-based psychological contracts with their employees*” (Beer & Nohria, 2000, p.134). This approach to change tends to be evolutionary rather than planned and its success lies in the ability to create new ideas and adapt to emergent changes. Participative approaches are typically associated with a greater amount of workforce autonomy and involvement in the decision-making process. This approach leads to a flatter, decentralised organisation where people assume responsibility for their activities and actions (McGregor, 1960; Menon, 2001).

It is evident that these approaches to change share similar features to the ‘authoritative’ and ‘participative’ organisational characteristics described by Likert (1961, p.223). It is therefore evident that a ‘soft’, participative change approach would be difficult to introduce in an ‘authoritative’ environment, whilst a ‘consultative’ environment such as Power Solutions business unit would be more susceptible to a participative initiative. Furthermore, if, as Beer & Nohria (2000) suggest, Theory E and Theory O are based on the unconscious assumptions of those initiating change one should assume that leadership style will also influence proceedings. If one considers the leadership styles introduced by McGregor (1960), which he termed Theory X and Theory Y, there are obvious

similarities. Like the 'participative' organisational characteristic, Theory Y assumes a 'soft' stance that takes the optimistic view that people are willing to assume responsibility to achieve organisational goals (McGregor, 1960) and this is a view that is supported by French & Bell (1978) and Likert & Likert (1976). Although McGregor (1960) was referring to leadership behaviours when he spoke of Theory X and Theory Y, much of the underlying concepts can be applied to the wider organisation as a whole.

Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) recommend that in order to understand the best approach to adopt, whether, 'hard' or 'soft', the initiator of the change should conduct an analysis of the context and issues to be addressed. Context, together with the urgency in which the change should be implemented, are the initial considerations. This suggestion leads us to question the context and urgency of change, which is discussed in the next section.

2.0.1.1 Conclusion

Through a study of the available literature, this chapter investigated if the Power Solutions business unit's environment is conducive to a participate approach. It was established that there are two main characteristics of an organisation; these are classified as 'authoritative' and 'participative' (Likert, 1961). Likert extended these organisational characteristics to describe them as exploitive authoritative, benevolent authoritative, consultative and participative group. These organisational characteristics have developed over time as a result of the organisations culture and are inherent in Power Solutions. When aligned with the organisations culture, Power Solutions business unit as a whole has been positioned as a consultative organisation with a task/achievement culture; this is probably due to its maturity (Beer & Nohria, 2000) and history, primary function, size, leadership and environment (Mullins 2002, p.804). In terms of the organisation's history, it was highlighted that Power Solutions consists of several unique work streams, which are housed at different locations and have been

established for a number of years in their own right. It is probable that each of these work streams have their own sub-cultures. It was also questioned that if these sub-cultures exist, do they aid or hinder the feasibility of a participative approach within the Power Solutions business unit and it was established that sub-cultures might actually support a participative approach to change (Lok & Crawford, 1999).

Change approaches have been associated with the organisation's characteristics and culture. The 'hard', financially driven, bureaucratic approach and the participative, 'soft' approach, that promotes involvement in the decision-making process. The manner that these approaches are introduced is quite different; 'hard' approaches tend to be fast-paced and transformational whilst 'soft' approaches involve slower, incremental changes that would be appropriate for the gradual paced change involved in the Primavera project. With the increased autonomy that 'soft' participative approaches promote, it is possible to move the organisation's culture to a participative, 'person/support' culture (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006) where the individual is encouraged to use their own initiative.

2.0.1.2 Summary

- There are two main types of organisational characteristic; authoritative and participative. When further expanded these are; exploitive authoritative, benevolent authoritative, consultative and participative group. These organisational characteristics have been aligned with the four types of organisational culture; power, role, task/achievement, person/support. Power Solutions has been defined as a 'consultative' organisation with a 'task/achievement' culture.
- The Power Solutions business unit consists of several work streams. Each of these work streams have been established for a number of years and have their own sub-culture. Cultural differentiation is considered to facilitate the change

process rather than go against it (Lok & Crawford, 1999). The introduction of a participative approach may increase workforce autonomy and move the culture to one that is more supportive (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006).

- Two distinct approaches to change management have been identified; the 'hard', authoritative, financially driven approach and the 'soft', participative approach. The successful application of these approaches is dependent on the organisation's characteristics. Consultative organisations, such as Power Solutions are more likely to adopt a 'soft' participative approach.

2.0.1.3 Document 3 Assumptions & Questions

Assuming that sub-culture is a positive factor, the following questions are posed:

- Does the workforce believe that there are cultural differences? That is, does sub-culture exist in the Power Solutions business unit?
- If sub-cultures are present, what is the dominant type? Is the current culture 'task/achievement' as suggested earlier in this text?
- Do the workforce (both management and non-management) believe that this culture can be maintained or move further to the right of the 'Cultural Types' model, thus offering an appropriate atmosphere to facilitate a participative approach?

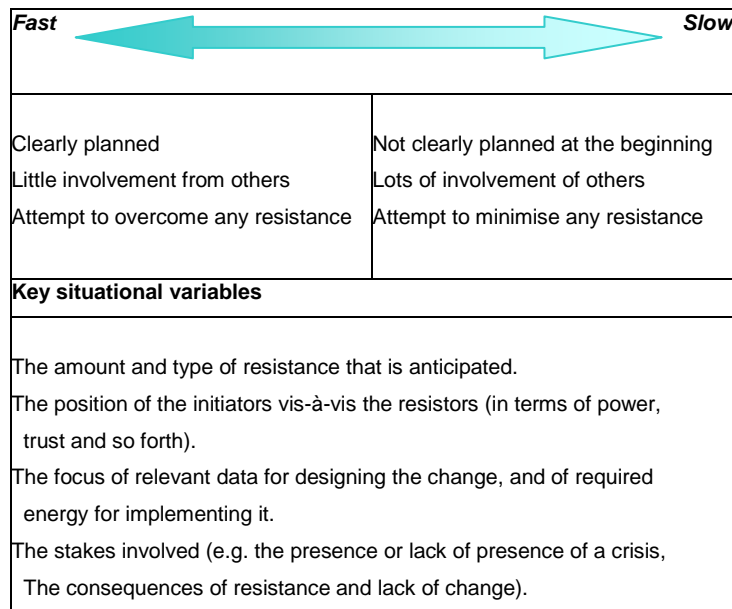
2.0.2 The Context and Urgency of Change

This section discusses the context and pace in which change is applied within Power Solutions. Situational factors and the amount of time available to complete a project have a high impact on people's reaction to change (Kanter & Corn, 1994). Subsequently it is important to gain an improved understanding of the change process, its environment and timescales (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Herold et al, 2007; Kanter & Corn, 1994). A participative approach facilitates this understanding through the encouragement of interaction with those closest to the affected activities.

As previously discussed in Section 1, Power Solutions aims to improve visibility and collaboration through improving its processes and systems. The Primavera project is now underway and aims to align the project and resource planning processes throughout the UK and abroad. Kanter & Corn (1994) studied companies in a similar situation to Power Solutions who were in the process of a merger. They found that a more positive outcome was experienced when an organisation had been involved in joint ventures; suggesting that when organisations interact over an extended, gradual period, the workforce has more time to adjust. Similarly, the Power Solutions business unit has a number of years experience working with clients in alliances, such as National Grid and ATCO (Canada). One might assume that if the Power Solutions business unit is already well versed in their approach to collaborating with external clients, the same principles could be applied internally within the business unit. Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) describe this type of gradual change as transactional. Transactional change is slow-paced and introduced in phased steps allowing time for communication, feedback and review. Current ways of working are assessed and improved on in an iterative manner. A transactional approach to change is particularly useful in situations where it is anticipated that there may be resistance from the individuals involved because it promotes participation. This is particularly appropriate for Power Solutions as many people are set in their own

ways of working (Section 1.2, p.5). Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) distinguish slow-paced transactional change from fast-paced change that they term transformational. Transformational change results in a completely different way of working. It is required when there are restricted timescales. The ‘Strategic Continuum’ (shown in Fig. 2.2, p.21) represents the two extremes in terms of time and the associated situational variables. Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) suggest that the further to the left the organisation tends to implement change, the less likely it is to use other approaches such as participation which lies to the right of the continuum. Similarly if the organisation has a tendency to implement change in a slower incremental manner, the more unlikely it is that it will adopt a strategy to the left of the continuum.

Figure 2.2: Strategic Continuum



(adapted from Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979, p.112)

The Primavera project is a transactional change, which has been introduced in phases over a number of months. The senior management team and the Primavera Steering Group have recognised that a change of this type, which

affects personnel throughout the organisation with different abilities both in terms of planning and technology, will need to be gradual. Slower paced, transactional change that encourages involvement has been attributed to reducing resistance (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979). In a longitudinal study of three large public sector firms, Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) found that a gradual approach to change leads to less resistance and an improved regard for leadership by the individuals concerned. Early literature regarded resistance as something that was generated at non-management levels that needed to be dealt with by middle managers (Caruth et al, 1995). Most of the literature focussed on how to overcome resistance rather than attempting to understand its causes. More recent studies show that those driving change should listen to the people who resist because they have a greater understanding of the situation. This enables those driving the change to address any concerns and so improve the chances of successful change. This alternative view to resistance to change suggests that resistance can result in positive outcomes because the motives of resistance are not always driven by individual fear or threats (Perren & Megginson, 1996). Often resistance may challenge poor change projects. Through various case studies involving middle management Perren & Megginson (1996) categorised resistance to change which resulted in five different tactics which they then conceptualised into a two dimensional grid (shown below, Fig. 2.3) to help middle managers find the most appropriate resistance tactic.

Fig. 2.3: Styles of Exercising Resistance

Personal action	Wheeler dealer	Straight talker
Catalyse others	Agent provocateur	Stakeholder's agent
	Manipulative	Candid

(adapted from Perren & Megginson 1996, p.26)

In light of this alternative view that resistance can be a positive force, a gradual participative approach to change will allow more time to identify and clarify concerns thus reduce resistance. However, Clegg and Walsh (2004) identify that most organisations have a preference to introduce change in a transformational way and this is particularly prevalent in the introduction of technological change projects (Bartoli & Hermel, 2004). Conversely, a ‘hard’ transformational approach to change will normally be the preferred option for organisations with ‘benevolent authoritative’ characteristics unlike Power Solutions which has been identified as having the characteristics of a ‘consultative’ organisation. ‘Hard’ approaches are normally the result of a lack of clarity of the need for change and participative approaches have been suggested as a possible way to resolve this issue (Fontannaz & Oosthuizen, 2007). It therefore appears that there is consistency in the literature inasmuch as change leaders should attempt to choose an approach that is as far to the right of the continuum as possible, implying that a participative approach is desirable wherever it is feasible (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Eriksson & Sundgren, 2005; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979). However one must consider that situations can vary over a period of time and there are some elements of change projects where deadlines must be adhered. When time is limited one must be prepared to use a ‘hard’ approach. A ‘soft’ approach might

then be adopted at subsequent project phases providing both the situation and time allow for this. Thus it is possible that 'soft' and 'hard' approaches to change can be used to compliment one-another. To illustrate this, in their research of the Astra and Zeneca merger, Eriksson & Sundgren (2005) determine that a combination of 'hard' and 'soft' approaches, at different organisational levels, and at different points in the change process, was beneficial. The dominant influence at the highest hierarchical level favoured a 'hard' approach. In the case of Astra and Zeneca, the contrasting approaches, far from being detrimental to the change process, were considered to contribute to its success. This was not a predefined strategy but a mix that they believe occurred due to cultural differences. However it was notable that extra demands were put on middle management, from their leaders who preferred a 'hard' approach to change, to implement change in a 'soft' style.

Eriksson & Sundgren (2005) quoting Beer, et al (1990) suggest that due to economic changes in the world today, the top-down way of decision-making is no longer appropriate. However, in practice, a 'soft' participative approach can be difficult to coordinate. This can be illustrated by the introduction of Primavera within Power Solutions. The requirement for this information system emerged from an initiative to improve the visibility of teams conducting contractual work throughout the UK, as it is accessible to any company user who needs to access the information on a daily basis. Although the change has been gradual after a period of time it was observed that a lack of clear direction by management resulted in a slowdown and lack of interest and drive by those involved. However, by combining a 'hard' approach, through top-down goal setting, bottom-up involvement was restored and project momentum increased. This is not an unusual tactic to adopt even when change is mostly slow paced; in fact Lewin (1948, p.170) suggests "*...some manipulations of the situation had to be made to lead the group into the direction of democracy*".

In reality it is likely to be a combination of the ability that the workforce has to influence their own behaviour and performance goals, which are defined and enforced by management. This suggests that a combined 'soft' approach driven from the bottom-up and a 'hard' approach, driven from the top-down leads to success (Argyris, 1998). Argyris (1998) refers to this as internal and external commitment. As change situations progress and develop, different issues arise and therefore different strategies are required. Ideally a combination of approaches should be adopted (Argyris, 1998; Beer & Nohria, 2002; Caluwe & Vermaak, 2004; Eriksson & Sundgren, 2005; Fontannaz & Oosthuizen, 2007).

Beer & Nohria (2000) suggest that the best way to combine 'hard' and 'soft' approaches is to apply them simultaneously, through what they term 'sequencing'. They give an example in which General Electric began with a 'hard' initiative of restructuring followed by a 'soft' approach to transform the organisation's culture. Sequencing is best achieved by beginning with a 'hard' approach and followed by a 'soft' approach. A situation where a 'soft' approach was followed with a 'hard' approach would result in a loss of trust by the workforce. Beer & Nohria (2000) warn that it can be dangerous for one individual to combine approaches as this could send out mixed messages and cause confusion. It therefore appears that a combined approach can only be achieved through collaborative working with emphasis on communicating vision.

The use of different approaches is prevalent in the case of Power Solutions due to the regionalised structure of the business, although there is no evidence that a coordinated 'sequenced' approach has been occurring. The regional offices based in England, Wales and Scotland currently act as semi-autonomous units, which is mainly due to client and contract specific requirements. This also accounts for the variety of processes, information systems and ways of working that exist. The convergence of work streams in new contracts means that processes and systems can be merged to form one common, streamlined approach.

2.0.2.1 Conclusion

Literature suggests that we should go beyond the process of change to understand what the change is, why it is necessary and who will be involved (Herold et al, 2007). Studies by Kanter & Corn (1994) showed that individual acceptance of change had a direct causal link to situational factors. However time has also been cited as a key issue. Transactional changes which are introduced over a longer period of time give people more chance to adjust (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979) hence the more likely they are to accept the change. This was demonstrated in the discussion earlier in this section, which referred to collaborative working, such as in joint venture programmes. This type of cooperation between organisations can lead to improved outcomes in terms of reducing resistance to change, as this can improve situational understanding by listening to those people who have concerns in a positive manner. It is also notable that Power Solutions having already undertaken this type of venture should be more susceptible to a participative approach. The evidence thus far suggests that a participative and incremental phased approach to organisational change is advantageous particularly in the case of the Primavera Project within Power Solutions.

However, it has been suggested that a common mistake made by many managers is to apply just one approach, in a 'one size fits all' manner (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979) and that some manipulation may need to be made to the situation (Lewin, 1948, p.170) to encourage group collaboration. The idea of combining approaches has been proposed as a possible solution (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979; Lewin, 1948). Certainly given the diversity and dynamics of change, this is a more plausible idea; particularly as change contexts and situations are so unique. Whilst an organisation which adopts a predominately 'hard' approach could be viewed as authoritative and driven by structures and procedures, an organisation led solely by the participative 'soft' approach could find itself in a situation where the change becomes insignificant due to a lack of

momentum. Combining approaches offers a solution that allows the flexibility to adopt a strategy that is specific to the situation, recognising that situations may change over time. However, taking into consideration the complexities involved in change situations, the answer is possibly not as straightforward as it may first appear. In reality, sequencing 'hard' and 'soft' approaches is difficult to accomplish and cannot be achieved by one person alone (Beer & Nohria, 2000).

2.0.2.2 Summary

- Context & time factors have a high impact on people's reaction to change (Kanter & Corn, 1994). Therefore there is a need to understand the change process and its environment in greater detail (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Herold et al, 2007).
- Companies who have had experience of alliance working such as Power Solutions are more likely to adjust to change in a collaborative way (Kanter & Corn, 1994).
- Resistance can be minimised through slow-paced gradual change (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979) and should not always be viewed as being negative. Listening to so-called 'resisters' to change can be beneficial in addressing often well-founded concerns.
- Authoritative organisations normally apply fast-paced 'hard' change approaches. 'Participative' organisations normally adopt a slower-paced change approach (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979). However it may be necessary to adopt a 'hard' approach when there are time constraints but this can be combined with a 'soft' approach in instances when timescales are not as restrictive (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Generally a combination of approaches results in more successful change (Argyris, 1998; Eriksson & Sundgren, 2005).

2.0.2.3 Document 3 Assumptions & Questions

Assuming that context and time influence the choice of strategy:

- Are the aims and objectives of the projects in question clearly understood?
- What is the perceived urgency for change?
- Can resistance be attributable to a lack of situational understanding? If so, what are the issues?
- Is there evidence of a combined approach at Power Solutions?
- Does a participative approach help reduce resistance to change?

2.1 Does Leadership Facilitate Participation?

The conclusions in the previous section indicated that leaders are influential in the change approach adopted; whether the approach is 'hard' or 'soft'. As such much emphasis is placed on those who initiate and drive change. Literature suggests that it is the personal style of leaders, their persuasive skills and behaviours that will help individuals to come to terms with change (Eisenbach et al., 1999; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Leaders should also provide a clear communication of goals and priorities (Eisenbach et al., 1999; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979) and give subordinates the freedom to influence their own working environment (Eisenbach et al., 1999). For instance, the Primavera project objectives were communicated to the groups of people whose activities would be affected by the change before the launch of the Primavera Project through an initial workshop. Subsequent to this, the PSG (described in Section 1.2, p.5) was formed. The PSG consists of representation from both management and non-management and exists to agree and prioritise future actions and approve completed actions. This was conducted in a more democratic way than Eisenbach et al (1999) suggests and the approach used shows the characteristics of group consensus as opposed to a pure authoritative management decision (this is further discussed in Section 3.1, p.36). This distinction between the democratic management (Theory Y) style and an authoritative (Theory X) style were mentioned in Section 2.0.1, p.16. Theory X and Theory Y was one of the first theory's to differentiate between leadership styles. Criticisms of McGregor's views focus on the rigidity of the theory, which implies that leaders neatly fall into one of the two categories. However McGregor's main assertion was that leaders should endeavour to view their subordinates in a positive light (McGregor, 1960) and move towards a collaborative approach, which avoids conflict (Lewin, 1948, p.172).

The terminology of leadership style is better represented by Harrison (1992) who also suggests that leaders fall into two distinct categories, those who are task-

oriented (Theory X) and those who are people-oriented (Theory Y). Kotter & Schlesinger (1979, p.112) describe these two extremes as; “...*the people-oriented manager who constantly tries to involve and support his people and the cynical boss who always manipulates and co-opts others...*” indicating that a task-oriented leader is more likely to use their own personal preferences in the choice of change approach. A task-oriented leader is dominant and takes central control of the decision-making process (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006) providing little consultation with their management team and presents no consultation opportunities to lower organisational levels or unions (Beer & Nohria, 2000). This style is prone to stifle creativity and innovation and may result in lowering employee morale through a lack of autonomy and empowerment (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979). In contrast, people-oriented leaders encourage participation in the decision-making process and facilitate teamwork. The drawbacks of this approach are that the decision-making process takes longer to complete (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979). However, leaders still need to be flexible enough to adopt the most suitable style for the situation (Mohanty & Yadav, 1996; Harrison, 1992), “... *the democratic leader should ‘lead’*” (Lewin, 1943, p.170). This means that when project deadlines are tight leaders may decide to opt for a task-oriented style to get the change completed quickly. However, if the project involves changing human behaviour and timescales are more flexible, then a people-oriented approach may be more suitable. It is apparent that task-oriented leaders encourage authoritative environments whilst people-oriented leaders support participative environments. In practice, however, it is likely that leader’s fall in between the two extremes.

Regardless of whether leaders have a tendency to be people-oriented or task-oriented, Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) warn that powerful leaders can sometimes influence the organisation in ways that mirror their own values rather than those of the organisation. Those responsible for initiating and driving change should recognise that the change initiative should be an appropriate choice, not only for themselves but also for the individuals involved in the change (Holt et al,

2003). This certainly contradicts Power Solutions leadership strategy, which far from being 'authoritative' has proved responsive to requests for consultative opportunities. For example, Power Solutions has a long and well-established rapport with union representatives in such instances as negotiations for annual salary increases and disciplinary proceedings. This demonstrates a people-oriented leadership approach where existing relationships between leaders and team members can establish a good grounding for change.

In fact, evidence in the literature suggests a linkage between leadership style and individual behaviour (Burke & Litwin, 1992; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006) Kotter (2005, p.3) suggests that the “...*biggest challenge in managing change is not strategy, structure or culture, but just getting people to change their behaviour*”. Leaders should ensure that they involve as many people as possible otherwise this could result in criticism and resistance (Eisenbach et al., 1999). Kotter, 2005, p.3, suggests that leaders must be able to appeal to people's feelings to change their behaviour. This is best achieved through communicating their vision and core values in a stimulating way. People feel more at ease with the change if they can visualise the future through leadership effectively transferring their vision. This process can be enhanced through the use of visual aids such as videos or by recounting scenarios, thus explaining the purpose of the change in a clear and concise way. The key is that there needs to be personal action from leadership to promote this. Kotter (2005, p.3) describes this as “...*speaking to peoples feelings*”. Sustaining this process may be difficult and there needs to be clarity and commitment from the leader of change for the vision to remain focussed. “*People need to see that the changes are not oddball ideas being pushed by the boss. They need to see short-term wins that validate the change vision*” (Kotter 2005, p.4). Choosing the right fit improves how employees regard leaders and increases the likelihood of acceptance (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Strategic alignment can be achieved between leaders and the individuals involved in the change by the effective communication of the organisation's vision (Kotter, 2005).

However, it should be recognised that the suitability of leadership alone is not enough to result in a successful change project. Participative, 'team-led' approaches, consisting of individuals with a range of skills from all organisational levels (including leaders) are suggested as being best placed to drive change initiatives (Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Landrum et al, 2000). Organisations often form Steering Groups or Working Parties in an effort to develop ideas, make decisions and follow through actions and this has been demonstrated through Power Solutions' formation of the PSG and the PPT. In fact, leaders who share similar characteristics to that of the group will be positively perceived by the group members (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Schein, 1980, p.115).

2.1.0 Conclusion

It has been suggested that leaders fall into two distinct categories, those that are task-oriented and those that are people-oriented. Task-oriented leaders tend to be imperious, with a preference to make decisions based solely on their own judgements whilst people-oriented leaders encourage consensus of the group and prefer to involve the workforce in decision-making process (Harrison, 1992). However, it is debatable if leadership qualities are actually that clear cut. It is more realistic to assume that leaders have a tendency to show more characteristics of one style as opposed to the other. For instance, although one may have a tendency to choose a people-oriented style, on occasions, due to situational factors and time constraints it may be necessary adopt a task-oriented approach. Therefore a predominately people-oriented leader may opt for a task-oriented approach or a mixture of the two dependent on the situation. However, regardless of the situation, in reality it is more likely that leaders' fall somewhere between the two extremes.

It has also been suggested that powerful authoritative leaders may influence proceedings in such a way that they impose their own values rather than those of the organisation. However this appears to be more applicable to task-oriented

leaders. Power Solutions management have experience of both internal and external collaboration as highlighted in the examples provided earlier in this section. Leadership have also been supportive in their efforts to involve all those affected by the change and so it appears that the Power Solutions management has a preference for a people-oriented management style.

It is proposed that the responsibility for successful change should not be the responsibility of leadership alone. Change needs to involve all affected parties and the formation of teams is a common participative approach that is used throughout the workplace in change projects. Power Solutions leaders can build on existing relationships with the workforce to facilitate this.

2.1.1 Summary

- It has been suggested that two styles of leadership exist; task-oriented or people-oriented (Harrison, 1992). However, it is more realistic to assume that leader's fall somewhere in between these two extremes, as it does not always follow that a predominately people-oriented leader will opt for this approach on all occasions. Essentially, leaders are in that position to 'lead' and may need to exert control in certain situations (Lewin, 1943, p.170). Thus, leaders must be flexible enough to adopt a task-oriented approach on occasions.
- A combination of leadership commitment and persuasive skills together with team interaction that make the success of change more likely. Furthermore, leaders who share similar characteristics as a group of individuals are more likely to be positively perceived by the group (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Schein, 1980, p.115).
- Powerful leaders may sometimes iterate their own values and beliefs rather than that of the organisations (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Leaders

should base their choice of approach on the organisation and consensus of its members rather than personal preference (Holt et al., 2003).

2.1.2 Document 3 Assumptions & Questions

Assuming that predominately people-oriented leaders facilitate a participative change process, do leaders:

- offer decision-making opportunities?
- exhibit a task or people oriented style? (That is, are decisions made top-up or bottom-down or a combination of both?)
- share similar characteristics to that of the groups or individuals affected by the change?

Chapter 3 –

Facilitating a Participative Approach to Change

3.0 Chapter 2 questioned if the Power Solutions business unit's environment, culture and leadership are supportive of a participative approach to change. Positive conclusions were made through the examples cited. It also appears that some methods of a participative approach are being applied in recognition of the benefits this type of approach can bring. The previous section highlighted how leadership can encourage individuals to participate within groups to be involved in making the decisions that affect their day to day activities. Leaders should also clarify the purpose and objectives of change through improved communication methods. Participative approaches have been suggested as being a desirable concept to adopt in any change initiative (Burke & Litwin, 1992; Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Howcroft & Wilson, 2003; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979) and this is particularly relevant in the Primavera Project, which is a slower-paced change with flexible timescales. A participative approach encourages communication and feedback and democratic decision-making (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Lewin, 1948) thus aiding Power Solutions aim to improve visibility of information and social interaction (Howcroft & Wilson, 2003), which is the essence of collaborative working.

This section aims to understand how the visibility of information and collaboration can be improved through communication and group decision-making respectively.

- Group decision-making will be discussed in order to understand how Power Solutions is improving its collaborative methods.
- Communication methods will be investigated to review how visibility of information is being improved and disseminated.

In order to validate how well the approach is received by organisational members this study also aims to understand the responses people have to change.

- Understanding responses to change will enable the researcher to assess the success of the change based on the participative methods applied.

3.1 Group Decision-Making

Studies have found that user participation, particularly in information systems projects, such as the Primavera project, has a high degree of success that encourages workforce job satisfaction (Howcroft & Wilson, 2003). Participatory methods are a way of gathering employee knowledge and opinions so that user requirements are more accurate. An example of this is the workshops that were conducted before the implementation of Primavera. Employees involved in the planning process were invited to attend a brainstorming¹⁰ session. At this session, people were asked in teams to create a 'process map'¹¹ of the current planning process in order to help them identify and understand its deficiencies and limitations. Thus the recommendation for the use of a common planning system as a solution, was the result of problem identification by the group of people who were most affected by the change. This is particularly prevalent when the change impacts the individual's activities, as their ability to adapt is influenced by the degree of impact the change has on their working environment thus affecting their day-to-day routines (Smollan, 2006). As such the initiators of the change have ensured that all Project Planners from different functional areas are a part of the PPT so that they are constantly updated and have an input into the decision-making process through their attendance at the PSG. Through their involvement and consultation, employees can also develop a greater awareness of the project goals. In fact most people welcome the opportunity to accomplish something useful in their work activities and this can result in higher productivity levels.

¹⁰ A problem solving technique used by individuals or groups in which ideas are shared with others.

¹¹ A graphical representation of a sequence of activities which examines the process in detail to identify areas of possible improvement.

Failure to provide these opportunities could lead to feelings of incompetence and inferiority (Likert & Likert, 1976), which may result in resistance.

Like McGregor (1960), Antoni (2004) suggests that the people make a decision to participate based on their perception of the opportunities available for them and their colleagues to be involved. This suggests that supervisors and work colleagues directly influence success and that the use of self-regulating teams supports the change process through participation in line with earlier insights regarding the influence of groups. Assuming that their work colleagues and leaders can influence an individual's perceptions, it is conceivable that those who are known to have negative attitudes might influence their peers and subordinates in such a way that they are persuaded into sharing those negative views. The findings from Antoni (2004) research contradict Wegg (2000) who indicated group conflict arose from a participative decision-making approach. These findings suggest that individuals' perceptions are influenced by groups which is a view shared by Lewin (1948). This group interaction is termed 'social identity' whilst the term 'personal identity' refers to an individual's characteristics (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Whilst cohesive groups are often advantageous for problem solving, when motivation to be part of the group is more influential than looking at alternative, and more suitable ways of problem solving (through the intervention of 'personal identity') hasty and irrational decisions can be made. Janis (1972) defines this extreme motivation to reach consensus within a group and limit their own viewpoints as 'Groupthink'.

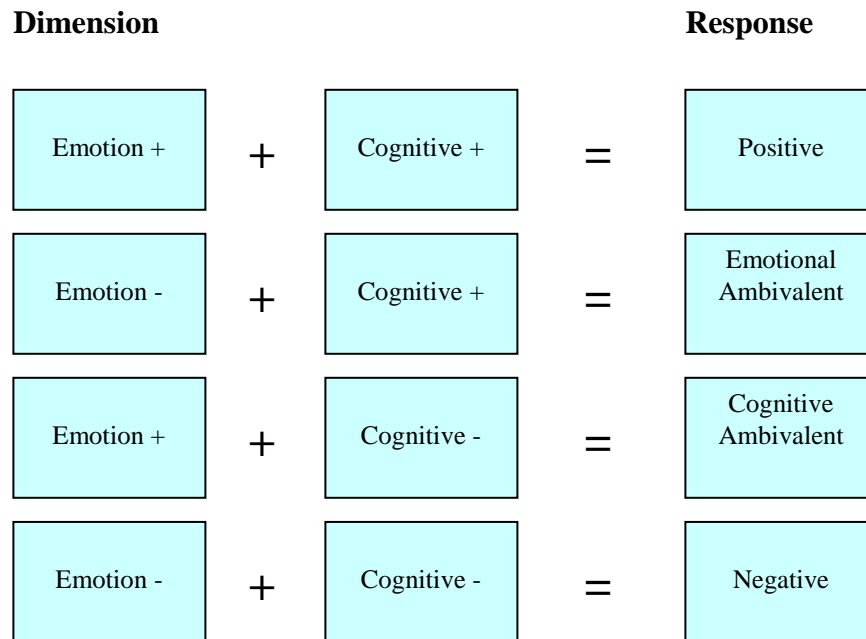
3.2 Responses to change

Assessing how people respond to change is the most important measure of successful change. Understanding these reactions to change within the context of this study is twofold. Firstly it establishes the criteria to assess the reaction to the Primavera Project independent of whether a participative approach has been

applied. Secondly it serves to understand and address responses in the most appropriate manner.

Findings from the Kavanagh and Ashkanasy (2006) study suggest that the success of a change project is dependent on individual perceptions, which are a consequence of how the change process is introduced. It is therefore essential to understand individual responses to change in order to address resistance. Resistance was initially discussed in Section 2, where it was suggested that those driving change should listen to the people who resist because they may have valid concerns, which could derive from their improved understanding of the situation (Perren & Megginson, 1996). Piderit (2000) refers to a number of qualitative individual interviews, which she conducted to collect stories about employee's responses to different situational changes. The results of this research found that responses to change were more complex than a person simply 'resisting' or 'accepting' change. In fact, research of the Astra and Zeneca merger by Eriksson & Sundgren (2005) found that responses to change varied based on management and non-management perspectives. Whilst interviewees at senior management level viewed a 'soft' participative approach to be the dominant approach, interview respondents at a lower level of the organisation had a completely different view. Their perception was that a 'hard' authoritative approach had been used. Piderit suggests that responses to change, which are neither consistently positive nor consistently negative, are classed as ambivalent. Previous empirical research has identified these responses as being cognitive, emotional and behavioural. This could mean that although a person might cognitively believe that a change is positively beneficial they might be emotionally unsettled or nervous thus indicating a negative emotional response. These positive cognitive beliefs together with negative emotional reservations result in a state of ambivalence that is demonstrated in the person's attitude towards the change. This multidimensional view is shown in Fig. 3.1.

Fig. 3.1: A multidimensional view of responses to change



Key: + Positive
- Negative

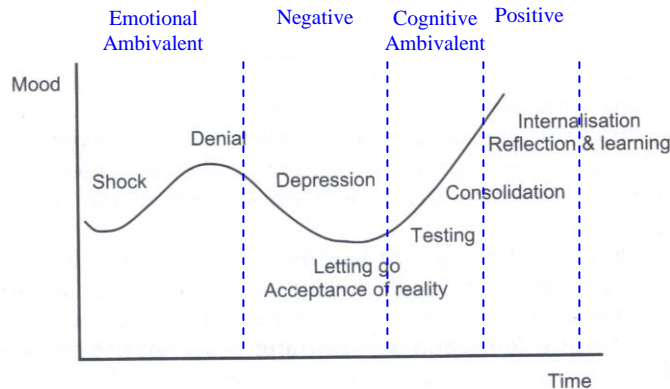
(Illustration developed by the author based on Piderit, 2000)

Piderit suggests that the use of a multidimensional view will help those responsible for the change to predict the behaviour of employees whose behaviour has previously been difficult to judge. Recognising how these employees might communicate their responses helps those responsible for change to identify the most suitable approach to address those responses. For instance, emotional ambivalence is more likely to be expressed through humour. In this instance an appropriate course of action might be to initiate an impromptu informal discussion rather than a formal project progress meeting.

Furthermore, this study proposes that these responses to change alter over a period of time because people will go through a series of reactions, based on their mood. Fig 3.2, generally known as the ‘change curve’, is based on the Kübler-Ross Model ‘Five Stages of Grief’ and pictorially demonstrates the effect of change on

an individual's perception of the success of change over time. This illustration has been adapted to incorporate the 'Piderit (2000) Multidimensional Responses' in order to show where these reactions might occur over the period of change.

Fig 3.2: The Change Curve



(adapted from Hayes 2002, p.151)

Negative or ambivalent responses can result from the perception that change is unnecessary. This is particularly applicable if the change is dictated by an influential party who is remote from the area where the change is occurring (Holt et al, 2003). One such example can be illustrated when the Primavera project was introduced. A Regional Manager who has a reputation of being enthusiastic about new technology orchestrated the initial idea. Other Regional Managers did not necessarily share this enthusiasm, judging the proposal as 'the latest gadget', which had no viable business case, thus causing resistance. People are often quick to view new technology as 'fad' or 'fashion' (Abrahamson, 1991) and in this instance the idea might have been more acceptable to other areas of the business, had the project been championed or at least facilitated by a third party as opposed to a peer. This might have avoided 'pro-innovation bias' (Abrahamson, 1991). Another aspect of note in this scenario was that the project was purposely concealed, the intention being a tactical ploy to allow the project a chance of becoming established and gaining momentum before its official launch. This example goes against the advice of Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) and Eriksson &

Sundgren (2005) who advocate that a participative approach should involve all organisational members who should be communicated to in advance of, and throughout the change. However, considering Piderit (2000) views regarding communication (p.41), it is important to understand the employee's response to change before deciding the most suitable approach to use.

3.3 Communication

How we communicate with different people at different organisational levels is based on our history and the perception we have of them (Mullins 2002, p.717). As indicated earlier in this section, the method of communication needs to be decided based on the responses of those involved in the change. Formal methods might be appropriate where negative beliefs need to be addressed but informal conversations are more appropriate for the expression of negative emotions (Piderit, 2000). When a person has conveyed their communiqué, feedback is required from the recipient to know if the meaning of the message was received and interpreted correctly. Feedback will confirm our perceptions or cause us to re-assess them accordingly (Mullins, 2002, p.717). Thus it is important to choose the most appropriate method of communication based on the response.

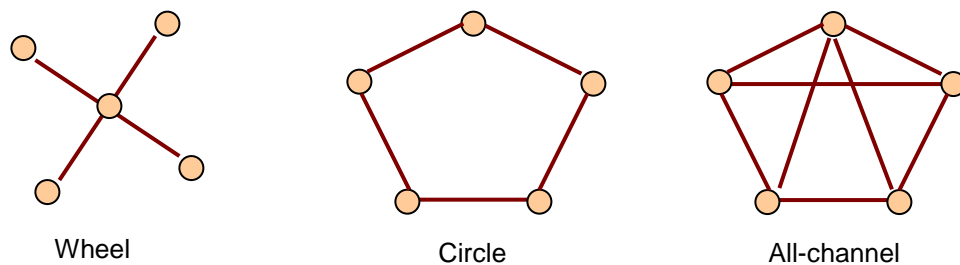
An example of negative emotions shown from the workforce within Power Solutions could arise from concerns regarding the accuracy of the data extracted from the Primavera system. This is a result of the project plan information being hosted in a central database as opposed to local systems where the project manager has control. Emotional ambivalence might arise from employees who have been used to a particular way of working for a number of years and may be afraid of their ability to cope with new technology. The use of informal communication can not only be used as a way of reducing negative or ambivalent responses but also as a way of mitigating politically explosive situations (Howcroft & Wilson, 2003) and organisations with long established cultures, such

as the Power Solutions business unit, are more likely to adopt political change tactics.

Culture is also recognised as a powerful way of generating shared meanings and support, which is not always gained in manipulative way. Some managers' work with their staff to create an atmosphere of information sharing and ownership but there needs to have been a history of collaboration to achieve this. Given both the cultural and collaborative history of the Power Solutions business unit (as discussed in Section 2.0.1, p.14) it is likely that leadership will adopt these political tactics during a change process.

The effective communication of group members is how group cohesion is developed. It has been suggested that communication channels set how groups interact (Mullins 2002, p. 500). There are five basic types of communication network; the wheel, the circle, the all-channel, the chain and the Y (Fig. 3.3). Groups who develop their own communication networks with minimal linkages are better at solving problems (Mullins 2002, p. 500). Centralised networks are more efficient at dealing with simple tasks whilst decentralised networks are more effective at solving complex problems. Whilst the circle is unorganised and has less guidance from leadership, it is more satisfying to members of the groups because of the amount of participation.

Fig 3.3: Communication Networks



(adapted from Mullins 2002, p.500)

3.4 Conclusion

Group decision-making is beneficial in gaining peoples buy-in to change particularly when their work activities are affected. This has immediate benefits for the organisation in obtaining more accurate requirements by helping people to understand the problem and project objectives. The ability for people to take part in the decisions which affect their day to day activities (Smollan, 2006) and routines encourages job satisfaction (Howcroft & Wilson, 2003) and the Power Solutions management have demonstrated a willingness to facilitate this. Furthermore, providing these opportunities can have a positive affect on peoples perception of change because this is influenced by the opportunities they see for themselves and their work colleagues to be involved. Individuals not only base their evaluation of the change events on their own reaction but also that of their colleagues and superiors thus forming a collective group view. Cohesive groups have their advantages, however extreme motivation to be part of a group can cloud judgements by stifling alternative viewpoints (Janis, 1972) leading to 'Groupthink'.

Individuals may have a number of responses to change which can be emotional, cognitive or both. A negative emotional response to change results in an ambivalent state in which the person neither agrees nor disagrees with the change. Similarly a cognitive response will result in ambivalence. A negative combination of the two will cause a negative response (resistance) whilst positive cognition and emotion leads to a positive response (or acceptance). The ability to recognise the type of response helps those driving change to address any issues in the appropriate manner. Perspectives regarding the success of change can be influenced by the position held in the organisation. It is likely that these responses will change over a period of time (as demonstrated by the Change Curve, p.42) hence a transactional participative approach to change is beneficial.

These perceptions can result from the way the change is communicated. We mainly think of formal communication methods to disseminate information about change but often informal communication methods can be an effective way of addressing responses, particularly those which are based on emotions (emotional ambivalent). Communications must be based on the response, when a message is conveyed, feedback should be sort after to check that the message was received and interpreted correctly. The effective communication within a group of individuals leads to group cohesion. There are various types of communication networks used by groups for problem solving. The most appropriate choice should be made to address the problem. If the problem is complex, as in the case of Power Solutions Primavera project then a circle network is the most effective method which encourages participation.

3.5 Summary

- Individuals potentially have a series of reactions to change which they adjust to over a period of time. It has been suggested that their subsequent reactions can be caused by their mood and personality at the time the change is being introduced (Hayes, 2002; Herold et al, 2007). In addition, an individual's perceptions of change can be influenced by the way the change is introduced (Eriksson & Sundgren, 2005; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006).
- The time period in which a change is introduced (whether incremental or transformational) can result in different emotional outcomes, which influence the way in which the change is perceived (Smollan, 2006).
- Different perceptions can arise from the position held within the organisation and the opportunities that colleagues have to participate.

- Perceptions can also be influenced by the method of communication, whether formal or informal. Initiators of change should ensure that feedback is requested whenever a message is communication is sent to ensure that the recipient has interpreted the message as it was intended.
- Group cohesion is developed through communication networks. The circle is the most appropriate method for solving complex problems such as the Primavera Planning project because it encourages the participation of group members.

3.6 Document 3 Assumptions & Questions

- Is there evidence of group collaboration?
- Is there evidence of good communication from the top-down, bottom-up and amongst peers?

Chapter 4 – Conclusion

A participative approach to change has been offered as a way of reducing resistance and developing a positive culture through collaborative working and increased responsibility throughout the Power Solutions business unit. However it has also been recognised that the success of a participative approach relies on supportive organisational characteristics, culture and leadership.

Through a review of literature and by reference to a current change initiative, this study has aimed to understand if a participative approach to change is feasible and in use at Power Solutions. Furthermore if a participative approach is feasible then how can this concept be applied to help improve the visibility of information and encourage collaborative teamwork? It is envisaged that this project will improve visibility and collaboration within the project planning process throughout the business unit which involves several different functional areas within the business namely; Estimating, Engineering Design and Operations. Improved visibility of project information will avoid timescale slippage and overlaps between these areas, as well as encouraging collaborative working amongst teams to improve awareness. A participative approach to change is seen as a way of giving people the opportunity to make decisions about the activities that most affect them and improving access to the information that they require to conduct their job more efficiently through improved communication. It was discussed how Power Solutions have setup a Primavera Steering Group and Project Team to identify improvements and carryout and approve actions.

The Burke-Litwin model was used to identify if the organisations characteristics, culture and leadership are supportive of a participative approach (p.7). These high level strategic issues will influence the successful introduction of a participative approach. After investigating and discussing the types of organisational characteristics (Likert (1961, p.223) it was proposed that Power Solutions is a ‘consultative’ organisation which could move to a ‘participative group’ given the examples cited throughout this paper. ‘Consultative’ organisations show a moderate amount of trust in leadership, amongst

peers and subordinates. General decisions are made at the top of the hierarchy whilst more specific decisions are made at lower levels. These organisational characteristics were aligned with cultural definitions and Power Solutions was identified as having a 'task/achievement' culture. This is representative of the organisation's history, size and environment. Power Solutions has long established work streams which are familiar with alliance working and so this positioning is reflective of the organisation's experience in this area. It was also identified that sub-cultures exist within the business unit. Far from being detrimental to a participative initiative, these sub-cultures could conversely prove to be a positive influence. This is because sub-cultures are focussed at workgroup level where a participative approach is applied. There is a higher level of commitment at this level (Lok & Crawford, 1999), which is more likely to lead to a positive reaction. Context and time were also suggested as having an impact on people's response to change. It was identified that gradual change which is introduced over an extended period gives people more time to adjust which is conducive with a participative approach and Power Solutions Primavera project. These 'soft' approaches are ideal in situations where change is more complex.

There are two extremes of leadership which are described by McGregor (1960) as Theory X and Theory Y and by Harrison (1992) as task-oriented or people-oriented. It has been suggested that leaders have a predisposition for one of these two extremes (Harrison, 1992; McGregor, 1960). The Theory X style of leadership is task-oriented and prefers to take control of the decision-making. This type of leader is more likely to apply their personal preference to a change initiative rather than go with the consensus. In contrast, Theory Y leaders are people-oriented and facilitate the involvement of people in teams to make the decisions. However in practice leaders probably fall somewhere in between these two generalisations but should be flexible enough to apply the most appropriate style for the situation.

The second part of this study aimed to discuss the advantages that a participative approach has in addressing the need to improving the visibility of information and collaborative working. Collaboration was demonstrated through the group decision-

making opportunities that Power Solutions are already providing. An example of a brainstorming and problem-solving workshop was given which indicated that the solution had the buy-in of those most affected. People's ability to adapt to change is influenced by how much it impacts their working environment (Smollan, 2006). It was therefore beneficial to involve people at an early stage in the change process. A situation where these opportunities are not provided could lead to feelings of inadequacy (Likert & Likert, 1976). Offering people the opportunity to participate can have a positive affect on their perceptions and leads to acceptance (Antoni, 2004). Perceptions can sometimes be influenced by work colleagues and leaders (Antoni, 2004; Lewin, 1948) and when this happens, it is termed 'social identity' (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Cohesive groups are beneficial in improving peoples understanding of the reason for change and reducing resistance (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979), however groups should be motivated by the organisations goals and objectives and the group must not take precedence otherwise 'groupthink' can occur (Janis, 1972).

Research by Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) suggests that understanding individual's responses to change determines if change was successful or otherwise. Listening and understanding why people resist helps to address sometimes important issues (Perren & Megginson, 1996), which could otherwise be missed. An individual's perception may also depend on the position they hold within the organisation and it should be highlighted that it is not always non-management who show signs of resistance. Piderit (2000) suggests that those driving change should understand how the person is responding (whether positive, ambivalent or negative) to help in choosing the most suitable method to address this such as informal or formal communication. Responses to change can alter over time and the ability to address any issues along the way could alter the individual's perceptions to a positive state (as indicated in the 'Change Curve', Fig. 3.2, p.40). These reactions to different situations can be the result of either cognitive or emotional feelings. Emotional feelings may arise from a lack of involvement in activities that affect the individual. Therefore it is important to choose the most effective communication method based on the individual's response. Whilst formal communication may be effective in addressing cognitive ambivalence informal discussions may be more appropriate in

dealing with emotional ambivalence. The suitability of communication channels amongst groups can also affect the response. Complex projects such as the Primavera project are best communicated through the decentralised circle rather than the centralised wheel (Fig. 3.3, p.42).

Whilst the theoretical view of participation may be difficult to achieve in practice, one cannot deny the benefits it brings. These benefits include collaborative working, improved communication, increased awareness and the potential for increased job satisfaction through involvement in the decision-making process. It is therefore suggested that Power Solutions should endeavour to follow participative principles but acknowledge the fact that in some circumstances a 'hard' approach is necessary to gain momentum over time. Of course the number of 'hard' interventions required is dependent on the situation and the time scale of the change.

It has been proposed that a supportive organisational environment in terms of its characteristics, culture and leadership is required for the effective application of a participative approach. Group decision-making and communication were then discussed to ascertain how these methods could improve the visibility of information and collaboration throughout Power Solutions. The Conceptual Framework shown in the next section demonstrates how all of these aspects combine and is used as a foundation for further study.

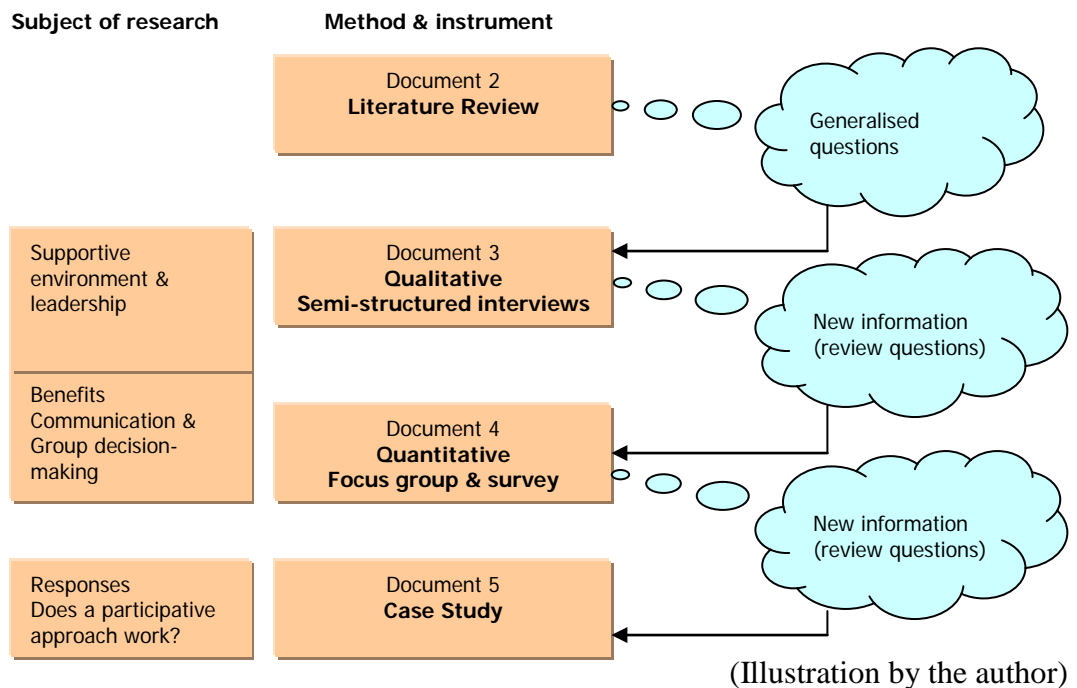
Chapter 5 – Research Methodology & Further Research

5.0 Introduction

This section aims to clarify how future research in Documents 3, 4 and 5 will relate to the findings of the literature review and the issues addressed. Firstly by conceptualising a framework for study and secondly by proposing what research methods will be applied to achieve these objectives.

This journey of study will begin through the inductive generation of theory based on the set of the questions derived from the literature review which will be open to further modification based on the interpretation of the data generated in Document 3. The author will triangulate the information based on different perspectives and using different data collection methods (Bryman & Bell 2007, p.412). An overview of this process is shown in Fig. 5.1 below.

Fig 5.1: Research Structure

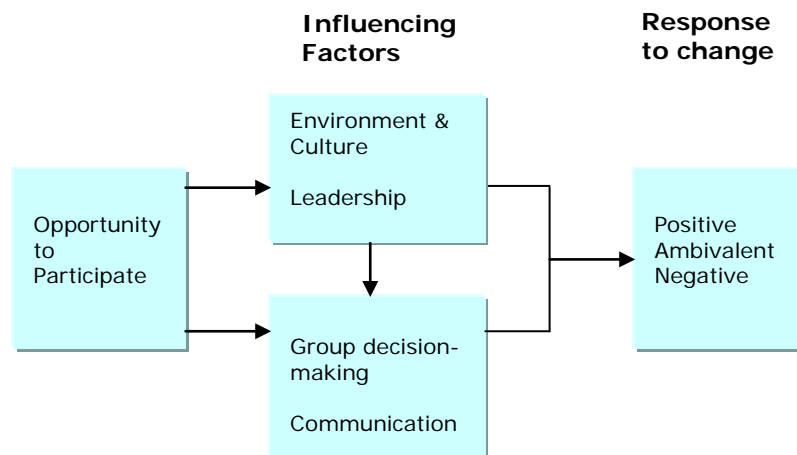


5.1 Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual framework (Fig. 5.2) is proposed based on the questions raised in each section. This framework will form a basis for future study and aims to understand if a participative approach can assist a successful change process. It also aims to qualify the influencers that might help or hinder this. From left to right, the framework begins with an opportunity to participate in a change project. The availability of this opportunity is based on the factors influencing the change which were discussed earlier in this paper including the organisations characteristics, its culture and leadership style. The discussion in Section 3.0 also highlighted two other important issues, which may aid the Power Solutions business unit’s aim to develop a collaborative working environment. This refers to improved communication and decision-making by informal and formal groups.

An inductive approach will be adopted for the empirical research. This will be aided and based around the questions posed as the outcomes of the literature review, which were substantiated by reference to a situation case study based on the Primavera Planning project.

Fig. 5.2: Facilitating positive reactions to change through participation



(Illustration by the author)

5.2 Document 3 – Ethnographic Research

The questions raised in Document 3 will concern the supportive influencers to a participative approach, which have been identified as the organisations environment, culture and leadership.

To gather evidence for the research objectives, the following questions will be posed:

To determine if the organisations operating environment is supportive of a participative approach to change.

- Does the workforce believe that there are cultural differences between work streams? That is, does sub-culture exist in the Power Solutions business unit?
- If sub-culture(s) is/are present, what is the dominant type? Is the current culture ‘Task/Achievement’ as suggested?
- Do people believe that this culture can be maintained or move further to the right of the ‘Strategic Continuum’ (introduced in Section 2.0.2, p.21) thus offering an appropriate environment to facilitate a participative approach?
- In relation to the context of change; are project aims and objectives clearly understood?
- Is there a perceived resistance to change? If so, what are the issues?
- Does a participative approach help reduce resistance to change?

To assist with the second objective that is: ‘To establish if leadership is supportive of a participative approach to change’?

Does leadership:

- offer decision-making opportunities?

- exhibit a task or people-oriented style? (That is, are decisions made top-up or bottom-down or a combination of both?)
- share similar characteristics to that of the groups or individuals affected by the change.

In order to understand how visibility of information and collaborative working can be improved through a participative approach.

- Is there evidence of group decision-making?
- Is there evidence of good communication (top-down, bottom-up and amongst peers)?

Document 3 will focus on a project which is currently in the process of implementation which is the Primavera project cited earlier in this paper.

- It is planned that three members of the senior management team will be interviewed using a semi-structured interview method. The topics for discussion will be based on the questions raised in Document 2.
- Three individuals (from a group of 15 potential participants) from different organisational levels and locations that are affected by the change will be interviewed using a semi-structured method. Themes for the interview will be generated from (a) the literature reviewed and (b) the discussion with senior management.
- Documentation, that is, minutes taken from Steering Group Meetings and email correspondence will be referred to. The researchers' journal notes of issues that have arisen throughout the implementation program will also be used.

5.2.1 Methodology

From the literature reviewed it is clear that several studies (Howcroft & Wilson, 2003; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Piderit, 2000) show evidence of an interpretivist approach, which given the dynamic nature of change one might well understand. This method has been used successfully in the study of organisational culture, leadership and responses to change. These theorists believe that change is too complex to make factual definitions, which is what a positivist would attempt to establish. Saunders et al (2003), assert that the interpretivist approach is a persuasive argument when considering the uniqueness and dynamics of the situation and the complexities involved. Interpretism is particularly suited to this study when discussing intangible issues such as culture and the variation amongst individuals. In particular ethnography is focussed on the experiences of different people in different locations and considers their perceptions of the same event (as studied by Howcroft & Wilson, 2003). This is particularly relevant when applied to Power Solutions' decentralised structure in which employees are located at different regional bases, functional areas and organisational levels.

Research Instrument – Semi-structured Interviews

The literature review has resulted in a series of assumptions and questions to be researched in an empirical study as part of Document 3. It has been conducted with an open mind, which leans towards an inductive approach. In order to get a deeper understanding and clarification on the issues raised in this document, the author will conduct several semi-structured interviews with individual personnel in both management and non-management roles, in different functional areas and locations.

The purpose of these interviews is to gain an improved situational understanding, through the explanation of the individuals who were involved in the Primavera project (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) citing Miles & Haubermann, 1994). This

technique will allow for new issues to be raised and included in future research. This inductive insight into the situation helps in understanding why something is happening as opposed to what is happening (Saunders et al, 2003).

Saunders et al (2003, p.137) suggests that the advantage of conducting semi-structured interviews is that the researcher is able to exert a greater amount of control in terms of steering the direction of the questioning thus developing knowledge iteratively. The interviewee is encouraged to talk freely and openly about a situation but ensures that the interviewer gets the in-depth information they require. Whilst a structured interview is formalised and limited to set questions, a semi-structured interview allows the flexibility for new questions to be raised as a result of what the interviewee says during the interview. The semi-structured interview has been used with success in the research of Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006); Howcroft & Wilson (2003).

Analysis

The data from the inductive analysis will be categorised into key themes. This will be developed by checking the frequency of verbs and nouns (Allen et al, 2004). Allen et al (2004) further examined the stability of the themes determining which would hold under different conditions by drawing comparisons across responses and by assessing the differences and similarities.

In addition to clarification at the time of the interviews, the researcher will also supply transcripts to participants to validate and verify their own data (Allen et al, 2004).

Limitations

As per Holt et al (2003) this study thus far is limited to a single change project within one business unit of an organisation thus restricting generalisability across business sectors and situations. However the study is representative of different locations, functional areas, gender and organisational level within the Power Solutions business unit. The number of participants will be limited due to time constraints but will be chosen from a possible 5 members of management and 15 potential non-management members.

5.2.2 Document 4 – Structured Research

Document 4 will be based on the outcomes of Document 3. A focus group, consisting of 6-8 individuals who are currently involved in change initiatives, will be arranged to further understand the relevant issues and to explore ideas to uncover additional information for the development of a questionnaire. A pilot will be conducted to test responses to the questionnaire and any ambiguous questions will be refined. The pilot will test a random selection of approximately 10 people. The final questionnaire will be sent to approximately 200 individuals of varying job types and locations. Both Holt et al (2003) and Antoni (2004) support my intention to use survey method in this type of research. In both instances a six point Likert scale, which avoids the temptation by respondents to choose the mid-point will be used. It is also noted that the questions developed by Antoni (2004) and Likert (1961) will be useful in developing the questionnaire.

5.2.3 Document 5 - Thesis

The key factors provided in Document 4 will be tested using two comparative situational case studies. The benefits of adopting a cross-sectional approach in this research is recognised as a means of gaining more generalised view of the business unit through data comparison (Eriksson & Sundgren, 2005).

The success of the change project will be judged by an assessment of the responses from management and non-management within the Power Solutions business unit. These reactions will be classified in accordance with the responses detailed in Chapter 3. In this definition, it is possible that an individual could accept a situation without necessarily agreeing with it, which is deemed to be a state of ambivalence.

The review of literature supported the view that the use of case studies is the most appropriate strategy given my research objectives. This is a popular approach which has been adopted by Avgerou & McGrath (2007); Fontannaz & Oosthuizen (2007); Howcroft & Wilson (2003); Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006); Kotter & Schlesinger (1979). This strategy also lends itself to qualitative interviews and participant observation (Fisher, 2007) and allows for both reflective and real-time analysis.

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Document 3

A Qualitative Interpretive Report

**Facilitating adaptability to Information Systems
through a participative approach**

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**Doctor of Business Administration
Cohort 9 – 2007/10**

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Abstract

This study investigates the feasibility of adopting a participative approach for the implementation of an information systems project called Primavera within Power Solutions, a business unit of Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions. Organisations that initiate a participative approach to the implementation of new information systems need supportive organisational characteristics, leadership and the commitment of individuals in order to sustain such an initiative.

The research focuses on how a team of individuals involved in the Primavera Project experienced events. The analysis explores management and non-management team member perceptions to understand whether Power Solutions' organisational characteristics and leadership assist or impede a participative approach. It also aims to establish whether group decision-making is influential in creating positive responses to information systems change projects.

The research uses an inductive process in which theory is developed from the data. This has enabled the researcher to capture the rich subjective perceptions and meanings that people apply to events that have occurred in the Primavera Project.

The analysis has revealed that personnel within Power Solutions, although extremely flexible and adaptable to change in their core business activities, are less adaptable to information systems change. This is specific to non office based individuals who have less exposure to technology such as Engineers. Communication was an emerging theme that developed from comments regarding a general lack of understanding of the wider Power Solutions community. This, together with an alignment of the business and information systems strategy is recommended to encourage the participation of all stakeholders thus gaining their commitment to the Primavera Project.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Introducing new information systems into an organisation can be a time consuming, resource hungry and complex task which is often focussed on project management and control rather than organisational change management (OCM) (Kuruppurarachchi, et al, 2002; Maguire, 2000). A lack of focus on an OCM strategy that involves the system end user in the decision-making process may not only result in poorly defined systems but more importantly a lack of acceptance from the individuals who are expected to use the system. Research shows that adopting a participative OCM approach can facilitate this acceptance (Antoni, 2004; Benbasat et al, 1987; Garcia-Arca & Prado-Prado, 2007; Likert, 1961; Maguire, 2000; Tan, 1995).

The term 'participation' is concerned with the process of democratic decision-making (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Lewin, 1948). This involves co-operative working at all organisational levels (Likert & Likert, 1976) and encourages the involvement of all parties who are affected by the result¹ (Mumford, 1983).

This study investigates the feasibility of adopting a participative approach for the implementation of an information systems project within Power Solutions, a business unit of Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions (BBUS). Understanding how individuals interpret their socially formed environment and develop their perceptions will assist in identifying the issues that can support or obstruct a participative approach.

The Document 2 Literature Review (henceforth referred to as Document 2) examined the relevant subject literature and established that the opportunity for workforce participation is advantageous to any organisation. However companies must provide suitable projects in which the workforce could have a positive influence on the outcomes together with an environment to facilitate this (Heller, 2003; Likert & Likert, 1976). Thus an individual's decision whether to participate in a change process is based on their perception of the opportunities available to them to participate in a change project (Antoni, 2004). Document 2 introduced an information systems project called Primavera that is one of several new information systems projects which are being implemented in the next two years. Power Solutions senior management would like to introduce an approach that

¹ These people are often referred to as 'stakeholders'.

encourages positive responses to new information system implementations. It has been recommended by the Business Improvement function that a participative approach to change will facilitate these positive responses. This study aims to understand whether workforce involvement in the decision-making process is encouraged within Power Solutions and whether such an approach could be beneficial in terms of improving participants' responses to this and future information systems projects.

1.1 Organisational Background

BBUS is the third largest operating company within the Balfour Beatty Group in terms of turnover, which consists of thirty-two operating companies. BBUS has approximately 5500 employees and revenue of £700m. 2400 employees work within Power Solutions and £300m of the revenue is attributable to the business unit (refer to Appendix I – Organisation Chart). Power Solutions incorporates work streams in electrical overhead lines, (both in the UK and joint ventures² abroad), underground cabling, an alliance³ formed with National Grid (NGA) and a steelwork fabrication and manufacturing plant called Painter Brothers.

Historically each Power Solutions work stream had its own formalised work processes for estimating, planning, design and operational functions. However senior management have recognised that harmonising these disperse systems and processes will benefit Power Solutions in creating efficiencies, reducing risk and optimising the business' resource. Primavera will ultimately present one standardised planning and resource management approach to BBUS and its clients.

It will take time for those involved in the change to adapt to this new way of working because many of the individuals affected by this change have been using their own methods for many years without any significant change. Therefore a change management approach which gives people the opportunity to be involved in improving their own working practices and facilitates ownership of the

² A contractual business undertaking where both parties share equal responsibility, and a mutual right to control and share in the profits of the enterprise.

³ A contractual business undertaking where one partner takes the lead role in the contract whilst the other partner contributes its core strengths to the venture. Each partner retains their own independence.

processes and information systems could help people to adapt to this and future changes.

1.2 The Primavera Project

Primavera is a project planning and resource management system which is accessible to any company user who requires project information. The system has been introduced in order to improve the visibility of resources across the business' regional locations. This will enable more efficient resource allocation and improved project control and management. The project, which has been implemented in phases by office location, began mid-2008. Each location has a nominated System Administrator (or Champion) who also acts a Primavera Project Team member. In this forum, the Project Team members who all have similar job roles, share experiences and offer support to each other. The team, which consists of non-managers and a project manager, meets at regular bi-weekly intervals and reports progress to the Primavera Steering Group which convenes on a bi-monthly basis. The Steering Group is attended by the Project Team and management personnel.

The Primavera system currently has approximately 200 users and has the potential to increase to 300-400 users in 2010. One of the project's main benefits is to improve the visibility of resource and project information. This is reliant on the ability to access 'real-time' information and the most effective way of achieving this is by encouraging information input at the source. The updating of project information at the source requires investment in training for Engineers, Project Managers and Resource Managers. Skill levels in terms of the use of technology are varied across the Power Solutions business unit but substantial efforts have been made to train and mentor the individuals who will be affected by the change. The Primavera Steering Group members have suggested that promoting how the system will be of benefit to the individual is the most effective way of encouraging its use. Many people need access to project information on a daily basis and participating in the process will help in shaping the outcomes.

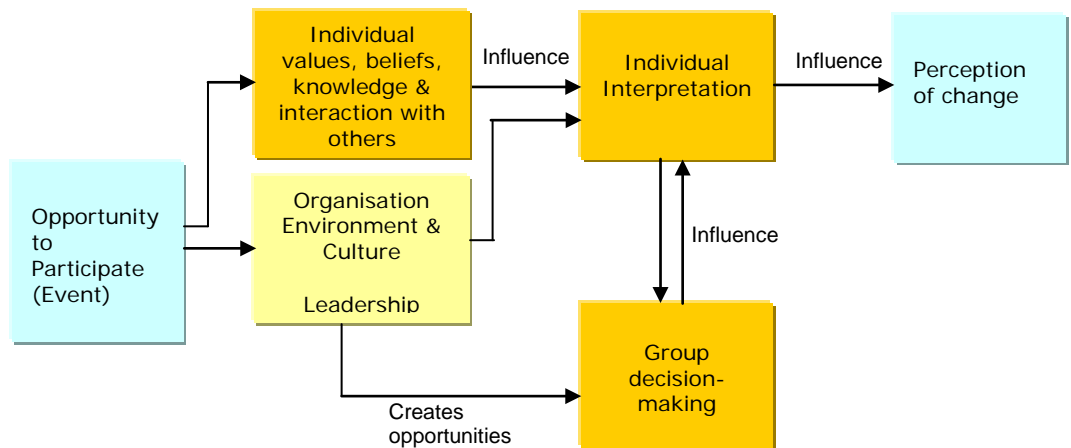
Document 2 provided practical examples which indicated that the business unit is making an effort to involve its employees in the decision-making process and encourage teamwork (Document 2, Section 1.2). This was demonstrated through the establishment of the Primavera Steering Group and Project Team. Likert & Likert (1976) proposed that group decision-making, a supportive organisational culture and relationships between organisational members particularly between manager and subordinate are the main concepts which form the Participative Group (which is discussed in Section 3.1, p.22). Document 2 established that if an organisation's environment is not congruent with this approach, then participation may be difficult or even impossible to introduce and sustain. This, together with a willingness to promote a participative strategy by leadership, must be prevalent and plays a part in forming individual perceptions. Therefore this study aims to understand the context that forms individuals' social reality and the constructs that exist which assist or impede the success of a participative approach. The objectives of this study are:

1. To determine if the organisation's operating environment is supportive of a participative change approach.
2. To establish if leadership is supportive of a participative approach to change.
3. To understand if group decision-making has a positive influence on responses to information systems change.

The foundations for this inductive qualitative study are based on the questions raised as a result of a literature review and focuses on three areas. These are organisational culture and characteristics, leadership approach and how group decision-making can positively influence peoples' responses to information systems change. The justifications for these questions were developed in Document 2 (Chapter 1, pp. 7-9) and are further discussed in Chapter 2 of this document.

The Conceptual Framework (developed by the author and shown in Fig. 1.1) will form a basis for the research plan and design.

Figure 1.1: Facilitating reaction to change through participation



Developed by the Author (2009)

The research objectives were transposed into generalised themes which are represented by the two boxes in the centre of the Conceptual Framework. The yellow box symbolises the themes established from Document 2. The orange boxes are amendments from the original Conceptual Framework shown in Document 2 (Chapter 4, p.52). This framework will be used as a guide to inductive study where the questions raised in Document 2 are posed in an open-ended manner. Therefore the research strategy has been chosen based on its appropriateness to the research objectives and questions (Saunders et al 2003, p.91) and use in other similar studies which have been researched in Document 2 (Allen et al, 2007; Gopal & Prasad, 2000; Howcroft & Wilson, 2003; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006).

In explanation of the diagram from left to right – The process begins with the opportunity to participate in an event. An individual’s perception of a change event is influenced by their interpretation which is developed from their values, beliefs and interaction with others (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Lewin, 1948). Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) describe events as an occurrence in the workplace that can affect organisational members’ views dependent on how much the outcome is an advantage or disadvantage to them. Opportunities to participate in group decision-making activities are influenced by the organisation’s characteristics and leadership. A person’s interaction with the group in the

decision-making process can influence how they interpret the event which forms their perception. Likewise the group may be influenced by the individual's involvement in this process. Chapter 2 discusses how the research questions will be answered through the research strategy and design.

Chapter 2 - Research Strategy & Design

2.1 Research Strategy

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Document 2 Literature Review generated a number of questions which have been developed into themes in order to understand the feasibility of introducing a participative approach within Power Solutions. These themes are; organisational characteristics and culture, leadership and group decision-making. Culture can exist at a business unit or work group level. Work group level sub-culture exists independently of the business unit culture (Martin & Siehl, 1983). This differentiation at work group level is termed 'sub-culture'. Document 2 found that an organisation's sub-culture can be a positive factor when introducing a participative approach because supportive sub-cultures demonstrate a higher level of employee acceptance and commitment to change (Lok & Crawford, 1999). Therefore the following questions were posed:

- Does the Power Solutions workforce believe that sub-culture exists within the business unit?
- If sub-cultures do exist, which is the dominant type?
- Do both management and non-management believe that cultural progression can be made towards a participative approach?

Leaders within Power Solutions are management level employees who take responsibility for implementing a change initiative throughout the organisation or within their functional area. Document 2 concluded that successful change should not be the responsibility of leadership alone. Rather Power Solutions leaders should build on existing relationships with the workforce to facilitate their involvement. It was therefore proposed that people-oriented leaders are more likely to be supportive of a participative approach to change and the following questions were raised. Do leaders:

- Offer decision-making opportunities.
- Exhibit task or people-oriented leadership styles.

Finally Document 2 suggested that group collaboration is essential to facilitating positive responses to change and therefore asks:

- Is there evidence of group collaboration?

Based on the fact that there are a number of questions that need to be answered, the research strategy takes an inductive approach where theory is generated from the research results (Bryman & Bell, 2007 p. 14). This approach is used due to the uniqueness of the Primavera Project and will capture an in-depth understanding of individual perceptions and the meanings that they attach to the events (Saunders et al, 2003 p.87). These subjective meanings cannot be captured through a quantitative study which is objective in nature. In fact it is debatable that subjective meanings can be quantified. Whilst it is recognised that some similar studies have taken a deductive quantitative approach (Antoni, 2004; Herold et al, 2007; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006; Likert, 1961) it is felt that a qualitative inductive approach (Gopal & Prasad, 2000; Howcroft & Wilson, 2003; Prasad, 1993) is better suited to this study in order to answer the research questions that were developed in Document 2. All approaches have been considered in the Literature Review and are viewed as valuable information sources.

It is recognised that the generation of theory through an inductive approach may cause the research design to be implicit at the outset as the theory is only generated as a result of the analysis and findings (Saunders et al, 2003 p.85). However the research is aided and guided by the key themes which have been arrived at through the Literature Review and are detailed in the Conceptual Framework. An inductive approach has the benefit in this study of allowing for new concepts to emerge which provide alternative explanations for what has happened (Saunders et al, 2003 p. 87).

This research takes a Social Constructionist ontological position which recognises that people make sense of their environment through their interpretation of events (Antoni, 2004; Bryman & Bell, 2007 p.23; Fisher, 2007 p.21; Gopal & Prasad,

2000; Saunders et al, 2002 p.84). This interpretation is formed from their beliefs which are developed from their own thoughts, knowledge and values and conversation with others (Fisher, 2007 p.48) (as shown in Fig. 1.1). This study suggests that a practice, termed a social construct, is the creation of an individual or group (Lewin, 1948). Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) call this group interaction 'social identity' whilst the term 'personal identity' refers to an individual's characteristics. From a social constructionist viewpoint reality is developed and maintained by peoples' interpretation and knowledge. These interpretations cannot be generalised because the Primavera Project is unique to a group of individuals within a single business unit of one organisation, namely Power Solutions.

This study aims to explore the range of views that people have of events and identify where these interpretations are the shared views of Power Solutions personnel (Miles & Huberman, 1994 p.1). These commonly experienced forces will develop peoples' socially constructed environment (Saunders et al, 2003, p.84). The research also acknowledges that managers and non-managers might have different or conflicting views because of the position they hold within Power Solutions.

This study recognises that social forces exist within Power Solutions in their own right and may constrain or assist the behaviours of individuals and their actions (Saunders et al, 2003 p.85). A social force within the context of this study refers to anything that exerts an influence on the way Power Solutions personnel behave or relate to one another. An example of a social force might be the degree that Power Solutions organisational structures and procedures can facilitate or constrain an individuals' ability to make-decisions. Individuals are likely to share interpretations of their environment and that their own interpretations of events or values might influence or constrain this interpretation (Fisher, 2007 p.19; Saunders et al 2003, p. 84) which is represented in Figure 1.1. This is supported through the research design which is described in section 2.2.

2.2 Research Design

The research design is based on a qualitative case study of a single information systems project which was identified earlier as the Primavera Project. This single case is used to gain a detailed understanding of the context and uses semi-structured interviews for the collection of the data. (The data collection method is discussed in more detail in Section 2.3). Qualitative interviews were used to give the participants the opportunity to describe their experiences of the Primavera Project in their own words (Bryman & Bell, 2007 p.63). This was guided by the researcher through the use of the themes and questions developed as a result of Document 2. The adoption of this approach enabled the researcher to explore the participants' experiences and find out important facets that may otherwise not have been foreseen. Such an example is the emerging theme of Communication which developed from the original open-ended question regarding the project's aim and objectives.

A qualitative approach was particularly useful in this study as there has been no previous research of the Primavera Project (Creswell, 2009, p.18). The qualitative interviews allowed a rich description of individual experiences within this focussed project context (Miles & Huberman, 1994 p.1). The semi-structured interview approach gave the researcher the flexibility to re-order the questions or themes depending on the conversation flow (Saunders et al, 2003 p.247). This also helped in understanding where individuals shared their interpretations of the Primavera Project implementation or where conflicting views emerged (Bryman & Bell, 2007 p.405). For example conversation overlaps or deviations from the Interview Agenda (refer to Appendix V) sometimes occurred. When interviewees were asked to describe the change management strategy this occasionally overlapped with leadership style. Greater clarity might have been achieved through the use of probing questioning.

On reflection observation techniques as used by Gopal & Prasad (2000) and Prasad (1993) could have been used in addition to semi-structured interviews to gain an improved understanding of the subjective worlds of Power Solutions organisational members. However, the researcher felt that there was sufficient

familiarity with these individuals to support the argument adequately. Nevertheless the use of observation techniques in the organisational members' own operational environment may have proved beneficial to the study. Thus a limitation of this study is that generalisation is less likely (Saunders et al, 2003 p.252) due to the uniqueness of the situation.

2.3 Data Collection Method

Semi-structured interviews are a data collection method that has facilitated an in-depth understanding of the Primavera Project (Silverman, 2004, p.112). This interview method has been applied with some success in the research of Allen et al (2007), Gopal & Prasad (2000), Howcroft & Wilson (2003) and Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006). It was therefore considered an appropriate method for use in gaining an understanding of the events recounted by individuals involved in the Primavera Project, particularly in developing new insights into a situation as opposed to validating a theory. This method encouraged the participant to talk freely and openly about events which happened in the project whilst ensuring that the depth of information required was obtained. The researcher was also able to exert a greater amount of control in terms of steering the direction of the questioning in semi-structured interviews thus developing knowledge iteratively (Saunders et al, 2003 p.137) Whilst a structured interview is formalised and limited to set questions, a semi-structured interview allows the flexibility for new questions to be raised as a result of what the interviewee says during the interview. Hence further themes were developed as a result of the interviews.

In view of the benefits of this data collection method, six face-to-face interviews were conducted on an individual basis over a two week period. This number of interviews was considered sufficient to be representative of the different Power Solutions locations and functional areas. To improve validity, the researcher's interpretation of the data has been questioned and revised. For example, based on the initial analysis the researcher believed that organisational members demonstrated that they were adaptable in a variety of situations. It was only after further understanding of the data which was uncovered through the analysis, that

it became clear that information systems change was more difficult to accept. The data was again reviewed to uncover that this was specific to certain job roles.

Plural structure has been used to improve validity and recognise the diversity in people's views of the Primavera Project. Plural structure acknowledges that managers and non-managers could have different perceptions⁴ of the same events. The researcher has also used a dialectical critique of the analysis to highlight the contradictions between people's formal intention, and actual practice (Fisher, 2007 p.299). This analysis challenges the formal spoken views of the interviewees and delves into their hidden meanings. The dialectical critique compliments the Grounded Theory approach to develop emerging themes from the analysis.

It is acknowledged that a critique of the methods used by an independent party would have been beneficial. For instance, triangulation could have been achieved through a senior manager checking the researcher's interpretation of the analysis (Fisher, 2007 p.297). However as discussed in Section 2.4, anonymity may have been compromised as the study is limited to a small select group of individuals. Hence the researcher thought it prudent not to distribute the results of the analysis to senior management at this current time.

Focus groups were considered as an alternative to individual interviews with the intention that this might facilitate a more intuitive conversation as opposed to the researcher providing themes with open-ended questions. However after careful consideration, it was felt that this approach would result in a broader, high level interpretation of events rather than obtaining the depth and detail of understanding required to answer the research questions. In addition it was felt that focus groups would prove more challenging in terms of controlling the direction of the questioning. It has also been considered that this approach could be a limitation for people who are more reserved in voicing their opinions within a group (Bryman & Bell, 2007 p.525). Pairing individuals in interviews was considered

⁴ The dynamic and complex way in which individuals select information (stimuli) from the environment and interpret and translate it so that a meaning is assigned which will result in a pattern of behaviour or thought.

but it was felt that the depth of information would have been lost and there was the chance that one individual could dominate the interview more than another. The characteristics of these stakeholders are discussed in the next section.

2.4 Participant Characteristics

A range of stakeholders involved in the Primavera Project were interviewed to gain an understanding of the different perspectives of the events which occurred in the context of the Primavera information systems project (Fisher, 2007 p.171). The sample was taken from a potential 15 individuals who were directly involved in the project. All 15 individuals were male and therefore it was not possible to represent females. This unfortunately meant that a gender analysis in respect of the female population although interesting in relation to the topic could not be conducted. This would have been of particular interest as findings by Jago & Vroom (1982) suggest that women managers are less authoritarian and more participative in their approach to group decision-making. However in this research male managers were found to have more freedom to act in either an autocratic or participative way without causing negative responses from both sexes.

For the purposes of anonymity, all interviewees were provided with alias names. This ensures that the participants cannot be identified by the way that the researcher writes up the findings or in any document or publication that may arise from the project. Any identifying characteristics of participants have been changed, unless the characteristic is pertinent to the analysis or changing it would distort the analysis (for example, the length of time with organisation). However it is recognised that anonymity may be difficult as the study will focus on one project (Primavera) and therefore limits this to a small, select group of individuals. For instance the management level selection is limited to a potential five possible candidates. Nevertheless care was taken to ensure that the interviewee's anonymity is not compromised by way of raising points or information found in other interviews that may inadvertently lead to other participants identifying the information source (Saunders et al 2003, p.136 citing

Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). Information was therefore carefully considered in a sensitive manner as to not divulge the identity of other participants.

Jack, Alfie and Oscar are management level employees. Jack has been employed by Power Solutions for 9 years. Alfie and Oscar have been employed by the organisation for over 20 years. All three are situated at different UK locations and are responsible for different functional areas and disciplines. William, Edward and Thomas are non-managers and have similar roles although they are located in different regional areas. Edward and Thomas have over 3 years service with the company whilst William has 2 years service. (For further information on the participants, refer to Appendix I – Participant Profile and Appendix II – Organisation Chart).

All participants have been involved in the Primavera Project from its inception in June 2008. Consideration has been given to the length of time that individuals have been involved in the project to ensure that they have an acceptable level of involvement and understanding. It is envisaged that organisational members who have worked together for an extended period will have a longer period of social interaction with each other. Therefore they may be more likely to share their perceptions thus exhibiting social constructs with other members of the group (Saunders et al, 2003 p. 84).

2.5 Arranging & Conducting the Interviews

The researcher ensured that interviews were planned well in advance to allow some flexibility in the event that the interviewee could not meet on the suggested date and or time. By ensuring that the individuals concerned received several weeks advanced warning of the interview the difficulties in gaining access were limited (Appendix III – Interview Schedule). The invitation to attend an interview of approximately 1 hour of duration was sent via Microsoft Outlook at least 1 week before the interview date. The invitation contained a Participant Information Sheet including a consent form (Appendix IV).

A prepared list of themes and interview questions (Appendix V – Interview Agenda) were used to allow the flexibility to adapt, remove or add questions to probe specific issues as the interview process progressed (Saunders et al 2003, p. 246). Themes for the interview were generated from the literature reviewed and the researchers own journal notes of issues to-date.

All participants were given the opportunity to consent freely to their involvement in the research. Full and accurate information was provided in terms of; identity of the researcher, contact details, the purpose of the research, methods used, security, confidentiality, practical implications of taking part and possible benefits. This was detailed in the Participant Information Sheet.

At the outset of the interview, the participant was given adequate time to read through the Participant Information Sheet. The interviewer asked if any aspects of the information needed clarification. The participant signed the Consent Form which was returned to the researcher. All participants were assured that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw themselves or their data from the project up until the point when the data was analysed in preparation for write-up and submission for assessment.

Interviewees were asked to consent to an audio recording being made and were made aware that they could ask for the recording device to be switched off at any time. In the eventuality that they did not agree to an audio recording, preparation was made to take handwritten notes. However all participants had no objections to being recorded.

Each interview was between 40 and 65 minutes in duration. The interviews were all recorded and each interviewee was asked in advance by the researcher for their permission. The questioning focussed on the Primavera Project that all participants had been involved in, which provided the interviewees with a scenario to illustrate events (Saunders, 2003 p.262). A series of open questions were used to encourage the interviewee to be as descriptive as possible to improve situational understanding rather than simply responding with a ‘yes’ or ‘no’

answer. The use of open-ended questions increased the reliability of the interview and reduced bias (Saunders et al 2003, p.262). Examples of these questions are:

How would you describe this culture(s)?

Do you believe that project success is the responsibility of leadership or the responsibility of everyone involved at all levels?

Probing questions were used to improve clarity or focus on specific issues to improve or confirm understanding. However it is recognised that more use of the probing technique might have been employed to obtain more clarification and examples of the issues raised by interviewees. Every effort was made at the end of each section of the Interview Agenda (Appendix V) to summarise the explanations provided by the interviewee in order to reduce interviewer bias or misinterpretation (Saunders, 2003 p.260). The interviewees were also asked if they had any further or additional information to convey. On termination of the interview, the researcher thanked the interviewee for their time and participation.

2.6 Transcription

The results of this analysis are formed from interview transcripts (Appendix VI – Interview Transcripts) and as such are open to the interpretation of the interviewer (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006) although every effort has been made to reduce the potential for interviewer bias (Saunders et al 2003, p.252). This was achieved through supplying the interviewee with adequate information about the research, ensuring an appropriate approach to questioning was used during the interview, preparing for the interview and the ability to listen and effectively question (Saunders et al 2003, p.254). Every effort was made to ensure that the interviewee felt at ease to impart with their knowledge and experience of the situation through establishing trust (Saunders et al 2003, p.253). This also encouraged new themes to emerge.

Each interview was transcribed shortly after the interview had taken place thus ensuring consistency in the approach. The transcript recognises pauses, overlaps

and notes regarding tone or irony, such as sarcasm or laughter (Silverman, 2004, p.222) which all help in clarifying meaning in the transcription and are an important addition to the transcript to ensure the reliability of the interpretation.

The main difficulties were in respect of transcribing the interviews, in relation to the amount of time required on the part of the researcher and audibility of the recorded interview. Surprisingly the problem with audibility was not due to the quality of the technology used but rather in terms of the clarity of speech from the interviewees. For instance, one interviewee tended to mumble and another posed difficulty because English was not his first language. However it is recognised that the interviewer could have asked the interviewee to speak slowly or clearly or the interviewer might have re-iterated what the interviewee said to clarify that this was correct. In addition the interviewer could have asked the interviewee to validate their transcript, highlighting areas that require attention.

2.7 Confidentiality, security and retention of research data

The researcher will keep the contents of the analysis secure by use of a 'key' which links the code names used with the name and contact details of the participants. This information will not be revealed to others. The purpose is purely to allow transcripts to be (a) viewed by the interviewee if requested after completing an interview or (b) excluded from the study if an interviewee requests it. When the project is complete, the key will be destroyed.

The audio and transcripts of interviews will be handled solely by the researcher at the researcher's home adhering to data protection principles. No names or other unique identifiers of individuals were used in transcribing the data from audio. Research notes and hardcopy questionnaires are kept in a locked filing cabinet in a secure place. Electronic files (audio and notes) are password protected securely on the researchers private computer which is not accessible to other people.

2.8 Analysis Method

The method for analysis is based on Glaser & Strauss' (1967) Grounded Theory approach described by Bryman & Bell (2007, p.588) and Miles & Huberman (1994, p.61) and applied by Prasad (1993). This involves the generation of theory from the data which is collected through primary empirical research rather than the generation of a theory through a hypothesis - thus it is an inductive approach. Comparisons of the data were made to develop and guide the theory. Whilst a case study research design has been adopted and the use of semi-structured interviews for the collection of the data it was decided that Grounded Theory would be used for the analysis of the data. This was successfully employed as a data analysis technique in a study of work computerisation conducted by Prasad (1993) and by Gopal & Prasad (2000). These studies used qualitative semi-structured interviews along with observation as the data collection methods and used Grounded Theory techniques for the data analysis. Given the similarities to this study and the volumes of data generated from the semi-structured interviews it was considered that this technique provides an effective and practical way of classification and commentary on the data.

The empirical research consisted of in-depth interviews which collected a mass of primary data which was collected and disaggregated into meaningful categories to validate specific elements identified in the theoretical framework (Fontannaz & Oosthuizen, 2007). However in the researcher's capacity as practitioner-researcher it was considered difficult to exclude the researcher's own knowledge of the organisation and situation (Saunders et al, 2003 p. 98) as suggested by Glaser & Strauss (1967) as this will naturally have an influence on the results of the analysis.

The analysis began with the transcription of the individual interviews. Key points were identified from the transcripts and colour coded (Allen, et al, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Prasad, 1993) to identify relevant statements and the original themes (concepts) from the Interview Agenda and developing new themes and sub-themes where appropriate. This coding involves naming and selecting pieces of data then converting statements into useful interpretations (Charmaz, 2006,

p.43). This coded information was then grouped into categories and compared with other interviewee transcripts to create groups of themes (concepts) which form the basis of theory (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p.589). Following the initial coding activity the statements were transferred into an Excel spreadsheet which combined all the statements from the six interviewees into one area (Appendix VII – Coded Analysis). Excel was used due to its ease of use and the researcher's familiarisation with the tool. Descriptive text is used throughout the analysis to illustrate the themes.

Categories were initially created to represent a theme from the Conceptual Framework that was applied to the Interview Agenda (Appendix V) - For example, leadership and culture. Throughout the process of transferring this data new categories were created and the statements assessed for similarities in the responses or re-occurring phrases. This clustering of information is referred to by Miles & Huberman (1994, p.69) as pattern coding and was achieved after aligning the initial two interviews the coding spreadsheet was relatively easy to update and the more analysis which was added, the greater amount of clarity. The codes and sub-codes were then filtered in Excel to further rationalise the themes, remove superfluous data and to improve the focus. At this point the data was matched which helped in defining the argument. The only difficulties in analysis originated from the interviews being semi-structured so it was difficult to categorise as people tended to answer and merge the responses. However the themes and open-ended questions on the Agenda did help in tracking the responses.

Although there was some variance of order throughout the interviews, generally speaking the discussion flowed from one category to the next in order of the Agenda item making it relatively simple to keep track of the initial categories. The open ended questions under each item are also coded in a similar fashion as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 58). A more inductive approach was taken whereby the Agenda items were not pre-coded, rather they were coded at the analysis stage (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.58)

Chapter 3 – Research Findings

Chapter 1 presented three themes on which the research is based; organisational characteristics and culture, leadership and group decision-making. These themes have been used as a starting point for further investigation and are some of the issues that have influenced individual's perceptions of events which have occurred in the Primavera Project. These themes have been developed from the research questions posed in Document 2 which proposed that the organisation needs a supportive environment and leadership to facilitate a participative approach. Document 2 also proposed that group decision-making, termed 'Group-think' by Janis (1972), influences people's responses to an information systems change. These areas are important in assessing the beneficial use of a participative approach within Power Solutions. This chapter begins with the analysis of Power Solutions organisational characteristics.

3.1 Organisational Characteristics

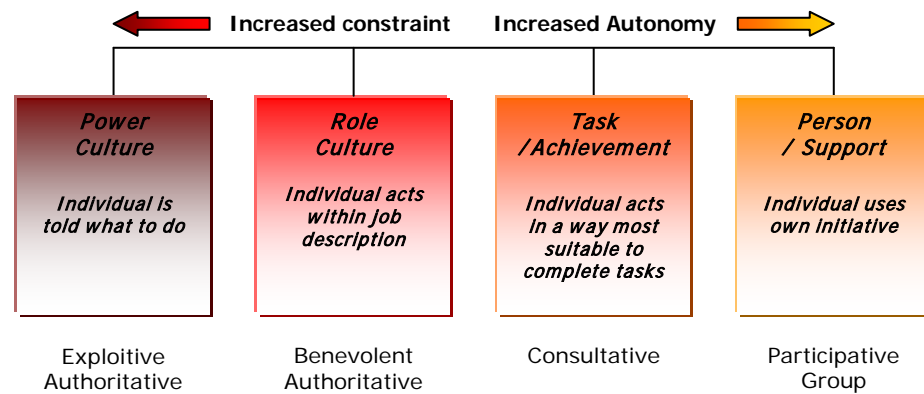
This section aims to develop an improved understanding of Power Solutions unique organisational characteristics to understand if the business unit is supportive of a participative approach. It begins with a brief explanation of how organisations can differ in their characteristics and how these have developed within Power Solutions. A participative approach to change tends to be evolutionary rather than planned and its successful adoption lies in the ability of the organisation to create new ideas and adapt to emergent changes (Likert & Likert, 1976; McGregor, 1960; Menon, 2001) therefore Power Solutions' flexibility to adapt to changing situations is also assessed. The focus of this section is on the first objective introduced in Section 1.2, p.4 which is:

To determine if Power Solutions business unit's operating environment is supportive of a participative approach.

Document 2 discussed Power Solutions' unique characteristics based on Likert's (1961) distinctions. These were defined as Exploitive Authoritative, Benevolent Authoritative, Consultative and Participative Group. At one extreme, the

Exploitive Authoritative organisation enforces change through threats and fear. The workforce exhibits a subservient attitude due to the controlling manner used by their line managers. Decisions are made from the top of the organisational hierarchy with poor communication. There is also little communication from the top downwards, bottom upwards or horizontally amongst peers and little teamwork. Consequently organisational members are resistant towards the organisation's goals. The opposite of the Exploitive Authoritative organisation is the Participative Group. In this type of organisation the workforce is cooperative across all organisational levels. Individuals take responsibility for their actions and feel able to question the decisions made because there is a higher degree of trust through the organisational hierarchy (Likert, 1961). Document 2 suggested that Power Solutions is a Consultative organisation which is close to a Participative Group. A Consultative organisation is effective at economic motivations but lacking in the desire for new experiences. Whilst employees show positive attitudes in adhering to Power Solutions' strategic goals, more involvement in the decision-making process would be beneficial. Communications are generally good flowing from upper to lower levels of the organisational hierarchy and responses upwards but communication may not be initiated from the bottom-upwards instinctively. It was proposed that these organisational characteristics are developed by the Power Solutions members shared values and beliefs (Schein, 1980 p. 107) which are collectively termed the Organisation's Culture (Mullins, 2002 p. 25). Document 2 aligned the four organisational characteristics (Likert, 1961) with four cultural types (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006 p.85) which are shown in Fig 3.1.

Fig 3.1: Cultural Types aligned with Organisational Characteristics



(Adapted from Kavanagh & Ashkanasy 2006, p.85)

Research conducted by Kavanagh & Ashkanasy (2006) found that in organisations where change was introduced gradually as in the case of the Primavera system implementation, individuals' cultural perceptions moved from the left of this diagram, which imposes more constraints, further to the right where there is a greater amount of autonomy. This is because people have more time to adjust to the changed situation.

As discussed in Document 2, Mullins (2002, p. 804) suggests this cultural development is based on the organisation's size, location, environment and history. When interviewed, Alf, a member of the management team indicates the link between cultural development and the organisation's history.

"...people who had been involved in the Power business had been in it from the start and therefore the culture was a collection of those, that entity, those people and the way they wanted to drive it forward". (Alf, Manager)

This also illustrates that culture in Alf's view, is a collection of individual's values and beliefs that have been developed over a period of time which supports Schein's (1980 p. 107) view. An emerging theme was raised by Jack, who suggested that culture is also driven by the environment in which Power Solutions conducts its business. Jack states that Power Solutions has an "inclusive culture" indicating that the business unit involves its workforce in making the decisions.

“...it’s a very inclusive culture and I think that’s the nature of particularly the electricity supply industry in terms of the environment we’re working in. Everyone has to be on their game or else they don’t go home at the end of the day”. (Jack - Manager)

Jack has an implicit expectation that people will stay working until the job is complete. This view by a member of the management team is validated by non-management who feel conscientious and take ownership for their work.

“I’m definitely of the opinion that everyone should take some responsibility although I realise that there is always someone ultimately accountable. I feel a sense of responsibility to complete work that I’ve been given. And I think that Power Solutions empowers you to take some of that responsibility yourself. Alan expects me to go and solve my own problems”. (William - Non-Manager)

It is clear that Power Solutions’ staff take responsibility for making decisions about the activities that they are involved in on a daily basis because this is the most efficient and effective way of completing the work. As suggested in Section 3.1, p.20, assuming that Power Solutions’ staff are generally flexible in their approach to adapt to new situations then they will be better placed to adopt a participative approach (Likert & Likert, 1976). Alfie illustrates that there needs to be an amount of flexibility in the business unit’s approach to cater for a varying customer base.

“... you need to have a flexible, erm, approach to your customer base.... you know you have to as you’re managing the business you have to vary that approach”. (Alfy - Manager)

Power Solutions has traditionally situated its regional bases close to its client sites which are located in different parts of Great Britain. Alfie suggests that a decentralised organisational structure is most appropriate for Power Solutions. He believes that workforce interaction with their clients on a localised basis is needed for the business to meet its clients’ expectations. This naturally leads to a flatter decentralised organisation in which organisational members have a greater amount of autonomy and are accountable for their actions which have been

identified as being congruent with a participative approach (McGregor, 1960; Menon, 2001).

"...our business model ... It's constantly trying to secure the workload for the business and therefore the involvement remote from head office has to be significant otherwise it just doesn't work". (Alfy - Manager)

Creating strong relationships with the customer is a business necessity which can only be achieved through a close physical local presence. As discussed in Document 2 (p. 14) work group level cultures (Lok & Crawford, 1999) exist independently of the business unit culture (Martin & Siehl, 1983). This differentiation at work group level is termed 'sub-culture'. Workforce commitment is gained through a strong local sub-culture where employees take responsibility (Lok & Crawford, 1999) for the relationship with the customer. Research conducted by Lok & Crawford (1999) found that organisations with supportive sub-cultures showed a higher degree of employee commitment to change.

Jack believes that the business will need to become more flexible and adaptable in the future to offer the customer an improved service and cater for their changing needs. This demonstrates that Power Solutions has a supportive and flexible sub-culture which is regarded as beneficial in terms of introducing a participative approach (Likert & Likert, 1976).

"...So I think in time the business will change and I think its going to have to become more flexible and more adaptable, more adaptable in the way we deploy our contracts because there's so many variations... With Cabling and Overhead Line activity, every job tends to be different. Different cable sizes, different specifications, different this, different that, different trench requirements, different customer requirements, terms of reporting. In terms of how they want the product installed, what specification they are going to work to. Every DNO⁵ is different". (Jack - Manager)

Jack's comment also demonstrates a link between the business strategy and a need to quickly adapt to changing customer needs and requirements. This suggests that

⁵ Distribution Network Operator

Power Solutions needs a flexible business strategy. The statement supports Landrum et al (2000) who suggest that organisations should become more flexible and responsive with more emphasis on a team-led approach for strategy development. Power Solutions has short to medium term project based business strategy which is heavily reliant on building strong customer relationships in order to win new work. This strategy is focussed on growing its existing markets, expanding into new markets with existing services and developing new services for existing markets. Existing market growth is defined in the Ansoff Matrix as Market Penetration. Market Development is the term used when an organisation endeavours to expand into new areas. When new services are used to penetrate existing markets this is referred to as Product Development (Dibb et al, 2001 p.681). The former explains why Power Solutions is very customer focussed and strives to build solid bonds between its workforce and its customers.

In order to make the interaction between the customer and the workforce efficient, Power Solutions advocates the delegation of responsibility to individuals who are made accountable for the activities that they undertake on a daily basis.

"..you get to the point where there's codetermination so people are working together in project teams to deliver an end product for our customers which is far superior to what anybody else can do and they are empowered and more importantly held accountable for their actions". (Jack - Manager)

This accountability can only be developed through enabling individuals to participate in the decision-making process (Menon, 2001). The former and the latter comments from Jack illustrate an explicit link between 'empowerment' through the participation of non-management staff in making the decisions which would traditionally be the responsibility of management. Empowerment can also result from stakeholder commitment to the organisation's goals as a result of participation in the decision-making process (Mullins, 2002 p. 590). Goal setting strategies such as Managing by Objectives (MBO) aim to relate organisational goals to individual performance (Mullins, 2002 p.220) and have been suggested to improve employee motivation (Latham & Locke, 1979). It involves setting objectives and targets with the participation of managers to agree business unit

objectives and performance measures and continual review and appraisal of the results. An example of MBO principles used within Power Solutions is the Balanced Scorecard. In the following statement Jack illustrates that Power Solutions is admired for this 'empowered' approach within the Power industry.

"...within the industry that we work within erm I think we're admired for having a very empowered customer focussed culture at the sharp end where people can make decisions..." (Jack - Manager)

It therefore appears that from a management perspective the Power Solutions business unit is used to adapting to new ways of working based on the customer's needs. This tactical level decision-making is heavily reliant on the input of its workforce. Decision-making at a tactical level, referred to by Johnson & Scholes (2002) as 'Operational Strategy' promotes the selection of tactics which are best placed to achieve the organisation's strategic objectives. Whereas strategic decision-making identifies 'what' will be done, tactical decision-making is concerned with 'how' the objectives will be achieved (Johnson & Scholes, 2002 p. 12).

Non-manager Edward recognises that the business unit is extremely adaptable and flexible when change is necessary which concurs with the latter statements from management.

"... the business is changing all the time and the nature of our works I mean I think we do adapt to different situations we've obviously got to react to fault work and stuff like that. So we are very adaptable to change and meeting clients needs. So I think we are pretty adaptable on a whole". (Edward - Non-Manager)

Both William and Thomas also share this view, which supports the argument from both a management and non-management perspective. However of note is that both statements are non specific and are generalisable to any situational change. For instance whilst Edward refers to the business unit's operating environment, William refers to an organisational merger. The research focus might have been improved through further probing of the interviewee to gain specific rather than generalised examples.

“Well I think it’s very adaptable, if you just consider over the past year {referring to an organisational merger}...”. (William - Non-Manager)

Thomas also refers to his local operating environment. He takes the pragmatic view that there can be difficulties when introducing any change but accepts these as a natural consequence of any type of change and suggests that this can be overcome by some modification to the method or deliverable of change itself.

“it is adaptable to change but er it is being adopted but with some difficulty not very easy to adopt to change... but certainly, er, if you change something you have got some difficulties... so you try to overcome that difficulty either by trying to revert that change or to modify that change”. (Thomas - Non-Manager)

In further consideration of these statements it is notable that all examples provided are specific to Power Solutions’ core operational adaptability in meeting customer requirements and views differ when the same theme is applied to computerised systems change. Information systems projects can have a huge impact on an organisation’s strategy (Kuruppurarachchi et al, 2002) yet the value of these systems may not be recognised because of a failure to strategically align them with the business strategy (Tan, 1995). This can cause a lack of clarity regarding the change and whilst all participants agreed that there was a problem with a lack of understanding in the Primavera Project, the solution to this issue differed. Opinions varied from the suggestion that people were not used to the technology and set in their ways to improving the clarity of objectives and involving people earlier in the process (Eisenbach et al, 1999; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979; Kuruppurarachchi et al, 2002). An emerging theme was presented in Edward’s comment about *“...people not understanding...”* which could be due to a lack of communication. Good communication both upward as well as downwards and horizontally amongst peer groups is a characteristic of a participative approach which is highlighted by Likert (1961).

“...we’ve had a lot of, sort of, people not understanding really rather than opposition as to what it can do for them and I suppose mainly the Engineers really who are a big part of it. Not in the culture of, you know, keeping programmes up-to-date. ...I would say

that the old school, what you call the old school, they've only just got laptops... they're not going to be very adaptable to it because they're not used to technology". (Edward - Non-Manager)

Edward's statement shows that some of the staff, particularly Engineers have an 'old school' attitude and are unwilling to change because they do not understand the benefits of changing their working practices and processes. A lack of clarity of the reasons for change can lead to resistance (Abrahamson, 1991). Improving communication methods could resolve the difficulties in the prospective system users adapting to the technology (Allen, et al, 2007).

Oscar (Manager) believes that people in his area have not adapted to the Primavera system because they cannot see why change is necessary. Oscar's indication that the strategic aim and objectives have not been clearly understood or articulated by senior management also demonstrates the need for improved communication methods to support a participative approach within Power Solutions.

"...we're set in our ways; we don't want to change because people don't see why we need to change. That's the way we've always done it, it's worked before why do you want to change it. But I don't think they can see the bigger picture". (Oscar - Manager)

Early inclusion of organisational members in the process is a way to facilitate this understanding (Likert, 1961) which is recognised by Alf. He provides an example of a financial system called Oracle which was initiated by Balfour Beatty Plc (BB Plc). Oracle was initiated to improve the financial reporting mechanisms between BB Plc and its operating companies to allow BB Plc to have clear visibility of financial information. However when BB Plc removed constraints on its operating companies to adhere to the standard system configuration, Oracle became customised to match the existing processes of each operating company. Alf suggests that a failure to include people in the choice of the Oracle information system may have led to a lack of acceptance by its eventual users demonstrating that a participative approach to change could be used to facilitate the acceptance of stakeholders. He recalls that:

“... we’ve chosen Primavera. Not all the business has, as we know but the majority of the business has and I think that that makes a big difference because you buy in to the change process don’t you. Whereas if you have change forced upon you, sometimes it can be slightly more difficult to accept”. (Alfy - Manager)

Involving organisational members early in the decision-making process is a way of communicating the projects objectives. This approach will also prepare organisational members for the change by providing them with an improved awareness of the benefits (Eisenbach et al, 1999; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979; Kuruppurarachchi et al, 2002). However this approach needs to be initiated and facilitated by leadership (Holt et al, 2003; Landrum et al, 2000) which is the subject of the next section.

3.1.1 Summary

This section provided an improved understanding of the Power Solutions business unit’s characteristics including its history, environment and location. It established that the business unit is well developed in many of the characteristics which facilitate a participative approach as defined by Likert (1961).

The Power Solutions business unit has a history of long serving staff members who have formed strong relationships with their customers at a tactical level over a number of years. This constantly changing environment can be relatively unpredictable which means that Power Solutions’ personnel need to be adaptable to changing situations on both a client and a project basis. This also drives a need for personnel, who are non-management level, to make decisions quickly based on their clients’ requirements. Management and non-management share the view that more flexibility will be required in future to secure the workload. This customer led requirement is driven by Power Solutions’ business strategy which is focussed on growing existing markets, developing new markets with existing services and providing new services for existing markets (Dibb et al, 2001, p.681). This has resulted in a collaborative working environment which delegates responsibility and authority to staff at all organisational levels. However this

working ethos is focussed on the business unit's core operational function and computerised systems change seems more of a challenge for people within Power Solutions who are less skilled in the use of technology. This is mainly focussed on certain job types such as Engineers who have less exposure to information systems. This may be a consequence of the fact that computer systems are not recognised as a strategic investment that brings explicit benefits to the business (Kuruppurarachchi et al, 2002; Tan, 1995). Participative methods such as early inclusion in the decision-making of those whose job activities are most affected by the change will improve communication. This, together with the clarification of the project goals by leadership has been suggested as a way to combat this problem (Eisenbach et al, 1999; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979; Kuruppurarachchi et al, 2002).

3.2 Leadership

This section is specific to understanding the role of leadership in influencing a participative approach to information systems change projects from both a management and non-management perspective and focuses on the second objective which is to:

Establish if leadership is supportive of a participative approach to change.

Based on the findings from the Literature Review in Document 2, it is recognised that there are certain characteristics associated with leaders who are most likely to promote a participative approach. In order to provide an answer to this objective, the following questions were posed:

- Do leaders offer decision-making opportunities?
- Exhibit a task or people-oriented leadership style?

Document 2 suggested that it is the personal style of leaders, their persuasive skills and behaviours that help individuals to accept change (Eisenbach et al., 1999; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Harrison (1992) made a distinction between two leadership styles which he termed people-oriented and task-oriented.

The people-oriented style of leadership encourages democratic decision-making and teamwork whilst the task-orientated leader prefers to control the decision-making process based on their own judgement with little advice or inclusion from others. It therefore seems likely that people-oriented leaders will be more supportive of participative environments particularly as they share many of the features of Likert's (1961) Participative Group (Mullins, 2002 p.217). Alfie exhibits this style of leadership which is illustrated by an example based on his experience of the Balfour Beatty Group wide Oracle project (Section 3.1, p. 29). He realises that had people been given the opportunity to be included and contribute to the decision-making earlier in the process they may have been more accepting of change (Antoni, 2004).

"...to me early participation is the key to all and also to feel that you are part of the decision-making process makes things a lot easier". (Alfie - Manager)

Information systems have different meanings to and influences on people. To some people they can represent an exciting challenge whilst to others they may be the cause of anxiety or frustration (Prasad, 1993). Alfie indicates that people had different perceptions regarding the purpose of the Primavera information system.

... it was quite er difficult and everybody had, everybody came to the table with different understandings of what, what it was about. ... I think what we should have done is we should have launched Primavera first in terms of saying well this is what it can do. ... rather than saying well what do we want out of it because people came to the table with different agendas. ...It caused more, caused more confusion". (Alfie - Manager)

Jack suggests that leaders need to use their persuasive skills to help individuals come to terms with change (Eisenbach et al, 1999; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006).

"Starting the seeds; allowing them to generate the ideas and then to take away the actions with those ideas to put them into reality. So by the time you get there, without them realising it, you've nurtured them, you've got to the point where, erm, they've got to the end game that we wanted voluntarily without loads of fuss and actually they've realised hopefully that that's the right thing to do and the course and direction of the

change over those interactions....what its done is, its created that desire thing again, but it's the desire of people that want to now as opposed to 'Well, they've told me I've got to use this system'". (Jack - Manager)

Jack's statement illustrates that forcing people to change will not encourage cooperation and acceptance. People need to understand the reasoning behind the change, be involved in making the decisions and given time to adjust (Hayes 2002, p.151). Power Solutions' leaders will face challenges when introducing a participative approach in terms of resource and time investments. As indicated in Section 3.1, leaders need to facilitate communication both upwards as well as downwards and across peer groups to successfully sustain a truly participative approach to change (Mullins, 2002 p.218).

In addition to promoting communication throughout the organisation, leaders can assist employee acceptance by influencing their perceptions (Antoni, 2004; Eriksson & Sundgren, 2005; Holt et al, 2003; Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). People's perceptions can be influenced in both a subjective and objective way. Subjectively, leaders are able to positively influence people's beliefs that they will have the opportunity to be involved in the change and objectively though demonstrating their on-going support for the project by delegating responsibility for making the decisions (Antoni, 2004).

One of the ways that leadership have attempted to influence project outcomes within Power Solutions is by establishing Steering Groups. An example is the Primavera Steering Group and Project Team. Although the term Steering Group may initially appear bureaucratic, William's statement illustrates that it is only practical that some form of project monitoring and control is used (Argyris, 1998). The primary purpose of the group is an attempt to involve non-management in the decision-making process. William shows that the Steering Group as representative of different functional areas and organisational levels (Garcia-Arca & Prado-Prado, 2007) and that responsibility is delegated to non-managers. He also feels that ideas are listened to and considered.

“Well it’s definitely an empowering type of leadership. The Steering Committee is a good example of that because in there you’ve got a good mix of people at all levels and from different functional areas. Erm, there’s a sense that your views are considered and taken notice of”. (William – Non-Manager)

This is suggestive of an organisation which has a psychological contract based on commitment and loyalty with its personnel (Beer & Nohria, 2000). The psychological contract refers to the perceptions and implied expectations involved in the relationship between the employee and employer.

Edward also agrees that leadership have given non-managers the opportunity to make their own decisions regarding changes to the Primavera system.

“I think that the leadership style has been, sort of er letting us make the decisions on how to develop the database.give us that power to make decisions on how to change the database ourselves so it’s not sort of a bureaucratic...” (Edward – Non-manager)

Whilst Thomas agrees with William and Edward’s statements in principle he suggests that the change management approach used in the Primavera Project could have been improved by extending it to the wider community and involving more people in the decision making process. This observation supports the view that a participative approach would be beneficial within Power Solutions whilst recognising that effort should be made in the on-going implementation of Primavera to ensure that these views are taken account of in practice.

“It has not been imposing; it’s soft, soft policy and probably a personal view that it could have been better.Not, er, just focus on the Steering Group... we need to look beyond that Steering Group a little more, more people. That’s the only thing we are... I feel that change management strategy could improve, but other than that good Steering Group, good leadership style. So more participation”. (Thomas – Non-Manager)

The latter statements indicate that leadership is supportive of a participative approach however there is differing opinion regarding the appropriateness of the management style used. Oscar, for example, does not believe that the style of his

direct line manager encourages involvement. In fact he implies that his line manager shies away from initiating change and collaborative working.

“... we’ve got Littlebrook and we’ve got Derby now really {refers to his line manager} should be getting us altogether saying this is one {refers to his area} department for Power Solutions you’ve got to learn to work together, we’ve had none of that. It’s like you carry on doing it the way you’re doing it and I’ll work around it and you carry on the way you’re doing it and we’ll work around that. You’re not actually, I’m not getting the {Interviewee says the names of two members of the management team who have been involved in the Primavera Project, coincidentally these are Interviewees Alfie & Jack} - we want one Engineering business here we should be talking to each other and working together. And again I think it’s because they’re frightened to change”. (Oscar - Manager)

It appears that this critique of his line manager’s style is representative of Oscar’s views only. However there is a common view that some managers are not as eager and positive as others to commit to change which Alfie’s statement illustrates:

“... Some managers manage pro-actively, others manage re-actively. It’s the pro-active ones that you get the most support from. It’s the re-active ones that you get the worst support from really to change that’s my opinion.... Where as those who are, like {refers to Jack}, who are more proactive, he sees the benefits and he sells it upfront so like when people get to hear about it they’ve already got a certain understanding and knowledge. Erm, yeah the re-active manager just basically sits on his butt does not a fat lot and then he’s very defence and very negatively reactive. So it depends on the, it depends on the approach of the individuals”. (Alfie - Manager)

The individual approach of leaders is a key influencing factor regarding the adoption of a participative approach to change. For example Jack illustrates that his preferred leadership style is that of involving people indicating Harrison’s (1992) people-oriented style. Power Solutions leaders need to develop a positive psychological contract with employees so that they are committed to their vision of the future and the strategies that they initiate to achieve it. Gaining this commitment, which Jack refers to as buy-in, will encourage the employee to support the Primavera Project (Mullins, 2002 p.708).

“Most of the time my preferred approach is to get the team signed on... by involving them, in the workshops, involvement in the discussions... So what we get is a group buy-in, as we did from the Steering Group, we needed to do something different”. (Jack - Manager)

However it is notable that Jack states this is his preferred approach “*most of the time*” suggesting that he does not necessarily use this approach in all situations. In fact leaders need to be flexible enough to adopt different leadership styles dependent on the situation (Harrison, 1992; Mohanty & Yadav, 1996) and Jack gives an example where there has been some resistance to the Primavera Project that has been overcome by a more authoritative leadership style.

“{Jack refers to one of his peers} being one wants his spreadsheets back and he’s not so sure but he’s accepting that he can’t resist the change and his gaffer above him, {Jack refers to his direct line manager} is saying to him ‘Well this is what I want’... {Refers to his line manager} has got him under the thumb so he has to modify his behaviour. He’s being told he’s got to use it. It would have been nice to have had acceptance and use it but we can’t have it all can we I suppose”. (Jack - Manager)

Jack believes that more sponsorship from management at a senior level would have improved the situation.

“It would have been nicer if {refers to his line manager’s superior} had launched it as a global strategy and said ‘Guys, I want Primavera implemented by the end of the year’. And therefore we’d have a clear strategic direction”. (Jack - Manager)

Whilst this statement is suggestive of an authoritative style it needs to be considered that in practical terms an authoritative style is sometimes needed in order to get projects started (Argyris, 1998; Beer & Nohria, 2000). The following statement by Jack illustrates this view:

“{Interviewee refers to his line manager’s superior} we’ve got to do this and go and give somebody a kick up the backside to go and make this happen... But ultimately the team go away and make it happen so the likes of {refers to some of the Planners/System

Administrators involved in the Primavera Project, namely Interviewees Thomas, Edward and William}”. (Jack - Manager)

This indication of applying an authoritative approach may be the result of past experiences where there has been a lack of clarity in the need for change. Participative approaches have been suggested as a way to resolve this issue (Fontannaz & Oosthuizen, 2007). Literature also suggests that leaders should provide clear communication of the specific goals and priorities within a project (Eisenbach et al., 1999; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979). Alfie recounts that at the outset of the Primavera Project when employees involved in the planning process were invited to attend a workshop in which brainstorming⁶ techniques were used.

“... if you look at Primavera, there was fairly heavy involvement. I mean we ran a number of workshops in the early days to try and capture the inputs and the outputs... and they were very good. They were very good. (Alfie - Manager)

At this session, people were asked in teams to create a ‘process map’⁷ of the current planning method in order to help them identify and understand its deficiencies and limitations. Thus the recommendation for the use of a common planning system as a solution, was the result of problem identification by the group of people who were most affected by the change (Document 2, p. 36). This proves that Power Solutions makes an effort to involve people in the decision-making process. Not only do management make an effort to involve people in this decision-making but also Organisational Development techniques have been used to facilitate this. Organisational Development techniques such as team implementation workshops and task groups are typical examples of participative techniques used to facilitate change (Bedingham, 1977).

Alfie suggests that the on-going involvement of what he identifies as ‘key decision-makers’ are the answer to a successful project. If management facilitate the change in this way people are able to familiarise themselves with the benefits and appropriateness of the change (Holt et al, 2003). However, Alfie’s use of the

⁶ A problem solving technique used by individuals or groups in which ideas are shared with others.

⁷ A graphical representation of a sequence of activities which examines the process in detail to identify areas of possible improvement.

term key decision-makers implies that the people he is referring to are management level personnel. This view overlooks the earlier suggestion by Thomas that more non-office based staff, Engineers for example, should be included in the decision-making process.

"...I think it would have been again bringing back the key decision-makers bringing them back to the table and saying look we've had this review and this is what, this is what we're actually going to launch now so the issues were really very much instrumental in, in dictating.... dictating may be too stronger word but you have to have that sort of buy-in it can't be done on a softly, softly basis to start with. ... once the decisions made and then everybody has to take a level of ownership and therefore ownership, with ownership comes responsibility and you can't have the two divorced erm from my point of view". (Alfy - Manager)

Alfy's use of the word 'buy-in' and 'dictating' in the same sentence seems a contradiction in terms. He proposes that an authoritative style is needed but only at the outset of the project. Conversely Alfy's proposal for the adoption of an authoritative style is directed specifically at middle management as opposed to non-management. He suggests that there is a need to begin with a formal authoritative approach in order to attribute some credibility to the project (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Oscar also provides an example of an authoritarian leadership style. However it is his expectation that this 'authority' should be applied by his line management rather than himself which could undermine his own authority as a leader and illustrates a possible lack of confidence in his own abilities to lead. This contrasts with Jack's earlier statement which illustrated an explicit link between participation and empowerment. The traditional theory of empowerment suggests that employees cannot feel committed to their organisational activities if the authority is being driven from the top downwards (Argyris, 1998).

"I sat in front of erm {Interviewee refers to International Operations Director}, and he said to me if anybody messes you about, first of all he said it sort of publicly, I used to sit in their erm team, senior team management meetings and he was sitting there and he says 'Right - Oscar is doing erm process mapping, I want him to do all of erm {refers to a former company Division}, that means talking to everyone out on site, talking to everyone in the offices and to see how this big picture looks'. And he had them all there -

all the {Department} Heads and he says 'I want you all to cooperate with him'. That's the first thing so immediately if I'd called anybody, they never put the phone down on me they always got back to me – yeah. So you never got any 'oh I'll get back to you', There's none of that. And then he said to me personally in his office, 'If anybody messes you around you just tell me and I will call them. I'll get up out of me seat and go and see em if they're messing you around because I want this done'. So that's having the right champion in place to drive this. No one else could have done it and {refers to a former Director} said to me erm '{refers to a former Director of the afore mentioned company Division} will champion this thing for you to make sure you get the doors open that you want'. And Primavera needs that and Teamcentre will also need it and anything else we bring in". (Oscar - Manager)

In contrast, non-manager William is quite adamant with his use of the word 'definitely' that he believes everyone should take responsibility for their duties. It appears that this establishes ownership and William feels motivated to solve his own problems.

"I'm definitely of the opinion that everyone should take some responsibility although I realise that there is always someone ultimately accountable. I feel a sense of responsibility to complete work that I've been given. And I think that Power Solutions empowers you to take some of that responsibility yourself. {Interviewee refers to his direct line manager} expects me to go and solve my own problems". (William – Non-Manager)

Menon (2001) suggests that an empowered employee has strong perceptions of control and competence. Such an employee will be highly job focussed, emotionally committed to the organisation and willing to engage in additional work activities beyond the scope of their official job role. Edward also feels responsible for his duties and suggests that leaders should offer guidance rather than applying a more forceful authoritative style which concurs with Jack's opinion (p. 26) and the outcomes of the Document 2.

"..making it a success itself is the responsibility of everyone, you know everyone involved, doing their parts correctly with the guidance of the leader basically". (Edward – Non-Manager)

3.2.1 Summary

Following a distinction between people and task-oriented leaders this section analysed and discussed the style of leadership within Power Solutions. The analysis has demonstrated that the leaders themselves have different perspectives and outlooks. For example, it is evident that whilst Jack and Alfie share similar perspectives and leadership style, Oscar's perspective is quite different. This may be the result of his individual characteristics and possibly a lack of confidence in his own authority as a leader. On a whole, management have demonstrated that their preferred style is that of involving people in the decision-making process which acknowledges the multi-skilled capabilities of their personnel and this is demonstrated in non-management's commitment to being "*responsible*" for completing their work. However more involvement of non-office based staff is needed in the on-going Primavera implementation to facilitate a participative approach. Managers have also realised that the success of a participative approach is based on the willingness of those in management positions to initiate this approach. Both Jack and Oscar have been critical of their management peers and direct line management and Alfie indicated that some managers are not as "*proactive*" as others. Jack suggested that a greater amount of sponsorship at a senior level could resolve this issue. It appears that word 'sponsorship' is used by management participants to indicate that a more forceful authoritative leadership style is required on occasions. Although Beer & Nohria, 2000 advise that an authoritative style is sometimes needed at the outset of a project to gain momentum, the preferred approach is that of involving people to gain their 'buy-in' and commitment (Holt et al, 2003; Garcia-Arca & Prado-Prado, 2007; Lok & Crawford, 1999). The functional area leaders should take responsibility otherwise their authority as a leader could be undermined indicating that management require more coaching in participative methods in the on-going Primavera implementation. Power Solutions leaders will need to recognise individual reactions to change and use their persuasive skills to gain buy-in (Antoni, 2004). Leaders should encourage all stakeholders to participate in the decision-making process. This is particularly the case for information systems change projects to improve understanding and reduce any fears or inhibitions that organisational members may have (Garcia-Arca & Prado-Prado, 2007; Kuruppurarachchi et al,

2002). Improving stakeholder responses through group decision-making is the subject of the next section.

3.3 Generating Positive Responses to Change through Group Decision-Making

This section addresses the third objective that was identified in Section 1.2 which is:

To understand if group decision-making has a positive influence on responses to information systems change.

Group decision-making is a way of gathering employee knowledge and opinions to ensure that user requirements for an information system are more accurate (Garcia-Arca & Prado-Prado, 2007). People's participation in this process makes it more likely that their responses will be positive (Kavangh & Ashkanasy, 2006). If change is considered unnecessary then a person's response will be negative or ambivalent (Piderit, 2000). This is particularly applicable if the change is dictated by an influential party who is remote from the area where the change is occurring (Holt et al, 2003). This 'influential party' might be an external consultant brought into the organisation by senior management or an internal department such as IT who are not close enough to the day to day work activities being changed. The importance of stakeholder participation in the decision-making process is therefore critical to developing their understanding and commitment.

The workshop described by Alfy in Section 3.2 (p.38) is a good example of the activities that the Power Solutions has initiated to encourage the participation of all stakeholders⁸. Through their involvement and consultation, employees can develop an improved awareness of the project goals which was acknowledged earlier in this analysis to be an issue for Power Solutions.

William's statement demonstrates that people within Power Solutions are able feel part of a team without necessarily working alongside each other. He illustrates how involving people, using the Primavera Project as the common

⁸ Stakeholders are all persons who have an interest of the outcomes (or deliverables) of a project.

focus point has brought people together. This statement demonstrates that there is effective teamwork across functional areas, which is a characteristic of a Participative Group (Likert, 1961, p.223). Individuals from all organisational levels are suggested as being best placed to drive change initiatives (Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Landrum et al, 2000).

“..dealing with people one-to-one whatever, get them involved in what you’re doing there’s still that element of cooperation and collaboration and that feeling of being a team, it is quite easy to break down any sort of feeling of geographical isolation”.
(William - Non-Manager)

A participative approach should involve all organisational members who should be communicated to in advance of, and throughout the change (Eriksson & Sundgren, 2005; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979). The former comments from both management and non-management suggest that the Project Team members have made every effort to include the views of all those effected by the change. This evidence concedes with Landrum et al, (2000) who suggests that group decision-making should include people at all organisational levels and functions.

The following statement by Thomas is consistent with Alf’s earlier statement regarding the benefits of the workshops (p. 37).

“We have had several like workshops {inaudible} people were free to express their views and what they want. ...Yeah, representative for engineers, resource managers side than project managers side”. (Thomas - Non-Manager)

Oscar believes that people within the business unit naturally want to take responsibility for their work and are used to having the authority to carry out multiple activities as part of their job role within Power Solutions. This statement supports William’s earlier comment (Section 3.2, p.24) regarding responsibility. It is also interesting to note that multi-skilled teams are best placed to drive change initiatives (Clegg & Walsh, 2004; Garcia-Arca & Prado-Prado, 2007; Landrum et al, 2000). This proves that Power Solutions personnel are multi-tasking and competent employees who take accountability to their work.

"...within the functions you've got the authority to do things...they're multi-skilled erm they're very well qualified technically they're very well qualified and erm the whole culture is you just can't give 'em one job to do because they'd just get bored..." (Oscar - Manager)

Evidence of this approach within Power Solutions is also demonstrated through the creation of the Primavera Steering Group and the formation of the Project Team. Primavera significantly impacts the Planning activity and as such the Project Team members all have Planning roles. This aligns with Smollan's (2006) recommendation that teams should consist of those most impacted by the change. The Primavera Project Team members are also keen and confident to adapt to the new technology and act as conduits for the Primavera system. This will provide their work colleagues with the confidence that the system will provide benefits for them personally (McDonald & Siegall, 1996) encouraging positive responses to the change (Holt et al, 2003).

The following statement from Oscar relating to improving awareness of the Primavera system confirms that the Primavera Project Team's efforts to act as conduits for the system have been beneficial.

"They're moving forward nicely with Primavera now er {Interviewee refers to several members of the Primavera Project team} ... Erm I mean as you know erm I personally was allowed to go on courses to get a better understanding of it and understand what we could get out of it ". (Oscar - Manager)

Certainly from a non-management perspective, and there has been much involvement and interest shown in the project from the outset. Jack believes that the project aims and objectives should be agreed through group consensus.

"...we divert the aims and objectives as a group, as a collective. ...and every now and then we have to remind them of that. But what I'm seeing evolve is actually, it's being owned by the business as opposed to any one individual". (Jack - Manager)

However despite this effort to involve people in the process the Primavera Project has still encountered some negativity. There is a need to communicate clear

objectives for the Primavera Project to the wider Power Solutions community. Thomas describes how the objectives of the Primavera Project changed over time and recognises that communication and feedback is necessary, facilitated by meetings and presentations to circulate the project objectives to all stakeholders within Power Solutions. However it is critical that these meetings are focussed and participation encouraged (Spinks & Wells, 1995).

“... we had objectives, set out objectives and targets at the start and we agreed we thought that it was like that but now we find that the objective wasn't the way we thought. So, so naturally we have to change a bit for our objectives/targets that we go ahead with the Primavera... Then for dissemination in place, {inaudible} through meetings and presentations. ...communication and feedback. Not just one to make a decision what we ... communication bottom to top, top to down”. (Thomas – Non Manager)

In addition William suggests that positive responses can be encouraged through improving people's understanding by conducting training on an individual basis. He focuses in particular on the Engineers who historically have had little exposure to information systems. However as indicated in Section 3.2, Engineers understanding might also be improved through group communication. This has the advantage of allowing people to share knowledge and provides the comfort that they are not alone in their need for clarification or further training. William's comment is aimed specifically towards Engineers:

“Well yeah, there was definitely resistance, still is in some areas but I think it's been overcome through improving the Engineers understanding. I know {refers to Thomas} and {Edward} for instance have spent a lot of time doing one-to-one sessions in their areas”. (William - Non-Manager)

Oscar concurs with William's views and believes that there is reluctance by Engineers to work in a collaborative way. He indicates that they prefer to solve problems on their own and suggests that they are set-in-their-ways.

"...each Engineer will solve their problem their way. They don't come together and decide erm OK, I'm not sure about this and it'll get to the point when they actually start digging their heels in". (Oscar - Manager)

Smollan (2006) suggests that people's ability to adapt is influenced by the degree of impact that the change has on their daily activities and a lack of inclusion in the decision-making process can only lead to resistance or a lack of understanding (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Recognising how employees might communicate their responses helps those responsible for change to identify the most suitable approach to address any concerns (Piderit, 2000). Edward provides an insight into some of the efforts that the Project Team have already made to minimise resistance. He too suggests that the most appropriate way forward is by continuing to involve those affected by the change through training.

"..the resistance, I think we sort of talked before about this, the old school culture and new technology, erm, which is still going to be on-going resistance really er, and what we did to minimise it is when we had the initial training er we did a presentation of er how Primavera worked and how it can benefit people and obviously there's on-going training...we're trying to minimise that resistance to new technology by keeping people trained". (Edward - Non-Manager)

Communication can be encouraged by involving people earlier in the process to re-emphasise why the change is needed and by clarifying the project goals (Eisenbach et al., 1999; Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979; Kuruppurarachchi et al, 2002). Strategic decision-making is best developed by Strategic Groups led by senior personnel (Fontannaz & Oosthuizen, 2007; Garcia-Arca, 2007; Kuruppurarachchi et al, 2002; Maguire, 2000; Tan, 1995). Research conducted by Locke & Latham (1984) found that groups who define their own goals, as opposed to being assigned them, feel more motivated and are more likely to develop new goals as a result. This will ensure that everyone is aware of the purpose of the project and its objectives so that they feel responsible for its success.

3.3.1 Summary

This section began by explaining how group decision-making can facilitate positive responses to change. A discussion then followed regarding the initiatives that Power Solutions have introduced to encourage stakeholder participation. The analysis found that despite these efforts there have been negative responses to the Primavera Project. It was suggested that those responsible for change need an improved understanding of these responses to identify how to best approach individuals to alleviate their concerns.

People are influenced by the extent that change impacts their daily activities. If these activities are changed without their involvement this may lead to a negative response. Literature research suggests that multi-skilled teams are best placed to formulate strategic decisions and it has been established that Power Solutions have formed a Primavera Project Team with representation from the Planning community in recognition that this job function is most impacted by the change. A Primavera Steering Group has also been formed in an effort to involve people at all organisational levels in the decision-making process. However it appears this involvement is initiated only after the strategic vision has been decided. Conversely, both managers and non-managers felt that teamwork and early involvement in the decision-making process is beneficial. Non-managers clearly believe that they take responsibility and are held accountable for actions and are given opportunities to participate.

However these views are those of people who are close to the Primavera Project and it is recognised that the communication to other stakeholders such as Engineers may not be as clear. This can be resolved through stakeholder participation in the strategic decision-making process. This will communicate the project aim whilst also enabling personnel to have an input into setting the projects objectives and develop commitment throughout the process.

Chapter 4 – Conclusion

The introduction of new information systems can result in different responses from those most affected by the change. Participation in the decision-making process has been suggested to improve the likelihood of those responses being more positive.

This study set out to understand if it is feasible to introduce a participative approach to information systems change within the Power Solutions business unit. The study began by evaluating if the organisation's characteristics and leadership are supportive of a participative approach and questioned if group decision-making could have positive affects on employee responses. The research referred to a current information systems project called Primavera.

The research adopted an inductive strategy in order to answer a number of questions which resulted from the Document 2 Literature Review. Qualitative data analysis was used to gain an in-depth focussed view of how the perceptions of management and non-management are developed and if these are socially formed. A Grounded Theory approach was used for the data analysis in which connections in the data were explored and themes generated (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 589). The research also highlighted the contradictions between the perspectives of management and non-management.

The discussion then focused on three key areas; organisational characteristics, leadership and group decision-making. An analysis of the organisational characteristics found that the Power Solutions business unit's personnel have highly effective relationships with their customers that have been developed over a number of years. There is also a good relationship between management and non-management, in-line with the characteristics defined by Likert (1961) of a Participative Group. Operationally the projects that Power Solutions undertakes are technically complex and unique therefore staff are required to adapt quickly to changing project requirements and environments. Decisions need to be made quickly and effectively by those closest to the work activity. This necessitates a skilled, knowledgeable and qualified workforce.

However although these working practices are well established in the core business operation, people are less adaptable to technological information systems change. This is

focussed on job types where there has traditionally been less exposure to technology mainly in an Engineering capacity (refer to quote from William – Non-manager, p.28). It has also been suggested that the lack of positive responses may be the result of computerised information systems not being considered a strategic investment. The information systems strategy needs to underpin the business strategy in order to realise the business benefits. This, together with improved Communication methods will provide greater clarity of the issues that need to be addressed by the introduction of any information system project allowing all stakeholders to “...see the bigger picture” (Oscar – Manager, p.28).

Leadership style is considered a key influencer of how people react to information systems change. Generally Power Solutions management demonstrate a people-oriented style (Jack, p. 25) and a desire to adopt more towards participative methods (Alfy, p.31) but it appears that further management training is required to promote such an initiative. This supports the evidence from the analysis of non-management personnel who feel that they have opportunities to be involved in making decisions and given the authority to carry out their work activities (Edward – Non-manager, p. 33). Non-management are conscientious workers and are eager to act as conduits for the Primavera Project (William – Non-manager, p.33).

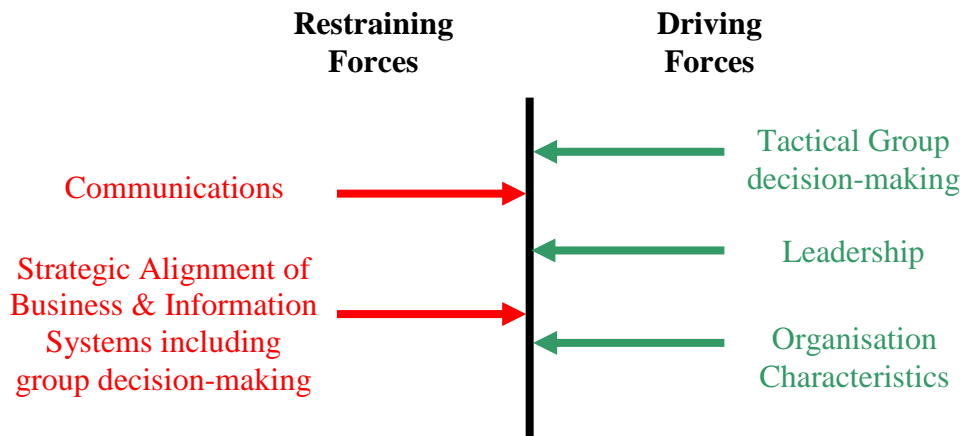
It is also clear that management’s critique and frustration is not focussed on their direct reports but rather on their management peers and superiors who they believe do not understand the benefits of the Primavera system. It has been proposed that this lack of understanding can be improved in two ways – by involving those most affected by the change in the strategic decision-making process, improving communication channels and by recognising how people respond to the change then applying the most appropriate approach to resolve any issues. The analysis suggests that there are opportunities for inclusion in the decision-making process within the business unit which are illustrated in William and Edward’s comments on p. 33. Past experiences of information systems change have proved to be unsuccessful, such as in the case of the Oracle system recounted by Alfy. However this is not a recent example and it could be that the business unit has since learnt from these events. Certainly statements from Edward and Jack pertaining to the Primavera Project are more positive. In order to facilitate positive responses, leaders can use their position to explicitly offer people opportunities to be

involved in the decision-making process and implicitly use their persuasive skills to encourage those personnel who have negative or ambivalent responses to information systems. Involving those people whose day-to-day work activities are most affected by the change in setting the strategy is critical to ensuring their commitment to achieving results (Fontannaz & Oosthuizen, 2007).

Team membership is representative of all functional areas and there is a good working ethos and psychological contract between non-management. This indicates that people's general perception is there are opportunities available to them to be involved (William – Non-manager, p.30). Non-management are comfortable to be involved in the decision-making process and management confirm that they are committed to involving personnel in discussions (Jack - Manager, p.32). It is clear that effort has been made by the Project Team members in terms of providing additional training and coaching. However it has also been recognised that further meetings and presentations are needed to develop the understanding and encourage the commitment to those affected by change who are not involved in the Primavera Steering Group or Project Team.

The following Force Field Analysis has been developed as a result of the Conclusions. It provides a summary and a focus on the key topic areas for further study and discussion in Document 4. The arrows symbolise the driving and restraining forces for each issue based on the findings from the analysis of the Primavera Project. Culture, leadership and tactical group decision-making which were the initial themes derived from Document 2, have been identified as being particularly strong facilitators of a participative approach within Power Solutions. However Strategic Alignment of business and information systems and Communication have been identified as weaker areas which require improvement.

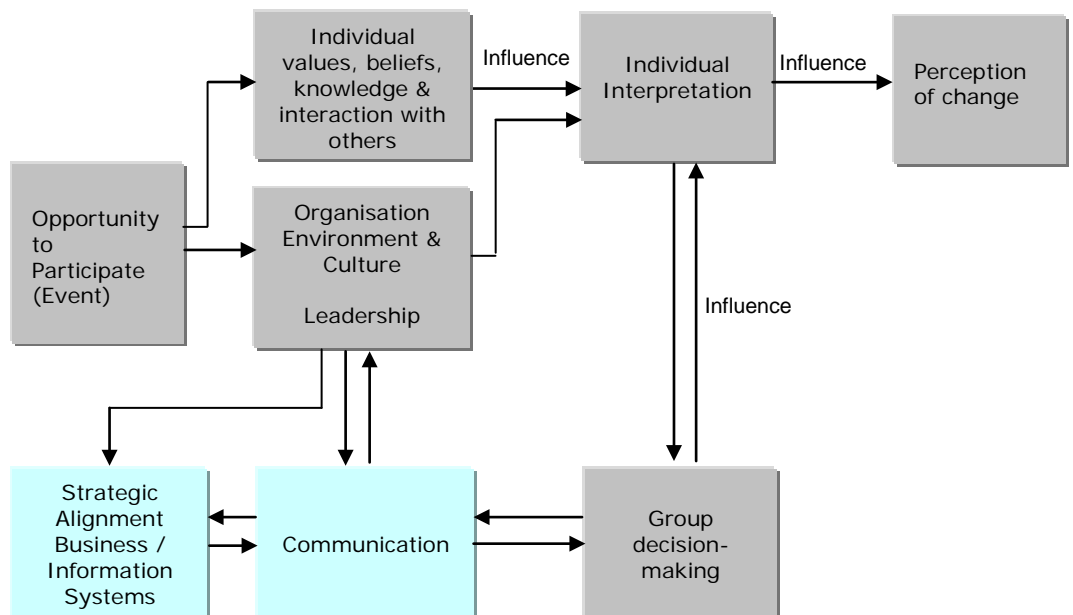
Fig 4.1: Force Field Analysis



Developed by author (2009)

Fig. 4.2 shows the original Conceptual Framework with the addition of these new themes. This forms the basis for a programme of improvement within Power Solutions which will encourage a participative approach.

Fig. 4.2 Modified Conceptual Framework



Developed by Author (2010)

The addition of Strategic Alignment and Communication to the original Conceptual Framework (Fig. 1.1, p. 5) demonstrates their influence on Group decision-making and

Leadership. A greater focus by Power Solutions on Strategic Alignment and Communication will encourage the commitment of Power Solutions personnel to the Primavera Project. The arrows indicate the affect one element has on the other. For instance, Communication affects both the Group decision-making process and the Strategic Alignment process. Leadership is also affected by Communication and the arrows indicate that the communication flow should be bi-directional.

With reference to the original objectives of this study, these conclusions confirm that the Power Solutions business unit's organisational characteristics and leadership are supportive of a participative approach to change. Clearly effort has been made to involve people in the decision-making process and management show enthusiasm to adopt a people-oriented leadership style whilst non-management display feelings of taking ownership for their work and responsibility. Leadership show that they are supportive of a participative approach and there are several examples of how leaders have made an effort to involve non-management in the decision-making process. These examples include the Primavera Project Team, Steering Groups and Workshops which have all been initiated by management. However the indication that sponsorship by management is needed and lack of understanding voiced by non-management has led to an emerging theme of Communication. It has been suggested that improving communication will clarify the aims and objectives of the project. It has also been proposed that the participation of organisational members in the strategic alignment of business and information systems would be highly beneficial to improve clarity of the projects purpose. This participation will also gain the commitment of the wider Power Solutions workforce to the project's goals. However greater focus should be given to the business strategy to facilitate information systems change projects in specific. Firstly the information systems strategy needs a clear alignment with the business strategy to support the business objectives so that the value of the Primavera system is realised. Secondly there needs to be a shift from strategy setting being the prerogative of management to being the responsibility everyone. Thirdly there needs to be an improvement in communication methods to encourage the involvement of the wider Power Solutions community to help in clarifying the projects objectives. Leadership would also benefit from assessing responses through use of techniques described by Piderit (2000).

Chapter 5 – Recommendations

The following discussion offers some initial areas for further investigation to improve the restraining forces identified in the Force Field Analysis (Fig 4.1). The research has highlighted that issues concerning technology focussed strategic group decision-making and strategic alignment of business and information systems applicable to the implementation of information systems projects. Further research will focus on the benefits of a participative approach within information systems projects and how this approach can be used to improve the strategic direction of information systems.

Information systems have a key role in achieving the organisation's strategy but there should be a clear understanding of information requirements to enable information systems to support this (Daniels, 1998; Tan, 1995). Literature suggests that senior management should regard information systems as "*a lever for competitive advantage*" (Tan, 1995 p. 50). Cohen (2000) conducted a Value Stream Analysis with senior managers to facilitate strategic direction and derive clear project objectives. He also invited all affected employees to discuss how working practices could be changed to fit these objectives thus providing sponsorship, strategic direction and clarity of objectives.

Research by Prasad (1993) suggests that organisational members attach different meanings in terms of their expectations & visions of information systems. Hence these systems have a symbolic meaning even before they become a material presence. Abrahamson (1991) suggests that anti-innovation bias occurs where there is a lack of understanding of the efficiencies that new technology can bring. Abrahamson discusses how the 'efficient choice perspective' occurs when groups are free to choose the technology and are certain about their aims and objectives. This confirms the suggestion that the participation of those that will be affected early in the change process is desirable. A lack of clear understanding of the project objectives can only lead to confusion and frustration (Prasad, 1993). Improving Communication methods which promotes the generation and acceptance of ideas from the bottom upwards will encourage the commitment of those whose day to day activities are affected by change. A participative approach that stimulates empowerment is critical to the success of information systems projects (Garcia-Arca & Prado-Prado, 2007) such as Primavera.

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Appendices

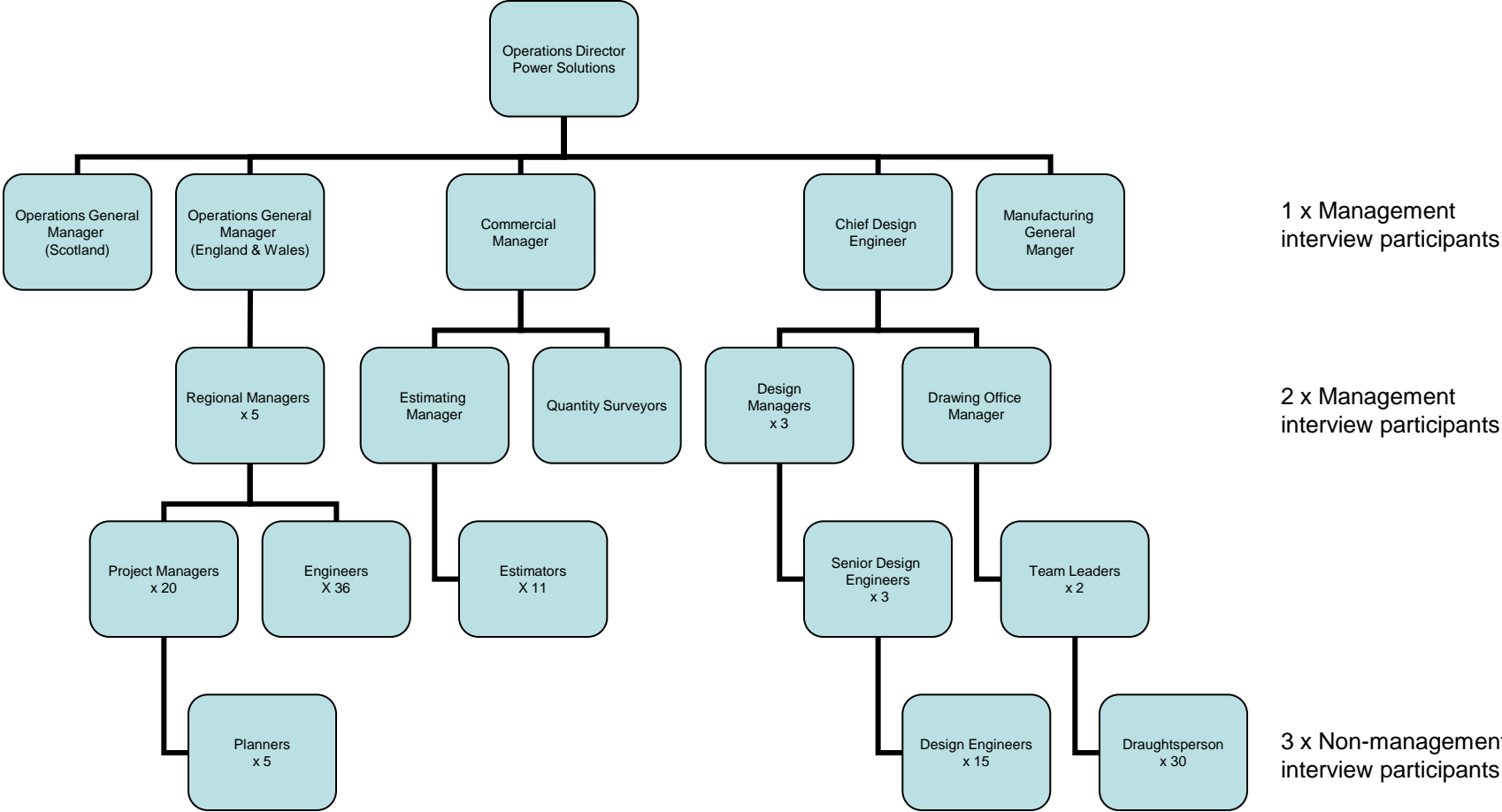
- Appendix I Participant Profile
- Appendix II Organisational Chart
- Appendix III Interview Schedule
- Appendix IV Participant Information Sheet (including consent form)
- Appendix V Agenda
- Appendix VI Interview Transcripts
- Appendix VII Coded Analysis

Participant Profile

Name	Organisational Level Manager or Non Manager	Age	Location	Length of Service with Balfour Beatty (Total service in any BB OpCo)	Highest Formal Qualification & Subject area (if appropriate)
Alfy	Manager	50	Redditch	28 years	BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying
Oscar	Manager	52	Derby	20 years	HNC Engineering
Edward	Non Manager	28	Middlesbrough	4 years	BSc (Hons) Business Information Technology Management
Thomas	Non Manager	39	Redditch	3 years	Post Graduate Diploma in Business Management
William	Non Manager	35	Derby	2 years	BA (Hons) Business Studies & French
Jack	Manager	38	Middlesbrough	9 years	HNC Electrical Engineering & MBA

Power Solutions Organisation Chart

Appendix II



Interview Schedule & Invite

Appendix III

Calendar - Microsoft Outlook

File Edit View Go Tools Actions Help

Look for: Search In: Calendar Find Now Clear Options

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/Sun
2 March Jo's Birthday 12:30 14:00 Primavera interv	3	4 09:30 11:00 Primavera project 11:00 11:30 Lee Cunningham c 12:00 13:00 DBA Interview (G 19:30 20:00 (24a)	5 14:00 15:00 DBA Interview (Gr 15:00 16:00 GIS business case 17:10 17:40 Siemens (Confere 17:30 20:30 Jo (PV Derby)	6 17:00 18:00 Balfour Beatty Co	7
9 19:30 20:00 (25)	10 10:00 11:00 GIS - PN, AAS, AK 15:30 16:30 Chris Warne/Paul	11 09:00 09:30 Car service 14:00 15:00 DBA Primavera In	12 08:30 09:00 Conf call with Rich 09:30 17:45 Uni Workshop BM 15:30 17:00 Mtg with Elaine &	13 09:15 17:15 Uni Workshop BM	14
16 10:00 12:00 SSE meeting	17 10:00 11:00 Competence Reviv 12:30 15:30 Zero Harm (Pride f 15:30 17:00 DBA Primavera In	18 19:30 20:00 (26)	19 09:00 09:30 Scottish Power (B	20 11:00 12:00 DBA Primavera In	21
23 Annual leave	24	25 10:00 12:00 Primavera project 10:00 11:00 DBA Primavera In	26 15:30 16:00 See Dorothy	27 19:30 20:00 Julie (Belper)	28
30 13:00 15:00 SSE/Siemens pres 19:30 20:00 (27)	31 Annual leave	1 April	2	3 09:00 09:30 Car Service Recep	4
					5

36 Items All folders are up to date. Connected

Start Calendar - Microsoft ... Document1 - Microsoft ... 20:06

DBA Primavera Interview - Meeting

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Actions Help

Save and Close Send Update Recurrence... Invite Attendees

Appointment | Scheduling | Tracking

1 attendee accepted, 0 tentatively accepted, 0 declined.
This appointment occurs in the past.

To... Beal, Anthony

Subject: DBA Primavera Interview

Location: Ground floor meeting room Derby Label: Important

Start time: Wed 11/03/2009 14:00 All day event

End time: Wed 11/03/2009 15:00

Reminder: 15 minutes Show time as: Busy

Meeting Workspace... This is an online meeting using: Microsoft NetMeeting

agenda.doc (32 KB) Participant Info Sheet & Conse...

Contacts... Categories... Private

Start Calendar - Microsoft Out... DBA Primavera Inter... 20:05

Participant Information Sheet

You are invited to participate in a research study which will assess the effectiveness of change management strategy from an individual perspective. The study will be conducted by Louise Shipley, Business Improvement Manager – Power Solutions, BBUS. The study is limited to the Power Solutions business unit. The research and findings of this study will be submitted as part of the assessment criteria for the award of Doctorate of Business Administration at Nottingham Trent University.

Before you decide whether or not you wish to participate in this study, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you feel necessary.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to sign the attached Participant Consent form.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study aims to understand if a participative approach to change management strategy facilitates employee acceptance of change.

Why have I been invited to participate in this study?

A small number of people have been selected based on their involvement in Information Systems related projects. The selection criteria is based on functional role, organisational level, amount of involvement in the change project and amount of anticipated impact on your working environment.

What does this study involve?

This study takes the format of a discussion based on a selection of themes which are all focused on recent change projects (similar to a meeting Agenda) that you have been involved in. You will be asked to give examples where possible. It is anticipated that the interview duration will be approximately 1 hour.

With your permission, the researcher will use a recording device which is purely for transcription purposes. However, if you feel uncomfortable with this method, please advise the researcher who will alternatively use handwritten notes.

How will I benefit from this study?

Although the study will not provide a direct benefit, it may provide valuable information to improve understanding of what works/doesn't work in terms of change management and will indicate what might be more effective methods for introducing change in future situations based on your feedback.

What if I don't want to take part in the study or decide that I don't want to participate after signing the consent form?

It is completely your decision whether or not you decide to participate in the study. Your participation entirely is voluntary.

If you decide not to participate or you participate and subsequently decide to withdraw you do not need to provide a reason. You have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time. You also have the right to withdraw your data from the project up until the point when the data has been analysed in preparation for write-up and submission for assessment. The researcher anticipates that write-up will take place from the 1st January 2009.

How will my confidentiality be protected?

The researcher will keep all participants anonymous and use measures to ensure the data are kept confidential. Your responses will not be linked to your name or any personal details. Any identifying characteristics will be changed, unless the characteristic is pertinent to the analysis or changing it would distort the analysis (e.g. length of time with organisation).

Code names will be used to prevent individual identification in any document or publication that may arise from the project.

The researcher will keep the contents of the analysis secure by use of a 'key' which links the code names used with the name and contact details of the participants. This information will not be revealed to others. The purpose is purely to allow transcripts to be (a) viewed by the respondent if requested after completing an interview or (b) excluded from the study if you request. When the project is complete, the key will be destroyed.

The audio and transcripts of interviews will be handled solely by the researcher and kept in secure storage adhering to data protection principles.

What will happen to the data collected once the project is completed?

Fully anonymous transcripts will be deposited in a research materials archive which is maintained by Nottingham Trent University. The audio of the interviews and computer files will be erased.

You will have the opportunity to request a transcript of your interview after the research document has been submitted to the university after the 30th April 2009.

What should I do if I want to discuss this study further before I decide?

When you have read the information, the researcher, Louise Shipley, will discuss it with you and any queries you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please do not hesitate to contact her on 07971 614173.

Who should I contact if I have concerns about how this study has been conducted?

You should contact Nottingham Trent University Ethics Committee on 0115 848 8117.

Thank you for taking the time read this information. If you decide that you would like to take part in this study, please sign the attached consent form. You may keep this information sheet for your reference.

Consent Form

Name of participant:

Researcher: Louise Shipley

Please confirm your consent to being interviewed by ticking the boxes and signing at the bottom of this form.

I confirm that I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and I have not been coerced in any way to participate in this study.

I confirm that I am over 18 years of age.

I have been informed that the data I provide will be kept completely confidential.

I understand that I can ask any questions at any time before or during the study.

I understand that I can terminate my participation at any point before, during or after the interview. I also have the right to withdraw my data at any stage up until the point when formal write-up takes place, on or before 1st April 2009.

I give permission for the interview to be tape-recorded by the researcher, on the understanding that the tape will be destroyed at the end of the project.

I have read and am satisfied with the instructions I have been supplied with and consent to participate in this study.

Name of participant (print) _____ Signed _____ Date _____

Name of researcher (print) _____ Signed _____ Date _____

Researchers contact details: Louise Shipley, Business Improvement, BBUS.
eMail: louise.shipley@bbusl.com, Tel: 07971 614173

Agenda

This agenda is divided into 3 sections. The questions relate to both your knowledge of the organisation and on your experience and involvement in the Primavera project.

Organisational Characteristics & Culture¹

- Are you able to make a distinction between corporate (HO) culture and the culture of the business unit?
- How would you describe this culture(s)?
- If there are differences, which, in your opinion, is the most dominant?
- Do you feel that this culture(s) will change over time and if so, in what direction?
- How adaptable to change do you believe the organisation is? Why do you believe this is the case? E.g. Do you believe that the nature of the business necessitates an amount of flexibility or is its environment more predictable?
- In relation to the Primavera project, what were the aims and objectives and how was this information disseminated?

Leadership

- How would you describe the change management strategy and leadership style used in the Primavera project?
- Can you give an example(s) where staff were given opportunities to be involved in the project?
- Do you believe that project success is the responsibility of leadership or the responsibility of everyone involved at all levels? Why?

¹ Culture is defined as a set of collective beliefs and attitudes.

Driving and Restraining Factors

- In relation to the Primavera project, was there any resistance and how was it minimised?
- How trusting is the relationship between leadership and the workforce?
- Do people naturally form groups to solve problems (or do the groups need to be initiated)? If so, how well do you feel these groups interact?
- How do you feel upward communication impacts procedures and working practices in the business unit?

Appendix VI

Key:
 Researcher = R
 Alfie = A

Analysis Colour Coding Key:
Green = Culture & Organisational Characteristics
Pink = Leadership
Blue = Teamwork & decision-making

Bold & italics = Agenda questions
 [] = References to codings
 () = Stop times in the transcription process

Interview Transcript	
Interviewee identification code	Alfy
Interview Date	2nd March 2009
Interview Duration	1 hour
Role level	Senior manager
Base	Redditch
Functional area	Commercial

The participant was given adequate time to read through the ‘participant information sheet’. The interviewer asked if any aspects of the information needed clarification. The participant signed the ‘consent form’. The interviewer provided the Agenda (Appendix I). The purpose of the research was explained to the interviewee prior to the interview commencement.

R: Are you able to make a distinction between corporate culture and the business unit culture? Do you think they’re the same?

A: Erm, it’s not the same. In terms of the new merged organisation which has a heavy utilities flavour to it, there is now quite a different cultural background between the corporate head office and the business unit’s culture, if you like. Whereas in Power Networks I think that was more lined-up but that was because you know that most of the people who had been involved in the Power business had been in it from the start and therefore the culture was a collection of those, that entity, those people and the way they wanted to drive it forward. Whereas the, er the culture that exists within utilities, erm, is derived from several different sources. Erm and principally sources erm outside of Balfour Beatty so it has a strong flavour of Kennedy’s and Kenton’s, in particular **Kenton’s cause Kenton’s was run by one individual basically who owned the company and managed the company and it was his way or it was no way. So he and when he left the culture remained.** So the culture within corporate head office is still, I think, is still very much steeped in that process. Er, everybody has got a job to do if you like and they’re all pigeon holed and you can’t step out of the box. Whereas, the business, **our business unit in Power Solutions I think is more, is more open and flexible. And er, you do cross the boundaries quite often between what your role and you know, what the needs of the business are. You can’t, I don’t think you can afford to be too blinkered... in your approach.**

R: OK, so in sort of describing the, sort of Head Office, or Sheffield culture, how would you describe that?

A: Well, erm to my way, it's dictatorial in its approach. Erm, which doesn't lend itself to be particularly flexible or erm particularly involving. So you, and they have, erm, they do seem to have, I mean, I just don't think it works in an organisation of the size that we are now because you just end up, the decision-making becomes very slow because its down to one or two individuals and erm you just can't afford to have that approach really that's worth, that's the size of what we are now.... And it's very diverse as well, it's not just a UK business. Erm, I mean the old utilities business was pretty much an England and Wales business, in fact it was probably an England business cause you know they had little enough in Scotland, didn't have a fat lot in Wales either...erm so it was very parochial. And the business was set-up to support that and now it's suddenly gone from that to being an international company. And it's, it's just not possible to manage in the same way.

R: So what you're saying is, or am I right in what you're saying is, that but erm, is way so erm, not a small business but it was able to be controlled because it was erm focussed into one area whereas now you've got the element of it being diversified and sort of, growth and sort of international rather than just in the UK. (5:20)

A: I mean it was a fairly small business. I mean if you look at Kennedy's and Kenton's, when it was put together, I guess it was £50m if that, so very small really. And OK, it's grown rapidly erm but it's grown because of two reasons. One is, that is, the large alliances that were put together, erm, which was a substantial amount of the business. Erm, if you look at the gas business Transco and erm the stuff that we've done with United Utilities, those projects, they've been substantial in value and also in size and because they're alliances and to some extent of fairly long duration, one the strategy is arrived at the secure that type of work, it moves from being a business to being a delivery tool. You know, whereas our business model isn't the same as that. It's constantly trying to secure the workload for the business and therefore the involvement remote from head office has to be significant otherwise it just doesn't work.

R: Does that sort of erm, does that mean that you have to be adaptable to individual projects...that you undertake?... Flexible enough to adapt?

A: I think you need to, not necessarily individual projects but you need to have a flexible... you need to have a flexible, erm, approach to your customer base. So, you know, your different customers, demand, erm, have a different approach to different contractors {Balfour Beatty}and, and Balfour Beatty as well, so er, so we'll have a different response and a different relationship with Scottish Power as opposed to somebody like Western Power Distribution. Erm and you know you have to as you're managing the business you have to vary that approach.

R: Just looking back at my set of questions, I think we've covered quite a few of those actually in that, in that discussion.

A: I mean just pickin' up on the differences and you know and there are... which in your opinion is the most dominant... I mean its quite clear, erm that in the old utilities sector, the most dominant aspect is the Head Office. Erm, I'm not entirely certain that that is the

case within the business unit within Power Solutions and that I think and that is what leads to a huge amount of friction. Because the HO attitude is well why is it different for you, everyone else toes the line but you're not. Erm and the response is basically well we understand the business, we've been doing it for years, you know, its, we think we've got the right approach. You know, so you have that conflict, because you have that different approach and different culture and it doesn't, it doesn't... it just makes life hard really rather than anything else.

R: Yeah, I can understand that.

A: I mean, ...do you think the culture will change over time, if so, in what direction. I think there will be, I think there'll be a change of both cultural, I think the business units will start seeing the benefits of a support function remote from it, because there are some benefits but equally so I think the, the Head Office will have to adapt slightly and will have to empower more, er and will have to be less dictatorial in their approach and OK there might be, there'll be sort of roles of engagement if you like, take for instance procurement as a classic example, so you'll have, the rules for procurement will be more clearly defined but there will be a fair amount of interaction er within the business unit with the supplier base whereas previously that has been fairly closely managed.

R: So, how adaptable to change do you believe the organisation is and why do you believe this is the case?... if you could think of an example...

A: Yeah, I think it's quite adaptable to change, cause it's been through a huge amount of change so by its very nature its used to change. Er, if you think about, just look at the, at Power Networks in particular. Erm, I mean in the space of, really in the space of 3 or 4 years, we went through massive changes. Erm I mean for instance you know the backbone of the transmission overhead line business was Power Construction Division erm and there was, and then there was Cabling Division so all parts of Balfour Kilpatrick and Power Construction Division was, was a completely different company at one stage. Because erm, Balfour Beatty Power Construction which was overhead line, er rail work and overhead line, erm DNO and National Grid work was a separate company to Balfour Kilpatrick at one point in time and then when they, when Balfour Beatty Group as a whole decided to put all the rail businesses together erm then that company was split in half. Er and Power Construc... er I can't remember exactly the timing of it, but then there was, shortly after that there was a merge between Power Construction Division and Cabling and we had Transmission and Cabling Division and then very shortly after that was formed we then had Balfour Beatty Power Networks which is basically the Transmission and Cabling Division of Balfour Kilpatrick so we went through massive changes erm in what was a fairly short period of time in 2 or 3 years we had several changes one after the other. And then when Power Construction, er sorry, Balfour Beatty Power Networks was formed, erm it wasn't long before that was evolving and changing you know and we had a northern region and a southern region er in Cabling. Er and that got merged into the one. Erm and having put Cabling and Transmission together we then break it up and split it out again so you have a Transmission Division and a Cabling Division.

R: I didn't realise that the, er, two entities had been together before and then split up again.

A: Er yes, I'm not entirely certain, I mean they were grouped together, I not entirely certain how close they ever got I mean what we've got now is much, much closer than what we've had previously, erm, but that's because again, you've taken away the National Grid business and put it into the Alliance, so I mean, that's yet, that was another change. I mean, and people were saying well without the National Grid business, how can the DNO market, how can that survive and its not only survived, its flourished you know and OK erm, Grid only operates in England and Wales and you've still got Scotland being independent and the Scottish business because we're working for Scottish Power both across transmission and distribution across the whole range, voltage range, then that business is, is, is more together and the er other elements of England and Wales operations, but you know we've embraced change, be it forced upon us or not or as a driver. So we are adaptable to change. Erm I, what concerns me obviously is erm these are global corporate changes they're not, the one, the one, that maybe more akin to Primavera is, we chose Mentor as an operating system as a you know finance package when we first formed Balfour Beatty Power Networks and so we chose that, erm it wasn't chosen for us whereas Oracle has been chosen for us and its amazing the difference in approach to a certain extent between the two. Primavera, we chose, we've chosen Primavera. Not all the business has, as we know but the majority of the business has and I think that, that makes a big difference because you buy in to the change process don't you. Whereas if you have change forced upon you, sometimes it can be slightly more difficult to accept. I don't know, I must admit, I've been with the company you know 27 years so and I've been through huge amounts of changes but in the majority of cases erm I've always I've never really had a problem accepting the change. Erm even when at times you don't really understand why erm but you know it's always been an inevitable consequence of a growing business. You know, companies evolve and sometimes, we've come, we've come the full circle like Transmission Division and Cabling Division being separate than put together then broken apart again now put together again.

R: Like doing the Okey-Koey, isn't it!

A: Exactly...so yeah.

R: OK. That's, that's interesting what you mentioned about Primavera and about the element of involvement of certain sort of areas like in certain areas I guess you were getting at.

A: Yeah. Yeah.

R: OK. Anything else that you can think about that I've not thought of in these sort of questions I think you've expanded really on most of them {Researcher says Interviewees name} within that sort of section.

A: Erm, I don't think so no. I mean in any managing change and managing erm not exactly change but introducing new things, you're right, to me early participation is the key to all and also to feel that you are part of the decision-making process makes things a lot easier. (17:38) Erm, I mean we spent a lot more time on within sort of the Oracle launch than we'd done anything in the past, er to the extent were we actually sat down with people and tried to explain to them what emotions they were going to go through erm...

R: The change curve, that sort of thing...

A: Exactly that's right, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Er and I mean, I'm not entirely certain, I mean some people reacted to that quite badly believe it or not but then you know we expected sort of 10% at either end of the scale who were gonna be totally anti-it or totally for it. But it was the block in the middle that you had to sort of bring along through it. Erm, I don't, I'm not so sure whether we er, I'm not so sure whether we view Primavera as having the same level of impact, you know as being significant to certain people, it was erm, when I say life changing I mean would change the way they work quite significantly. Er, to others they would be quite remote from it so it only had a certain impact on the business, and that, that does make a difference as well. *You know, if it's a cultural change or, no if its, if it's a business change than you really do have to get into er you know the characteristics and the culture of the companies to determine whether they are capable of accepting that with Primavera its we, its more to do with accessing those individuals who are going to be affected and understanding where their, what their cultural characteristics are.*

R: So how would you erm kind of put that sort of idea into say Teamcentre where if we finally get that launched were I believe we're sort of that close to it now {Researcher holds up hand illustrating a centimetre between thumb and forefinger} hopefully erm, that's probably gonna cause as much impact within the business unit as Oracle.

A: Exactly, I think that's right - I think Teamcentre is on a parallel to Oracle. Because I think you need, its gonna pretty much have an impact on everybody. Erm because we need it, we need that across all aspects, erm and then and I think that's gonna be a separate challenge because you I wouldn't say as we get polarised but as, as the sort of the dominant effect of either the Head Office or the business unit as I was saying to you earlier *I think that both cultures and both approaches will change and be more flexible whereas Teamcentre is definitely gonna be a tool for Power Solutions erm and its whether there is sufficient interaction outside of that environment and I think the challenge in that respect is ... again we need to ensure that Head Office, if you like, is well, is well bought into that... and I'm not entirely certain it is.* [25] But that's a separate subject.

R: So do you think, in terms of when you mentioned kind of involvement and empowerment and the way that Primavera was introduced...OK probably individuals were less affected by Primavera depending on their job role erm but do you think its important then that Teamcentre is sort of the way that that's rolled-out that it has some element of people getting involved in the business? People getting involved in the decision-making process so that they get the feeling that they have totally bought into it as well, so kind of decisions being made from the bottom-up for involvement rather than just from the top downwards.

A: Yeah. Yeah.

A: I mean I don't know how much visibility Teamcentre has. *Primavera's got quite a lot of visibility but even now I think people are er you know, they're...Some managers manage pro-actively, others manage re-actively. It's the pro-active ones that you get the most support from. It's the re-active ones that you get the worst support from really to change that's my opinion.* [26] Because they tend to react negatively to what their staff are

saying to them (22:51) and they see themselves as being on preventive mode. Where as those who are, like {refers to a Regional Manager}, who are more proactive, he sees the benefits and he sells it upfront so like when people get to hear about it they've already got a certain understanding and knowledge. Erm, yeah the re-active manager just basically sits on his butt does not a fat lot and then he's very defence and very negatively reactive. So it depends on the, in depends on the approach of the individuals.

R: OK. Do you think then that we've got a sufficient amount of proactive kind of senior managers, if you like, erm..

A: Personally – no.

R: Right – ok.

A: I don't think we have. No.

R: OK. Not, not even within the, the business unit itself? Are you referring to, are you referring to the wider scale, er Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions?

A: I think both.... But I'm, I'm particularly talking about the business unit.

R: OK

A: Cos I don't really know, I don't know that many people well outside of that.

R: Yeah. Yes that's cool, cause the focus of my project is really within er Power Solutions but then I'm having to think of the kind of effects that the merger has had on, on everything really.... OK. So I think from there we can sort of, we've sort of gone into the next sort of section anyway, haven't we, on leadership.

A: Yeah.

R: Erm, and and really covered sort of leadership style as well really I guess.

A: Yeah.

R: Erm, the next question that I've put down, erm can you give examples of where staff have been given opportunities to be involved or or, either involved or even empowered in the decision-making process, in a project?

A: Yeah, erm, if you look at Primavera, there was fairly heavy involvement. I mean we ran a number of workshops in the early days to try and capture the inputs and the outputs.
[28]

R: Yeah. I remember, erm {refers to a Regional Manager} telling me about that. [28]

A: ...And they where very good - They where very good. I mean ok they were a bit hard work because we had 12-14 people sitting round a table. You know, and it was quite er difficult and everybody had, everybody came to the table with different understandings of what, what it was about. What we... I think what we should have done is we should have

launched Primavera first in terms of saying well this is what it can do. Erm and er, rather than saying well what do we want out of it because people came to the table with different agendas. [28]

R: Right. That's interesting cause I was, my next question was going to be, just before you said that was do you think that the workshops actually helped clarify the sort of aims and objectives of the project but from what you're saying it seems as though...[28]

A: No, I don't think it did to be honest with you. It caused more caused more confusion.[28]

R: Right. OK.

A: Because people went away thinking, oh bloody hell this is what we've got, you know. When in reality it was probably not what, what we were about.

R: Yeah.

A: I think it was definitely the right thing to do. I just think the sequencing was slightly long.

R: Right. OK.

A: I mean in terms of and, and as a consequence of that, I think we got the management strategy slightly wrong because it became... it evolved massively from what it was. It just grew arms and legs and it still is to a certain extent. I mean yeah when we sat round the table in the erm, in the last Steering Meeting and and we almost turned it on its head to a certain extent or I felt that we had in that meeting.

R: I think that was almost due to getting the drawing office involved

A: Yes

R:as well and them being keen to kind of produce, what I call all the different kind of phases or modules.

A: Yes

R: ... in one huge hit. Erm, it, it has its good aspects and I think but also bad as well... but I think the good aspects outweigh the sort of bad elements. But erm, I know what you're saying because on the kind of what we're calling the project team or user group which I hold in between the steering group we got loads of items to talk about on the agenda, management reporting and all of the kind of different aspects of what we need to look into.

A: I mean the other thing is that that if you look at, I mean Primavera erm just like Teamcentre if we're not careful we'll be seen as, as erm **People have difficulty in understanding sometimes the benefits associated with doing something like that. But the common theme is, you know a lot of these issues have emanated from the same source.**[29] You know so build on line was very much driven, albeit that there was a certain amount

of client drive. (28:31) for that. Primavera has very much has come internally even though again there are one or two erm you know client drivers in there. But the client drivers not been sufficiently strong for us to embrace it, as a business, as a business tool. I mean for instance Network Rail have been using Primavera for years and.... and dictating that we use Primavera to a certain extent National Grid have as well but that's not sufficiently strong for us to say hey just a minute lets use this as the tool of choice then. Erm Build Online you know again a certain amount of client intervention but again it wasn't, it isn't let use this as the tool of choice then. Erm, and I'm, I'm just fearful that Teamcentre erm and Primavera to a certain extent will struggle because of that erm you know lack of buy in if you like right from the start and this, so the management strategy in terms of getting that buy in is, has to be somewhat stronger. [30]

R: OK. How do you think then, erm, could that be helped or where do you think we....

A: I think you need to make sure, you've got to get the erm the key decision-makers in the business together and say this is what we're going to do er and you know get them to understand or try and buy in to the process early on. I mean you'll always, I mean I don't think you'll ever have 100% buy-in, erm life would be too easy wouldn't it if that was the case. But you need to have a high percentage of buy-in, you need to understand why not everybody is buying in to the process and tackle those individuals off-line. [30] Cause if you can get the mass going forward with a common theme, it's a lot easier to manage rather than having to do that time and time and time again.

R: Ok. So would I be right in thinking that what you're suggesting is that there needs to be more buy-in at a senior level rather than kind of lower level.

A: Yeah. Yeah.

R: We've maybe got sufficient interest at this level so maybe we need to focus on...

A: Yeah. Definitely yes. Which is to a certain extent, it's the wrong way round isn't it.

R: Yeah. Yes, it's almost quite surprising really isn't it that it is quite the opposite to what you would expect.

A: Yeah. Yeah.

R: Quite interesting though.

A: I think, I think it's because unlike any of these, it is quite a change. Erm, it's, it's, to me it's a necessity of the business, we get side tracked doing lots of stuff that we don't need to do and the stuff that we need to do sometimes falls by the wayside because of that reaction. And I think a lot of it may be linked to the fact that it's quite difficult for some people [31] and everybody, it's human nature that people tend to do the easy bits first don't they and leave the difficult bits til last it's only the exceptions that do the difficult bits first. And prioritising, even though everybody's got to prioritise there's always more work to get through than you've got time. Again, sometimes you're not careful you can prioritise even though they're are important but there easier tasks or its tasks that you like doing. Er, a lot of what we're asking people to do now with Primavera is something (a) they're not used to doing perhaps or not to the same level or depth that we want them to

do, some people struggle with that a little bit so it's a bit hard for them. So you need somebody to drive those, you know to drive those people who are struggling a little bit. And the only way you can do that is by getting the people who manage them on side at the earliest opportunity and I, yeah I know for a fact that in Scotland we've got people who are key decision-makers in the business who are not going to support it and to a certain extent maybe Littlebrook is the same. [31] Even though they've been using a Primavera Planner for the longest period of all of us.

R: Yeah, that's right. That's quite bizarre isn't it really.

A: Yeah, but he's been, you know he gets on and does it you see – it's not really a problem. Whereas we're actually asking people to have a hand on involvement... it's like bolt on quality isn't it, you don't want bolt on quality cause bolt on quality doesn't work. You just need quality to be embedded into the business, just like we want Primavera, just like we want Teamcentre. (33:31) you know and that's the cultural change isn't it. That's the actual change management process that we need to go through. It needs to go from being a bolt on to actually a daily activity.[32]

R: Yeah.

-- Interview break

R: ...Put it on record again.... Erm, so really I think the last question I had under that section was erm... erm, the question which kind of leads quite nice into it – Do you believe that project success is the responsibility of leadership or.. or everybody involved cause I know that different people have different views on that question maybe.

A: Yeah. Er, I mean, my... my view is erm everyone involved in the process is responsible for delivery, once, you know, once... I think the leadership has to, erm, to be very clear on the objectives and.... and I know like I said about the inputs and the outputs, erm, to me that was well worth doing, but I don't think the er, the, excuse me, the overview of what we where.... what we wanted to achieve through Primavera wasn't very clearly disseminated after that discussion. So people did come out of that thinking all sorts of different things about what it was going to deliver. Because they went in with those preconceptions they came out with preconceptions. Whereas erm I think it would have been again bringing back the key decision-makers bringing them back to the table and saying look we've had this review and this is what, this is what we're actually going to launch now so the issues where really very much instrumental in, in dictating.... dictating may be too stronger word but you have to have that sort of buy-in it can't be done on a softly, softly basis to start with. But once, once you've.... once the decisions made and then everybody has to take a level of ownership and therefore ownership, with ownership comes responsibility and you can't have the two divorced erm from my point of view.[33]

R: OK.

A: So, you know if you don't get that, that responsibility and ownership then its, to a certain extent it's gonna fail. I mean, the theme, if you look at the Zero Harm {a Balfour Beatty Group (BB) Safety initiative. BB Group provide the framework but entrust its operating companies to conduct the events in the most appropriate manner} theme, erm, I

mean erm when we were at the JCB place the other day, the actual message coming across was, if you don't embrace this, you don't belong in the business which is quite a powerful, I mean I... I, was a bit shocked really as to how they came out with that right from the word go, but and, and I think they could have phrased it a lot better than what they did. But that again is, that's the Head office..... that again is an example of the cultural difference. [33]

R: Kind of, one extreme as opposed to the other.

A: Yeah, yeah, exactly. Mark Andrews, who erm, did you know Mark?

R: Erm, I know the name, but I don't know him.

A: I mean, Mark was erm, er, General Manager of Transmission and Cabling Division when we were part of Balfour Kilpatrick. I'm not entirely certain whether he sold the dream or what but he definitely, he was the founder of Balfour Beatty Power Networks in, in respect of what we were all about and erm he didn't last long because he was, he had his own agenda as it happened which was more, which was career rather than anything else. Erm, but he, he, erm, he was er, he had too much of the management speak if you like. He'd got his MBA and he'd got a 1st, er I think in Engineering, I mean, a very, very clever bloke, really clever bloke. Erm and also he'd spent some time on the commercial side as well so you know it seemed quite a large spectrum. But erm, it was, sort of swimming against the tide that was his sort of attitude to change. Erm and... and basically there's too many dead fish in the water sort of attitude, people who are, people who won't embrace change they're not, they just don't like change or there's people who will resist change because, because of the nature of the beast, so and I, I think that would have been a much better message to send. I mean, obviously somebody spent a significant amount of time thinking about this, and erm one of the phrases that was used was that you can be a tourist or you can be a participant or you can be a blocker and we don't want the blockers and we want to convert the tourists so and it's er quite strong that. Maybe that's what you need to have I mean something as significant as Zero Harm.

R: OK. So what was meant by the tourist, kind of people who are kind of neither negative or positive, ambivalent?

A: Exactly that's right yeah - Just having a look round and see what it looks like and do we really want to be here, wish you were here, wish you weren't here sort of attitude. Rather than people who are there specifically for the purpose for what it was there, well it was Zero Harm launch day so. Definitely a clever significant agenda item.

R: OK thanks for that {Researcher states name of Interviewee}. It was interesting what you had to say particularly towards the end with, with that sort of question. That was great thanks. Was there anything else on, on leadership that I've missed? Regarding sort of projects and change and how they can be facilitated or how they can be helped along?

A: Yeah, erm, I mean having said all I've said, you know, I still think you need a very strong leader er on anything like this. Erm, and somebody who can be quite ruthless at times. Er, and there has to be, cause there has to be, it's alright empowering people but at some point or other either of these projects will either stutter, stall or there'll need to be a changed direction and that's were you need a strong leader to really grab it and give it the

kick start again. If you haven't got that strong leader then it'll, there'll be too many deflections. Er like we said you know, the, this concept about blocker more than tourist I mean er, the tourist can be equally as disruptive but the blocker is definitely going to be out there to try and do things which, which, which stops and stalls and they can even put a death to the actual project. Er so you need somebody who is sufficiently strong to er you know to spot that and to get and get round it and.. and it's a big, I mean, with erm, with something like Teamcentre in particular whoever drives that through has to have a lot of clout and has to have you know erm has the ability to not only cohurse but dictate at times. Erm, so it's a it's a big role and sometimes people don't understand that role or don't understand the importance of it. It's more, to some people it's a case of well I'll just show them direction and they'll find their own way and that doesn't happen – does it. People make the wrong turns or, which is, which is often the case so you need to point them back in the right direction again don't you.

R: I think sometimes, as well, erm. Sometimes I think if it's an IS project, Information Systems project in particular, its can be given less priority as something which is more of a money making process shall we say rather than an internally IT based project.

A: Er, I agree with that, yeah.

R: Er OK. Last section – Driving & Retraining Factors, so we've talked a bit about this I think, erm, all the way through haven't we...

A: That's right.

R: Erm, so in the questions, I'm, I'm being a bit more specific where I've said in relation to the Primavera project, was there any or resistance and I guess you've really sort of touched on that subject anyway haven't we.

A: I mean, yeah, yeah, there are still some level of resistance, erm, and... and to a certain extent we've let people get away with that er but again that's getting back to the leadership issue isn't it. Erm, I mean certain people have Primavera project where people have embraced it the easiest has been where there's been quite a strong drive from the top implement it or it's been a passion for individual people. Er, to me it's a matter of trying to get that across the whole business. I mean people, there's no doubt you know that er it's.. it's a powerful tool there's no doubt that people ort to be doing a lot more planning and programming and it as you, you know we were talking about it the other day, this is this misconception that Primavera is a lot harder to use than it than it needs to be and so minimising, minimising that resistant is educational as well, as well as erm the launch aspect of it. I think in terms of Scotland, I mean we need to what would be useful is, is to get one or two people who are on your side using it er before we start er trying to spread it too wide.

R: Yeah.

A: It's a slightly different approach isn't it.

R: Yeah. Yeah.

A: I mean, there's a couple of projects, who are, crying out crying out for that sort of tool. Which we can sort of talk about and adapt and implement.

R: Yeah that sounds good.

A: So you do have to vary your approach don't you depending on the individuals that you're dealing with. Er...

R: I know maybe for er, it's it's interesting to look at the aspects of... of resistance because we've talked about resistance at both level if you like at a lower level and at a senior level as well.

A: Yeah. Yeah.

R: Whereas normally I think it's perceived when you read all the text books to be the lower levels who are always resistance to change and it's not necessarily the case is it which makes this more interesting.

A: That's right. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I mean just going to the relationship, I mean I think the trust is quite high, erm but then I'm always probably more optimistic than pessimistic so that's probably my characteristics coming through ^{[47](47:27)} I don't, I don't think there's any underlying finger pointing. Erm, about well this is what you know people see erm sort of reading between the lines if you like and coming out with erm reasons being very cynical about what the approach is, it's.. it's very straight forward, it's a very straight forward approach to some extent in terms of we need to do planning and programming and this is the tool to do it. But Primavera, was one step... a lot... well a number of steps further down the line from that. But I don't believe anybody's particularly sort of said "Oh well this is there's an ulterior motive" in that way... that's not what, the feedback I'm getting.

R: So nobodies getting the view that because they're having to enter in say resource and things like that that maybe it's a bit of big brother or anything like that you've not got any people...

A: No. No. I don't think so.

R: Neither have I to be honest.

A: I mean Oracle, Oracle had a tad flavour of that erm about the big brother syndrome, but I don't even so it wasn't because it was driven from the top and their wasn't an alternative you know people just couldn't, they had to get on with it. Erm, I mean Primavera is possibly not driven from the top and there are alternatives so that's that's that is quite a distinction. Erm and it's getting round those two issues isn't it. Getting the buy-in from the top and there is not an alternative really. If you can get over those two humps then the projects more likely to succeed. ^[43] Not that I'm saying its failing by any stretch of the imagination and its there is still a little bit of resistance out there.

R: Yeah, I think there's almost a final kind of barrier to overcome isn't there.

A: That's right. Now in terms of leadership I mean I was involved in launching erm profit related pay and there was a huge amount of er, er, lack of trust [48] you know unbelieve... you know in certain sections of the workforce and you know to an extent were I mean we... we erm because and that to a certain extent and that was linked to some extent with the fact that we couldn't tell them all the rules which was, which was a complete fundamental floor in the whole of the launch so in a way people were seeing this as er well they're not saying everything that they need to say here and they're not stupid some people you know, they might not be, they might not have the brightest educations some of them and they might not be erm intelligent but they are very cute a lot of them are and they can hear when they're not being told the whole story. [48] But even when you told them, er, I mean we, we, made the choice, we made the decision that we were actually going to go into some level of depth as to how the actual er profit related pay erm sort of how the maths worked if you like erm and then when we put that up on the board you know well some of them said well how do I know what you're saying is right? Even when they saw it in black and white they still didn't trust you. So there was and... and one of the one of the levels, one of the reasons for mis-trust in that particular situation erm was er the company were perceived as being a greater benefactor to the individuals. I... I... I mean I had a discussion with one particular individual who basically said well the company is gonna make millions out of this and we're gonna get £2.50 each a week better off or you know those were sort of the figures so I'm gonna block this because the companies gonna make millions. Well I said well how many, if you multiply 2.5, you know £2.50 a week, 52 weeks x 35,000 people, how, how you know how many millions is that gonna be. So the company's giving back millions but fortunately it's cost £35,000 whereas the company's just one single entity you know and then you get people who say well I'm... you know if... if it's profit related pay then it's related to the profit of the whole company but I might be a bigger contributor to that profit than somebody who works down the road because I'm working twice as fast as he does so shouldn't I get more of the profit related pay and you say well just a minute you get paid piece work that dictates how much you earn through your productivity, its got nothing to do with this and it's amaz... it was amazing the difference on that particular launch erm the mis-trust whereas on something like Teamcentre or something like Project, er Primavera erm the... the, the issue is that maybe there's not that much of erm the company's a win-winner on this I mean you know what we do is sell it as its individual and the projects that are going to be the winner that that means if we've got more control at that level then that means that we're uniformly winners all together. Once you start saying there's a swing a balance between the two then again people start, that's when you get the dis-trust perhaps... er anyway interesting.

Comment [LS1]: LEAD-TRU This is about the whole issue of 'TRUST' or lack of...

Comment [LS2]: LEAD-TRU So even prior to the merger there was a lack of trust demonstrated by the workforce...

R: Erm the next question, next to last question is about erm groups really erm forming together naturally to solve problems.

A: Yeah, I don't think they do

R: Do you think there's much of that?

A: {Laughs} No – I'm afraid, erm people don't naturally volunteer through choice either. Erm, so that, somebody at some point has to call the group together.

R: So somebody really facilitates that?

A: That's right – Yeah. And ya know er, and even, even in a regional business er, I've, I've not come across a spontaneous group forming to solve problems, I must admit erm the fact that you actually do have fairly structured business meetings that are at regular intervals throughout, throughout the year, would... would sort of seem to suggest that there has to be a driving force somewhere behind the lines. I think you get informal discussions going erm spontaneously if you like, when you get like minded individuals together and certain, to a certain extent erm, maybe erm one of the issues is that you try and encourage those groups to form as if by accident by putting people in that sort of environment erm but it's interesting just taking for instance Zero Harm, when we sat down for lunch for instance people just sat with people they knew and they worked with. They don't go off and I mean people talk about networking and all this sort of stuff erm it just doesn't work does it. Erm even when there's been smaller business, when there's been smaller senior management team meetings for Power for Utility Solutions as opposed to Power just looking, when you just look in the room and start seeing where people are sitting next to each other its you know the people they feel familiar with and comfortable with. Erm I mean we threw, they then formed, they deliberately then broke us up into erm, er seminar rooms with diff.... you knew put different people together in terms of the business and that was done deliberately really er so you need that catalyst don't you to... to and then it can be evolved from there but without that to start with I just don't see it happening really.[45]

R: Erm, final one is about communication then really how well, how much do you think erm the erm the feedback or... or information from a lower level erm affects procedures, working practices and how much is that generally listened to I guess from a higher level?

A: Erm I think its, it varies enormously in my opinion depending on what you're trying to achieve erm there's... there's a lot of procedures and practices, working practices within the business within our Power Solutions business which erm has enormous impact and effect from the ground upwards. Because at the end of the day those procedures and practices are written by those people who are used to getting involved. (58:37) and if we don't involve them enlist and understand change and adapt then we've got no chance. [49] But erm, there are other, there are other, erm initiatives if you like and projects that get launched which it doesn't matter what you say you're never going to have an influence on it and I think that you again I'm not saying we missed a trick, that's something else that you need to understand from the offset which category are you going to you know will your project fall into. It is one were you are going to listen very seriously to what people are saying about the change and you know maybe alter the strategy or can you not afford that to happen. I mean again looking at Oracle we can if couldn't afford that to happen. Er but actually having said that the fact that we have a lot of customisation in Oracle erm erm meant that there was a certain amount of er listening but they {Balfour Beatty Group} gave us the opportunity. It wasn't you know the group gave us the opportunity to customise. They could have turned round and said sorry no customisation that would have been a different attitude altogether. When we bought Mentor we pretty much took it as it was and we changed our processes and procedures to adapt and everybody hated it but then along comes Oracle and Mentors the best thing since sliced bread... [50] It's amazing isn't it... Er but I think er I mean Primavera has evolved, I'm not entirely certain how or why. I don't think its necessarily evolved because the er because the communications come upwards from grass roots, I think it's more because we've discovered the tool is more powerful than it was to start with and there we've the actual project itself has grown (0:49) so I know, I know I'm sort of dodging the issue

Comment [LS3]: So there was 'listening' but the impression is that the system was tailored to meet the process. No focus on 'best practise' or change here. What is required is a 'participative change' which is the opportunity for people to participate in progressing a situation not to enforce their current situation – this is different!

there but I, I do think that er it really does depend, it does depend on what you're trying to achieve.

R: Yeah – I understand. Yeah. OK. Well thanks for that {Researcher says Interviewees name}

A: That's alright.

R: Is there anything else that you would er like to say.

A: No, no I don't think so. It's the world according to {Interviewee says name} that is.

R: That was brilliant, thanks ever so much for that. I'll have plenty to write up now.

A: {Laughs} I'm sure you will.

Appendix VI

Key:
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 Edward = E

Analysis Colour Coding Key:
Green = Culture & Organisational Characteristics
Pink = Leadership
Blue = Teamwork & decision-making

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Interview Transcript	
Interviewee identification code	Edward
Interview Date	20th March 2009
Interview Duration	40 minutes
Role level	Non Manager
Base	Middlesbrough
Functional area	Planning Cabling

The participant was given adequate time to read through the 'participant information sheet'. The interviewer asked if any aspects of the information needed clarification. The participant signed the 'consent form'. The interviewer provided the Agenda (Appendix I). The purpose of the research was explained to the interviewee prior to the interview commencement.

R: So basically as I've put here, the Agenda is in three sections, the first section being about the organisational characteristics and culture then leadership and the final section as you will have seen is about driving and restraining factors. Now before I continue I've got to ask you, are you happy with everything I've supplied to you and what you've tucked off and signed? In other words have you got any concerns or questions regarding....

E: Yeah, no problem.

R: Well if you do or if there's anything you're not happy with at the end of the interview or anything like that or even if you want a transcript because I'll have to transcribe all this recording that I'm making with all the erm's and sort of's and kind of's that's involved in it ... so you're welcome to have that if you wanted.

E: Yeah.

R: But I'm sure you could probably find better things to do with your time than read about 15 sides of transcript! {Laughs}

E: Wow, will it be that long?

R: Yeah, it takes me about 6 hours to type up about an hours worth of interview.. so if you talk quick it might help a bit!

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E: I've not got much to say {laughs}

R: Before I start asking these questions, we've no need to stick to these particular questions...if there's anything you want to ask me or clarify then do so. Likewise if there's anything you feel you want to add or if there's anything I've missed, which I probably have, please let me know – OK?

E: Yeah, OK.

R: Erm, so the first section is about organisational characteristics and culture and I've just put a little note there [referring to the footnote on the Agenda] identifying culture. So it's the collective beliefs and attitudes by individuals that make-up and we're talking about Power Solutions really.

E: Right.

R: Yeah, for the business unit.

E: Yeah.

R: Erm, so the first question is are you or *do you think there's a difference between the corporate head office culture i.e. Sheffield....*

E: Yep.

R: And the business unit culture or way of thinking or way of doing things?

E: I think since we've integrated to Utility Solutions, I think Sheffield culture has very much centralised everything. Everything goes through Sheffield and is controlled by Sheffield. Erm whereas the culture obviously used to be decentralised so there's still a bit of opposition to that sort of culture from different branches, individual branches. [5] Erm so there's sort of been a change process. The individual business units are in the transition process of changing to the centralised process at the moment but they are sort of opposing it. [14] Erm that's....cause we're in a period of change aren't we The cultures changing you know they're trying to create a culture in Sheffield, they're trying to change the old culture [referring to BBPN 'old culture'?] and create a new one.

R: Right, so you think they're creating a new culture as opposed to changing the old one?

Comment [11]: An interesting perception. Sheffield is attempting to create a new culture...other informants indicate compliance rather than new culture creation.

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E: They are trying to create their own culture, that they want to impose on the whole of Power Solutions.. which is a centralised culture where everything goes through Sheffield office...which is the all seeing eye of everything basically. That's the way I see the culture anyway. [14]

Comment [12]: I see so it is being imposed.

R: I think what you've done there as well is lead on to the next question or really answered the next question which is how would you describe the culture?

E: The culture of Head Office at Sheffield is centralised and everything and the culture of the business unit is changing to centralising... well it has changed to centralising, but I don't think they see that as the way the culture should be.

Comment [13]: So the regions are resisting the new culture.

R: By 'they' do you mean the Regions in the business unit?

E: Yeah.

R: OK. Now maybe again you've answered this one but it's just as well to reiterate. So I said here if there are differences, which do you think is the most dominant?

E: Well Sheffield because they are the Head Office. We have merged with Utility Solutions and that is the Head Office now in Sheffield so the dominant culture is the centralised system and that's what's being opposed by everyone else but that's the way it has to be, you know. [14]

R: Er, do you think that either Sheffield will be successful in changing erm the culture of the Business Unit in time or do you think maybe the business unit could sort of rub off, the way of thinking of the business unit, kind of rub off on the higher level business.

E: Personally I think the fully centralised system and culture isn't gonna work fully. I think it's going to come to some point where things certain things are going to go back decentralised back to the branches, individual branches [14] so things like ordering plant back to the sort of individual offices (6:49).

R: Yeah.

E: ... I think it's going to go detour a little bit, certain things are going to stay decentralised in Sheffield and then other things are going to go back to being decentralised I don't think it'll ever be everything, I don't think it'll work everything

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being centralised cause of the nature of our business really. Things like relationships with local buyers and plant offices and things near to Middlesbrough that we've built relationships up with and we know them and the location and they know where our work is and the best thing to do were Sheffield is, they don't really know that sort of thing so {inaudible} things like that need to be within the branch and controlled by the branch itself rather than, that's my opinion anyway rather than somebody sat at a desk in Sheffield trying to tell someone in Middlesbrough where to get an excavator from when they're next to the yard on their job if you know what I mean cause at the minute Sheffield have to order them for them so they could be in Newcastle waiting for an excavator to come from, I don't know, Liverpool before they can use it just because Sheffield have said you've got to order it from there even if they're sat next to the yard where they've got loads of excavators they have to you know do what Sheffield say basically use there practises. I don't know if you've got anything out of that?

R: Yeah, yes.

E: or if you want me to explain?

R: there's no right or wrong answer. I'm looking for your opinion of things, that's important to me. Erm, *how adaptable do you think the organisation is, to change basically? And why do you think this?* (8:49)

E: Erm

R: Probably focus on the business unit.

E: Yeah. Well the business is changing all the time and the nature of our works I mean I think we do adapt to different situations we've obviously got to react to fault work and stuff like that. So we are very adaptable to change and meeting clients needs. So I think we are pretty adaptable on a whole [18] going back to a centralised system I don't really think, you know, adapting to that sort of thing it's not going to work but as a whole as a working unit I think we are adaptable to meeting clients needs. That's all I can say on that really.

R: What about it if I give you the example of Primavera?

E: Well, erm that something... well Primavera, where do I start. Erm as you know we've had a lot of sort of people not understanding really rather than opposition as to what it can do for them and I suppose mainly the Engineers really who are a big part of it

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(10:32) **not in the culture of you know keeping programmes up-to-date** [21] and you know analysing resource and requesting resource in a way that can help the business as a whole they're used to Microsoft Project for programming and they're not really used to that sort of thing. The way they used to do it was just to program in Project and that's it that was the program if it changed it changed. There wasn't very much structure to how we request resource how we plan and analyse the resource within the branch and within you know the Power Solutions business now (11:14) so...

R: It's interesting in that, erm, that you described over all that the business unit has to be adaptable to change and is adaptable to change in terms of the customer requirements....

E: Yeah, yeah.

R: In response to that and the job itself yet when you give Primavera as an example then....maybe you're implying that its certain elements or certain roles that aren't as adaptable...

E: Yeah, yeah.

R:and maybe that's really focussed on new technology, I don't know.

E: I would say, new technology. Adapting to new technology is something that, if you call them the old school Engineers, you know 30 years at Balfour's, you didn't have a mobile phone when they didn't have computers when they first started, so when new technology comes along they're a bit....

R: So is it mainly... is it more the older people who are finding it difficult?

E: Yeah, **I would say that the old school, what you call the old school, they've only just got laptops... they're not going to be very adaptable to it because they're not used to technology.** [21] Whereas you know people like {refers to an Engineer} he's come through learning computers as well as the Engineering side, so he's got both whereas the old school people have just got site and the Engineering side and they haven't got the technology side, you know.

R: Yeah.

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E:but that'll change as people like {refers to an Engineer} come through have got the technology and the site knowledge as well so we can balance both the experience and using the technology, which is the way I see it at the moment.

R: Erm, in relation to the Primavera project, this really relates to *how aims and objectives were communicated and how did the information come across to people in general and yourself?*

E: What shown to other people?

R: How, erm...Well first I suppose do you understand what the aims and objectives of introducing Primavera were and how was that information put across or communicated to you?

E: Erm, the aims, the aims from the start would be to analyse resource. Plan and analyse resource within branches and also within the division which was Power Networks and is now Power Solutions, erm mainly with a joint resource, with the objective of being able to share resource across the whole division. Erm and this is obviously you know still at the development stage with it but *it has been disseminated to, to er senior managers from the start, two years ago now, so a the highest levels they do understand what we're trying to achieve and where we're trying to get to and that was, that was sort of disseminated to Engineers – Project Engineers, Project Managers when we had the training for Primavera. Er, but I think more information, you know, cause we're still developing it, different part of it and the way we're going to use it.* [27] That information, once we've got it sorted will need to be rolled down to the people who're going to use it. You know what I mean, once we get to the stage of how we're going to use it properly with the Timesheet and all that sort of thing. So at the minute, the question was how was it disseminated wasn't it?

R: Hmm. Well you answered that really because you said that ... er you talked about it being communicated to senior managers at the start...

E:well *I went to the managers' meeting they have in Cardiff probably a couple of years ago now, I think it was about two years ago, me and {refers to a peer} went through basically what it could do and where we want to get to but that was very early stages, when I was only really learning Primavera then, that was when I first started. From that stage everybody was for the objectives* [27](16:44).

R: Right, OK, so everybody bought into it at that stage....

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E: Yeah, everybody bought into it...every time we've bought senior management around the table they all want it, they've all bought into it, mainly, erm, they just want it to happen basically and that's what we're sort of still trying to achieve.

R: OK, so just out of interest, well it's probably aside from these questions but probably appropriate to ask now. Erm, do you think the Steering Group and the Project Team are working well enough, in terms of generating momentum and carrying out actions and approving everything or do you think something else needs to be something else done in terms of communicating the information across, etcetera?

E: Erm, I think since we started having the User Group meetings, erm there's been a lot of momentum developed. And it gives everyone a chance who's using it to help each other and to give each other ideas, things like that and I think that has helped to build up a lot of momentum so developing erm I mean even helping in the Engineering office now, I'm learning things that'll help me as well as helping them if you know what I mean (18:23) it been a learning curve but I think haven't the User Group has helped a lot.

R: I think its safe to say that after having this comment from a number of people, from a range of people, there's a lot more involved in Primavera than probably erm everybody appreciated at the beginning.

E: Yeah.

R: There's a lot more to it and I think since the Engineering Drawing Office has come on, I think they've.... They don't just want one bite out of the apple they're wanting three or four bites all at once, aren't they.

E: Yeah, yeah. They want to use it to fully control their office.

R: But I think as well although it's not been a linear, sort of, way and things haven't worked out quite to plan it's sort of you've got to appreciate it's a big learning curve for everybody and things are going to go a bit wrong and nothings going to happen over night.

E: I think the learning curve sort of went flat for a while you know until we started having User Groups. I think now we're sort of going upwards you know I think we were {inaudible} quite a while, probably six months, longer we were just on a flat, you know nothing was not a lot of progression in terms of the old {inaudible} system. [46]

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R: So do you think that's due to erm, you know forming the project team but also sort of a little bit of team work and things like that?

E: Erm, yeah-yeah. I mean it started off with just myself and then Gunjan came on board and to make the full system work we needed a Planner in each division, department, one in each and then you know somebody oversees it all **and it started off with just me and Gunjan you know sort of trying to work things out ourselves. Now it's developed and there's more people using it more inputs more ideas and things in the User Group as well as helping each other on a daily basis and it's helped us to develop parts that probably me and Gunjan were struggling with at first because we're on that learning curve if you know what I mean.** [46]

R: Yeah. That's good.

E: ...and then after the User Group meetings everything gets passed by the Steering Group so we've got that erm authorisation process, you know where it goes through them, so you know sort of this document that we were doing yesterday Gunjan started that you know to show to the Steering Group you know on the 3rd so we've got deadlines to get stuff ready (21:15) to show to senior managers which drivers, is driving us, you know, to get more things done in that time, so yeah...

R: That's good to know. I know in that final question, that I sort of asked, sort of diverged off of characteristics and culture but have you got anything else you want to add, er, before we move on to the next section which is leadership?

E: I can't think of anything, no.

R: OK. If you think of something you can always tell me at the end anyway.... So if you do.....So leadership. How would you describe and again this is applicable to the Primavera project the change management strategy and leadership style used.

E: That we used?

R: Umm.

E: Erm...

R: It's probably difficult because I haven't really given you any examples but I'm really wanting your thoughts on it. It's better if you describe it and give your thoughts on it.

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E: There wasn't any strategy put in place and all that. It was me testing it on a laptop... and then presenting that to senior management, telling them where we needed to go and then.

R: So you're saying nothing kind of formal initially...

E: {Refers to a Regional Manager} has always been the lead, er, the lead person behind Primavera, cause obviously we started using it in Middlesbrough first. [31] But he's too busy to just control Primavera so he sort of, it was left with me really at first and erm I think before you came along we had another gentlemen, erm I can't remember his name, but he didn't get very much involved as Project Manager, but it was only when you came along to be Project Manager that we had somebody to be the leader sort of thing. It was just me at first, there was no...

R: Would that be {refers to an ex-Manager who has left the company}?

E: {refers to an ex-Manager who has left the company} – yeah, but he only came to one meeting and I met him once after that and then he went on to another project or something...

R: What was his input?

E: Nothing that I know of. So there hasn't really been a strategy of leadership style if you know what I mean. Then obviously you came... you started and then obviously you as the Project Manager and myself and Gunjan so the lead people and then obviously weekly, er, fortnightly meetings.

R: So to start off with things might not have necessarily been that structured but to be fair that's maybe because you were testing the water and things there – yeah... its not necessarily a bad thing for it not to have been real formalised straight off. Well that's my view anyway.

E: Well I think, I know what you're saying but if we'd got the structure in place. Obviously I tested a bit at first but like yourself, that structure in place earlier then we'd be a lot further along the line now I think rather than 2 1/2 years down the line. [31]

R: Yeah, so it might have been a year and a half as opposed to 2 years or...(25:17) OK. Erm, so we talked we talked about, a bit about, sort of, change management strategy

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mainly focussed on the early period and leadership style so how would you say it is, or how would you describe it now? And this is not, erm, I'm not necessary talking about my leadership style, my style of managing this, sort of more generally, so you could talk about my style, {refers to a Regional Manager},s erm the Steering Committee in general, {refers to the Power Solutions Operations Director} or all of those, you know. Do you fit as well, I suppose would be an interesting question.

E: What sorry?

R: Do they all fit, are they all similar or is there anything opposing about it all.

E: I think, the thing is that everybody's got their own interests. I know {refers to a Regional Manager} is, sort of, started off erm, more involved than what he is now. Now he just comes to us to report to him about our progress really.

R: He's took more of a back seat now hasn't he.

E: What we originally had was, sort of, what we called a project team then. That was before you came along. In Redditch there must have been 20 odd people around the table. (27:00) Er, Jim Dinnigan, the QS's and things, you know all the different roles and it was just everyone talking, I think there was too many people, if you know what I mean.

R: Oh, I didn't realise you'd got, so that was specifically for Primavera was it before?

E: Yeah, they used to have it in Redditch office and that's when we got Nigel to come as well and he sort of guided them but.... I forgot what the question was now.

R: It's about leadership style...

E: Yeah, I think {refers to a Regional Manager} is sort of taking a back role than what he used to have (27:45).

R: I suppose what I mean by leadership style, probably I can help a bit it's similar to culture, you've got the bureaucratic kind of style culture or authoritative and that can be... or in terms of leadership and very often the culture and the leadership or the leadership will have an effect on the culture but you could say visa versa or you could say on the other extreme to the right is more of an empowered... or a leader who promotes empowerment sort of gives more decision-making or lets people or promotes that or in the middle you'd probably have someone how'll still have a thread of process through

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everything that they do but they'll ask people to get involved (29:04) every now and again so you know, that's what I'm really getting at in terms of asking you about change management strategy and leadership style – does that make more sense?

E: Yeah, I think then the leadership style has been, sort of er letting us make the decisions on how to develop the database, [36] certainly like yourself – the Project Manager you've done the training course on Primavera but you don't use it day to day so you wouldn't know. You sort of give us that power to make decisions on how to change the database ourselves so its not sort of a bureaucratic, its more of a I don't know what the word is for it [36] but....

R: Involving?

E: You trust in us to make the decisions about he database because you know we're the one's who've been trained and we know what we're doing but any major decisions we know that they have to go through senior management and yourself certainly anything to do with the budget and price and causet and things like that, [43] erm...

R: Now that probably leads nicely into the next question which is really about can you give any example s of where, and you've touched on this anyway, of **where you've been given opportunities to be more involved**. Now you know it probably doesn't necessarily have to be Primavera but I would have thought you could have thought of lots of examples regarding that where you've been given opportunities and from what you've been saying its really fro the beginning you've had almost a free rein to sort of have a look at the system and make recommendations.

E: Yeah, er yeah. Basically as for myself I was given a free rein from the start to erm develop the database where it was myself really meeting the divisions and now obviously there's more people in the database and decisions I make now are going to affect other people as well. I mean that why the user groups good for things like that were we can...decisions that are going to affect the database as a whole, we can make them as a group rather....

R: Yeah.

E: ...than er me changing something and it changing something like of Sue's...[30]

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R: Well when you're sitting out on a limb and not saying anything to anybody and then making a change and then, yeah like you say it could affect somebody else. I don't think Sue would be very pleased if you did that!

E: Yeah, along the way we had a workshop, I think that was before your time so...

R: Who did that?

E: {Refers to the Commercial Manager} – he did er a process map of where we wanted to get to – that was done early on. That was a good cause it gave us that outline early on what we wanted to get – the inputs and outputs you know what this was all about so that involved quite a number of people from different offices got involved, we had a lot of training courses with people, getting people involved. Is that what you're getting at with that?

R: Um.

E: ...A lot of one-to-one training with people so... (32:44)

R: Yeah, yeah. That's all I'm really wanting because the more information I can get out of you the more... the more I have to write about {laughs}!

E: I'm just not very good at explaining anything, I know {inaudible} but I just don't know how to explain it properly.

R: Yeah, I think we all have problems with that sometimes. Myself I had to say certain things to certain people in about four different ways until I run out of thinking of ways to say it {laughs}. Erm, right, this final question on this section is – Do you believe that a successful project is the responsibility of leadership so people like {refers to the Power Solutions Operations Director}, {refers to a Regional Manager} or, or even me for that matter or the responsibility of everyone involved at all levels and if so why. So basically what I'm getting at here is that, you know do you think its, if something happened and the project wasn't a success do you think it would be {refers to the Power Solutions Operations Director}'s fault or my fault or everybody's fault.

E: I think the overall success of the project is going to be, the responsibilities going to lie with the sort of leader. The consequences if you like of failure. But **making it a success itself is the responsibility of everyone, you know everyone involved, doing their parts correctly with the guidance of the leader basically.** [33] So I think the consequences will

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fall to the leader but, well I don't mean you, you know what I mean...The success of the project, you need the guidance of the Project Manager but then you've got to go away and do your part correctly so project success lies with every individual at all levels really. That's the way I see it.

R: Yeah. Well obviously I have to ask that question because different people have different views on that question or will give you a different answer – yeah.

E: Well it's teamwork isn't it – no 'T' in team. If the ships sinking I'm off {laughs}. Only joking.

R: So, final section. Section 3 – Driving and Restraining Factors (35:39). Erm, so *in relation to the Primavera project, was there any resistance* and you've already commented on this a little bit and how was it minimised? So what did the project team or yourself or people like {refers to the Commercial Manager} and {refers to a Regional Manager} do to minimise that resistance.

E: Er, *the resistance, I think we sort of talked before about this, the old school culture and new technology, erm, which is still going to be on going resistance really er, and what we did to minimise it is when we had the initial training er we did a presentation of er how Primavera worked and how it can benefit people and obviously there's on-going training going on and if anybody needs any training we can put them on courses so we're trying to minimise that resistance to new technology by keeping people trained...[42]*

R: And of course you're doing the one-to-one training as well aren't you.

E: ...and continuing one-to-one all the time really. Just to keep, to stop them from... We don't want somebody logging in and not... and getting resistance from not knowing how to do something or not knowing how to do it cause then that'll get them into the mindset of you know, not wanting to do it because it's not working, if you know what I mean. So we're trying to stop that resistance by continuous training and er providing them with information as to how to do it.

R: Erm, now you did mention about trust a few minutes ago, erm, which is the next question, which is what the next question is about. What is the relationship, you know, the trust relationship, do you think between leadership and the workforce so again you could split that down into levels couldn't you like the project team and maybe me (37:58) erm the Steering Group and the Project Team..

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E: Yep.

R: ...and then overall you as well you know if you think if you think everybody in business Solutions trusts what {refers to the Power Solutions Operations Director}'s views are etcetera.

E: Erm...

R: ...and senior management.

E: We'll go from the bottom-up so myself at that level obviously you trust in us to develop the database because we're using it on a daily basis so, there's the trust from the Project Managers to the Planners...

R: Yep.

E: ... I think there's trust from, I think we should say {refers to a Regional Manager}, erm, he monitors his trust on how much progress we're making in the Steering Meeting sort of thing so when he comes and sits in it he's like he wants to know how we've progressed you know how we're going with it and that sort of builds his trust level and then we're doing what we're supposed to be doing, if you know what I mean, you know what I'm getting at...

R: Yeah. Yeah.

E: ...Erm above that I don't really, I don't know what the trust is like between {refers to the Power Solutions Operations Director} to us. I know that they want it to happen so you could say there's a trust in that they're letting us get on with it erm, because they want it to happen really rather than trusting that we're going to succeed cause there's a lot of different projects going on well there's loads in Balfour's some you're involved in, IT systems and... I think there's a trust in letting people get on with how we succeed and that's all I can really say on that line.

R: Yeah. That's fine. That's fine. Erm, now the next one is probably worded a little bit ambiguously but what I'm basically trying to say is, do you think erm there's an effort either informally or formally erm whereby people will collectively get together to solve a problem.

E: For Primavera?

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R: Yeah, it could be. Or if you can't think of anything for Primavera erm then in general... and do you think that formal or informal group is put together sort of erm initiated by someone else or some other force or is it more the point where people identify that they've got a problem and go out and

E: I think because we've got that...

R: get the relevant people together to solve it?

E: Yeah. (41:26) I think cause we've got that group in place now. Erm which we put together, well it wasn't actually formed. It was like forced together really. Yeah, I think there's that group that people know that they can put questions to that they need answering. Erm, I don't think really there's any individual groups within that. We've got the Cabling side so me and Gunjan ask each other questions, help each other out cause we're working differently from Engineering But the User Group a lot of people know they can put questions to or any problems they've got. So what was the point, do people naturally form groups? I think we do have naturally formed groups because of what, the requirements of how we're going to use the system.

R: So you're talking about yourself and Gunjan there?

E: Yeah. In general really

R: Or particular type of work that you....

E: I think generally people form groups with people that they know may be able to help them solve problems and probably also on a level where they get on with them better. You know, they know that they can talk to me, and another helpful person, then they will form groups in that sense. Whereas if you didn't get on with a person or you didn't find them helpful you know things like that they're not going to form a group.^[46]

R: Yeah.

E: You know you don't get that, with that sort of ...

R: Yeah. Yeah.

E: I've got to say that people do naturally form groups based on social and business.

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R: That's together, you think?

E: Together, yeah. Definitely together. Which unless forced together people who don't get on aren't going to form a group, unless they're forced. You know what I mean...

R: Yeah.

E: You know what I mean.

R: Erm, *how do you feel upward communication impacts procedures and working practises in the business unit? So how much can you, do you think have an impact onto new ways of working which will result in new procedures?*

E: Myself?

R: Yeah.

E: I think if we can get a process which works and then show that to senior managers, show that it works and then get their approval then yeah, I can have an impact on procedures, you know our working practises have changed erm just a case of showing a working procedure to them and them approving it. I think that's what they want really to a certain degree. Yeah, we can have an impact on...[50]

R: So what you're trying to get at there is rather than erm {refers to the Power Solutions Operations Director} thinking, "I think this is the best way of working, I'm going to..." not that he would write a procedure, but "I'm going to tell somebody else to write a procedure that this is the way everybody should work", so form what you've said its more....

E: Erm...

R:.... The other way round in that you would, with a group of people put a recommendation forward. Am I right?

E: Er, yeah, to a certain level, I mean the senior managers obviously have got the power to reject and you know it depends how big the procedure is that we want to change if you know what I mean. I mean they're not going to As long as it's a logical procedure and we can show that it works then erm then I think you know we can change it as long as it's not something that impacts the business as a whole.

Appendix VI

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R: Like everybody put a proposal forward that we want to just work two hours a day [laughs].

E: Yeah that sort of thing, yeah.

R: But its got to be realistic!

E: It's got to be a logical and realistic procedure and I think you know they would listen. If it helps a bit {inaudible}.

R: OK that was the last question. Anything else you want to add?

E: Erm, not really. No.

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ID	Code	Sub Code	Comments	Alfy	Oscar	William	Edward	Jack	Thomas
5	CULTURE	Differences	Both Alpha & Beta indicate that the HQ culture is totally different to the Power Solutions business unit culture. <i>Of note is Epsilon's suggestion people being "empowered at the sharp-end".</i>	<u>....it's not the same.</u> In terms of the new merged organisation which has a heavy utilities flavour to it, there is now quite a different cultural background between the corporate head office and the business unit's culture	<u>It's totally two different cultures.</u> Erm the Sheffield, if you look at it like organisational matrix – yeh. Sheffield if you like, they run their projects at a very high level		I think Sheffield culture has very much centralised everything. Everything goes through Sheffield and is controlled by Sheffield. Erm whereas the culture obviously used to be decentralised so there's still a bit of opposition to that sort of culture from different branches, individual branches.	I think {laughs} <u>couldn't be further apart</u> is my comment there. Erm, yeh, I mean the culture at Head Office is very much, from what I've seen of it, command and control and is all referred back to someone higher up the chain.... I think there's a clear distinction. You got command and control versus <u>empowered at the sharp end.</u> My job as I see it is providing the link between the two and trying to influence back into the central processes .	After the merger there have been lots of changes in the process. This integration... lots of things have move on to Sheffield {inaudible} rather than so now less regional control of things, that the one thing that's changed. So that's the consensus over the entire.There are good things but I think there are disadvantages also more than the advantages, if everything integration for them causing lots of problems function wise, time wise, convenience wise so its erm but yes certain advantages are there too but there is should be a balancing how far you can go centralising things and what you should leave to the regional.

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ID	Code	Sub Code	Comments	Alfy	Oscar	William	Edward	Jack	Thomas
6	CULTURE	Bureaucracy	The HQ is a very process driven organisation based on structures and procedures.	So the culture within corporate head office is still, I think, is still <u>very much steeped in that process.</u> Er, everybody has got a job to do if you like and they're all pigeon holed and you can't step out of the box.					
7	CULTURE	Bureaucracy	Decision making in the organisation from the HQ perspective is very slow because everything needs to be authorised at the highest level of the organisation.	<u>...the decision-making becomes very slow because its down to one or two individuals</u>	<u>Directors have to sign everything off.</u>			culture we've been merged with erm for me is very much "do as you're told and don't ask questions" culture	

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8	LEADERSHIP	Empowerment	In contrast to the HQ (Sheffield culture) is more involving. Words such as open and flexible, delegation and inclusive are used by Alpha Beta and Epsilon. The culture within the business unit responsibility is delegated down through the organisational structure. In addition job roles are broader in their content to get an all round picture. People are given the authority to carry out their activities.	Whereas, the business, our business unit in Power Solutions I think is more, is more <u>open and flexible</u> . And er, you do <u>cross the boundaries quite often between what your role</u> and you know, what the needs of the business are. You can't, I don't think you can afford to be too blinkered... in your approach.	<u>...we delegate down the line</u> so therefore what we've got here is the top person and then the functions and then people <u>within the functions who've got the authority to do things....</u> They're multi-skilled erm they're very well qualified technically they're very well qualified and erm the whole culture is you just can't give em one job to do because they'd just get bored you know they're Engineers, they're Draughtsmen, they want to do lots of different things. Erm looking at the Sheffield its square pegs, square holes you get on with that and that's your bit what you do. The other big culture difference is on erm in the Transmission we tend to do everything ourselves so if you like we start with a blank sheet of paper for most contracts. Sheffield like to look			So it's a very inclusive culture and I think that's the nature of particularly the electricity supply industry in terms of the environment we're working in.	
9	CULTURE	Bureaucracy	HQ is described as 'dictatorial', 'inflexible', 'hierarchical' and more bureaucratic.	Well, erm to my way, <u>it's dictatorial</u> in its approach. Erm, which doesn't lend itself to be particularly <u>flexible or erm particularly involving.</u>	The <u>hierarchical matrix of how they delegate and control projects</u> is just totally different its erm its apples and pears. So that's why we've got all these problems at the moment I would suggest.	something that's driven by Sheffield or whatever but erm one of the things that's coming out of the whole merger is there's a greater prevalence of paperwork and bureaucracy		So I've had subcontractor control taken back into central procurement, taken back into centre. Not bad things, but instead of selling it as a good thing, it's just "That's it, you will comply"	

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ID	Code	Sub Code	Comments	Alfy	Oscar	William	Edward	Jack	Thomas
10	CULTURE	Control		<p>and erm you just can't afford to have that approach really that's worth, that's the size of what we are now.... And it's very diverse as well, it's not just a UK business. Erm, I mean the old utilities business was pretty much an England and Wales business, in fact it was probably an England business cause you know they had little enough in Scotland, didn't have a fat lot in Wales either...erm so <u>it was very parochial.</u> And the business was set-up to support that and now it's suddenly gone from that to being an international company. And</p>	<p><u>In today's world that has to go to Phil Brookes {MD BBUS} regardless of if he's on £20,000 or £50,000.</u></p>				

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ID	Code	Sub Code	Comments	Alfy	Oscar	William	Edward	Jack	Thomas
11	CULTURE	Differences	There are obvious differences in the working methods of the business unit and HQ. The business unit relies on the abilities of its workforce whereas the HQ employes people with lesser skills, which can easily be replaced. Epsilon describes this as a production line culture. Both management and non-management informants identify this as being the differentiator.	they're alliances and to some extent of fairly long duration, one the strategy is arrived at the secure that type of work, it moves from being a business to being a delivery tool. You know, whereas our business model isn't the same as that. It's constantly trying to secure the workload for the business and therefore the involvement remote from head office has to be significant otherwise it just doesn't work.	The Sheffield culture is erm, have very motivated, well looked after managers and then, if you like, all the shop floor people all the people on the coal face, they're all they're given tasks that, if you like, they can be replaced easily. It's a very sort of erm, I don't know, its more like a call centre if you like type of thing. They don't let anybody get too big in any areas so if they get a problem they can just replace. Now on our side of things we sort of we look after, we, we believe the people at the coalface more and you can tell this by the salary scales of the graded people against management. And if you look at that against the Sheffield er management salary scales and their operatives there's a big gap.	differences in backgrounds, the differences in working practices and so on. Which seems to be that's the main difference I think.		it's frameworks you tend to get a culture where it's a production line and you can approach this production line, cause that's what it is you're going to go through a village and you're going to replace 250 Km of gas pipe, off you go – replace 250 Km... You plan it, you execute it, you put the yellow pipe in, jobs a good 'en. There's very little design involved from what I can gather, erm, minimal compared with the type of work we have to do. Take Beauy Denny as an extreme example – I think that necessitates that. I don't know if that's answered the question but certainly the environment's quite predictable.	

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ID	Code	Sub Code	Comments	Alfy	Oscar	William	Edward	Jack	Thomas
12	CULTURE	Adaptability to change	<p>The <u>question relates to the business units ability to adapt to its environment including the customers needs.</u> Not surprising then that empowerment works in the Power Solutions business unit as the team needs to be flexible in its approach to different customer needs. Alpha, Beta and Epsilon are all of the same opinion.</p>	<p>You need to have a flexible, erm, approach to your customer base...</p>	<p>Now, we need that flexibility. If we're going to be really competitive we need to be flexible look at things change the way we do things.</p>			<p>Frameworks (mid term contracts) consist of predictable generic repetitive activities whereas project work (undertaken by Power Solutions) are large scale complex activites. Project work is also shorter term but larger scale and tends to be more reactive than planned.</p>	

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ID	Code	Sub Code	Comments	Alfy	Oscar	William	Edward	Jack	Thomas
14	CULTURE	Dominance	Alpha, Beta and Epsilon are of the opinion that the HQ is attempting to impose their culture onto the business unit however both are adamant that this is not working. Alpha and Epsilon obviously feel that the business unit culture is strong enough to overcome this attempt to impose the new culture. Both Gamma and Delta are aware of the 'friction' caused by this cultural difference.	I mean its quite clear, erm that in the old utilities sector, the most dominant aspect is the Head Office. Erm, I'm not entirely certain that that is the case within the business unit within Power Solutions and that I think and that is what leads to a huge amount of friction... ..you have that conflict, because you have that different approach and different culture and it doesn't, it doesn't, it just makes life hard really rather than anything else.	the more dominant at the moment, hence things not going very well is the Sheffield culture because they're trying to impose their organisational matrix and business model onto Derby and I would say you couldn't reverse it, you couldn't impose the way we work onto them. Theirs works for their type of business because its been built up over I suppose I don't know four or five years were ours has been developed over 30 years of keep driving the responsibility down the line	there's inevitably going to be differences in the way that people carry various activities out and as we try and commonise there's going to be friction and resistance and all that sort of stuff.	The individual business units are in the transition process of changing to the centralised process at the moment but they are sort of opposing it... ..They are trying to create their own culture, that they want to impose on the whole of Power Solutions.. which is a centralised culture where everything goes through Sheffield office....which is the all seeing eye of everything basically. That's the way I see the culture anyway.Well Sheffield because they are the Head Office. We have merged with Utility Solutions and that is the Head Office now in Sheffield so the dominant culture is the centralised system and that's what's being opposed by everyone else but that's the way it has to be, you know.Personally I think the fully centralised system and culture isn't gonna work fully. I think it's going to come to some point where things certain things are going to go back decentralised back to the branches, individual branches.	My concern is at the moment is that the machine bureaucracy is becoming more dominant. People are starting to give up the fight, if you like, of being "Oh well ok fine, if it takes me three days to get a pump, I don't care anymore cause no one else seems to care, it doesn't matter. I've rung the machine up, the machine isn't delivering the pump, its no skin off my nose, I'll sit in the van for three days". And there's a danger at the moment that we're walking towards that kind of culture..... I think in time erm and I think again given the way group and things {inaudible} and I think given time and a bit of patience the more dominant culture, the one that will prevail will have to prevail is going to be the one of an empowered organisation.... it's a challenging time and I think its encumberant on us to try and change the culture to what we'd like it to be. We've got to engage with it.	I think that we will definitely change over time. It will be a little bit more flexible in terms of... in terms of ..of centralised. Er, so I guess after sometime it will be more relaxed and more er decentralised, it will go in that direction.

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17	CULTURE		Re-inforces [14]	I think the, the Head Office will have to adapt slightly and will have to empower more, er and will have to be less dictatorial in their approach	it can't work. It can't work. Because there's no erm, because they require directors to be involved in all the decision making it basically is the bottleneck of all work being done.			But however we are influencing change, we're not influencing the way that the team interacts with us and its being done in a way, my usual subtle way where its not necessarily us having a big ball out row with them. (31:29) It's us challenging	
18	CULTURE	Adaptability to change	The two statements here contradict each other.	Yeah, I think it's quite adaptable to change, cause it's been through a huge amount of change so by its very nature its used to change. Er, if you think about, just look at the, at Power Networks in particular. Erm, I mean in the space of, really in the space of 3 or 4 years, we went through massive changes.	I suspect Sheffield is very adaptable to change because it's a lower order and they don't have, its more narrow in their skill base because when they say now you will do it this way, because they got like an authoritian way of doing things talking to people... you know working with them. So I suspect that they if you like drive change with a big stick where if there's one thing that we're poor at here is changing.	Well I think it's very adaptable, if you just consider over the past year with the merger and all that.	Well the business is changing all the time and the nature of our works I mean I think we do adapt to different situations we've obviously got to react to fault work and stuff like that. So we are very adaptable to change and meeting clients needs. So I think we are pretty adaptable on a whole	Erm the issue with all of that said, well the answer to that is, well yes it will change over time. How adaptable is the organisation to change? I think our part is extremely adaptable to change. We've had every process and system ripped apart over the last 18 months erm with the exception of Primavera {laughs}.	it is adaptable to change but er it is being adopted but with some difficulty not very easy to adopt to change so, the system is being adopted... adapted. And but certainly, er, if you change something you have got some difficulties. In the way so you try to overcome that difficulty either by trying to revert that change or to modify that change I feel again that {inaudible} is capable of adapting to change but with some maybe modification.

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ID	Code	Sub Code	Comments	Alfy	Oscar	William	Edward	Jack	Thomas
19	CULTURE	Adaptability to change		it wasn't long before that was evolving and changing you know and we had a northern region and a southern region er in Cabling. Er and that got merged into the one. Erm and having put Cabling and Transmission together we then break it up and split it out again so you have a Transmission Division and a Cabling Division.					I would say, er, fairly unpredictable with respect of time. Times and resources as well

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21	CULTURE	Adaptability to change	<p>The opinion of both Alpha & Beta is that generally people within the business unit don't accept change easily. Alpha gives an example of a financial system (Oracle) which was chosen by group. The motive in this was for BB group to have clear visibility of financial information. However group gave a free rein to its Operating Companies and the Oracle became tailored to suit the existing processes of each business unit! My feeling is that if there had been some involvement in the choice of financial system early on this might have been avoided.</p>	<p>we chose Mentor as an operating system as a you know finance package when we first formed Balfour Beatty Power Networks and so we chose that, erm it wasn't chosen for us whereas Oracle has been chosen for us and its amazing the difference in approach to a certain extent between the two. Primavera, we chose, we've chosen Primavera. Not all the business has, as we know but the majority of the business has and I think that, that makes a big difference because you buy in to the change process don't you. Whereas if you have change forced upon you, sometimes it can be slightly more difficult to accept.</p>	<p>No I think you can see it because there's no competition, we're set in our ways, we don't want to change because people don't see why we need to change, that's the way we've always done it, it's worked before why do you want to change it. But I don't think they can see the bigger picture. Erm, we can't scale up what we do that's always a big sign that you're in danger.</p>		<p>we've had a lot of sort of people not understanding really rather than opposition as to what it can do for them and I suppose mainly the Engineers really who are a big part of it not in the culture of you know keeping programmes up-to-date.I would say that the old school, what you call the old school, they've only just got laptops... they're not going to be very adaptable to it because they're not used to technology.</p>	<p>In terms of giving people chance to get involved in the projects. Well, again its been inclusive all the way along really hasn't it. So, you know you sit on the Steering Group with us and one of the driving forces I think. Initially there was resistance to cross the piest from the individuals to get involved and once they've been involved it now having the opposite effect, more of a driving effect</p>	<p>It necessitates flexibility...because it evolves by the time, everything evolves by the time. So you have to adopt the change.</p>