



**THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING AGILITY AS A COMPONENT OF SUSTAINED
BUSINESS SUCCESS**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this treatise is to determine if learning agility is an important component for business success. With the arrival of new technology, change and information explosion the rate of uncertainty is increasing. Leaders are challenged to present continuous change and need to be able to adapt and develop their competencies to remain relevant. The VUCA world increased the complexity of the environment and provide volatility, uncertainty, complexity and are ambiguous.

A significant amount of research has been done to define learning agility. The three drivers of learning agility are change, information explosion and rapid response during a crisis. The concept of learning agility can be defined as the readiness and ability to learn from experience and to utilise the learning competency to perform successfully under new environments. The seven-model framework was developed to assess how leaders cope under change. The three leadership competencies are intellectual intelligence, managerial intelligence, and emotional intelligence. Studies shows that emotional intelligence will be an important competency a leader can have and together with learning agility, will provide success to any organisation.

The researcher believes that an individual who is not learning agile will not succeed in the new fast-changing environment. The term learning agile is rather a new concept and the influence it has on the organisation is complex. For leaders to succeed, their mindset needs to be adaptable and willing to change. Training and learning from experience will assist the leader to move forward and be an agile leader. A key success factor for organisations is to identify and recruit learning agile individuals to drive competitiveness and enhance relevance in the market.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF ANNEXURES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xi

CHAPTER 1

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT	2
1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS	3
1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	3
1.4.1. Primary objective.....	3
1.4.2. Secondary objective.....	3
1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	4
1.6. DATA ANALYSIS	4
1.7. DEMARCATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY.....	5
1.8. ETHICAL ISSUES	5
1.9. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	5
1.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY	6

CHAPTER 2

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

2.1. INTRODUCTION.....	7
------------------------	---

2.2. RATIONALE FOR LEARNING AGILITY	7
2.2.1. Change	8
2.2.2. Information Explosion.....	9
2.2.3. Rapid Response during a crisis.....	10
2.3. LEARNING AGILITY	10
2.3.1. Defining learning agility	10
2.3.2. The importance of leadership learning in organisations	11
2.3.3. Executive derailment.....	12
2.3.4. Factors of learning agility	12
2.3.4.1. People agility	13
2.3.4.2. Change agility.....	13
2.3.4.3. Result agility	13
2.3.4.4. Mental Agility	13
2.4. IDENTIFYING AGILE LEADERS	16
2.5. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN AGILE MINDSET AND BUREAUCRATIC MINDSET	18
2.5.1. Agile mindset.....	18
2.5.2. Bureaucratic mindset	18
2.6. DISTINCTION BETWEEN DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP APPROACHES	19
2.6.1. Trait approach to leadership	19
2.6.2. Behavioural approach to leadership	20
2.6.3. Situational leadership approach	21
2.7. DISTINCTION OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES	23
2.7.1. Intellectual Intelligence (IQ).....	23
2.7.2. Managerial Intelligence (MQ)	24
2.7.3. Emotional Intelligence (EQ)	25
2.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY	27

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

3.1. INTRODUCTION.....	29
3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM	29
3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH	29
3.4. SAMPLING DESIGN	30
3.5. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT	31
3.5.1 Questionnaires	32
3.5.2. Interviews	32
3.6. DATA COLLECTION.....	32
3.7. DATA ANALYSIS	33
3.7.1 Generating Themes: Particularities, Generalisations and Considerations ..	34
3.7.2. Coding of Themes	34
3.7.2.1. Open coding	34
3.7.2.2. Axial coding	34
3.7.2.3. Selective coding	35
3.8. REPORTING AND SYNTHESIS	36
3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	36
3.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY	37

CHAPTER 4
THE EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION.....	38
4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS.....	38
4.3. THEMES	39
4.3.1. Theme 1: What defines an agile leader?.....	39
4.3.2. Theme 2: Openness to agility	42
4.3.3. Theme 3: Organisational support.....	46
4.3.4. Theme 4: Strategies and mistakes induced by change.....	47

4.4. ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	50
4.4.1. Secondary Research Question 1: Identify leadership competencies for agile leaders?	50
4.4.2. Secondary Research Question 2: What leadership approach supports learning agility?	50
4.4.3. Secondary Research Question 3: How can organisations develop an agile learning culture?	51
4.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY	51

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 1

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

5.1. INTRODUCTION.....	52
5.2. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS	52
5.2.1. Findings on demographic analysis	52
5.2.2. Findings of the primary objective	53
5.2.3. Findings of the secondary objectives	53
5.2.4. Summary of findings from questionnaire	55
5.2.5. Summary of findings of research questions	57
5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS	59
5.3.1. Recommendations for organisations	59
5.3.2. What leaders can do to enhance their agility	60
5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	61
5.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	61
5.6. CONCLUSION	62
REFERENCES.....	63

LIST OF ANNEXURES

Appendix A: Cover Letter and Questionnaire	68
Appendix B: Ethics Clearance	70
Appendix C: Interview Questions and Reponses	71
Appendix D: Turnitin Report	157
Appendix E: Language Editor Letter	158
Appendix F: Permission to Submit	159

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Original conceptual model of learning agility	13
Figure 2.2: Revised model of learning agility.....	14
Figure 2.3: Seven-factor model of learning agility	15
Figure 2.4: Situational model.....	21
Figure 3.1: Linking questions to categories	35
Figure 4.1: Summary of values per respondent	40
Figure 4.2: Respondents' leadership style	42
Figure 4.3: Qualities of an agile mindset	43
Figure 4.4: Summary of mistakes made during change	48

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: The Agile mindset vs Bureaucratic mindset.....	19
Table 2.2: Summary of types of managerial competencies.....	24
Table 3.1: Positions held by/Experience of Respondents	31
Table 3.2: Themes and categories retrieved from interviews	36
Table 5.1: Research Findings from Questionnaire	55

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

LA	:	Learning Agility
IQ	:	Intelligence Quotient
MR	:	Main research question
SQ	:	Secondary questions
IPA	:	Interpretative phenomenological analysis
ADT	:	Attention Deficit Trait
CCL	:	Centre for Creative Leadership
MQ	:	Managerial Intelligence
EQ	:	Emotional Intelligence
VUCA	:	Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous

CHAPTER 1

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The arrival of new technology and the increasing rate of change produces a new wave of uncertainty. The gap between how a leader retains information in his/her conscious memory and the rate at which the information grows, increase exponentially and the pace of change is hard to comprehend.

Moore's law which originated around 1965 states that processing speeds multiply every 18 months. This adds more pressure on leaders to consider the bigger picture (Spacey, 2016). The traditional leadership styles, charismatic and bureaucratic, will fade away and a new level of leadership is required to manage a diverse workforce.

Leaders are challenged to keep up with the pace and complexities presented by continuous change. Today's leaders need to adapt and develop their competencies to remain relevant in a continuously changing, complex and ambiguous world (Gesell, 2010). There is growing recognition that today's organisational leaders must develop agility as a core capability to effectively meet the challenges brought about by rapid change (Dai, De Meuse, & Tang, 2013).

De Meuse, Dai and Hallenbeck (2010) indicate that the level of intelligence and achievement are high in both successful and unsuccessful executives - the sole difference is their flexibility and adaptability. These statements support the need for creative development approaches at all levels, but especially at executive level.

According to Jahan (2016) organisations need to eliminate incorrect traditional management beliefs and rather incorporate modern management perceptions and rational knowledge into their belief system.

Learning Agility (LA) can be defined as the ability and willingness to learn from experience, and to subsequently apply those lessons, in order to perform successfully in new or changing contexts to achieve desired results (De Meuse, 2008). It is a

mindset and corresponding collection of practices that allow people to continually develop, grow and utilise new strategies that will equip them for the increasingly changing environment they face in the organisation. Learning agility can be defined as one of the key success factors during this VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) business environment (Orr, 2012).

Learning agility on an executive level is more complex than many other general learning theories. According to Antonacopoulou and Bento (2004), teaching leadership might transmit knowledge, but it does not aid in the development of leaders. A possible explanation could also be inadequate assessment regarding development issues and obstacles.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In a changing world, organisations are searching for opportunities to gain a competitive advantage. Advances in technology, increasingly informed customers, information overload and new regulatory requirements of the world economy have led to a world marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. This type of environment is what is referred to as a VUCA world, making it very difficult for organisations to gain a sustainable competitive advantage (De Groote, 2011).

During the 20th century, autocratic leadership was often the norm in most organisations. In an autocratic system, the management of the organisation makes all the decisions and accepts little or no input from the other employees. Decisions are made based on the leader's views and experience, and these leaders have complete control of the group. Today, workplaces tend to be more collaborative, making an authoritarian style of leadership unfavourable (Gitsham & Wackrill, 2012).

During the 20th century, people thought they needed to master a specific profession to receive promotion and that hard skills were the key to advancement (Graham, 2015). Intelligence Quotient (IQ) was the one measure used to determine if a leader will outperform the rest of the individuals. The economy is moving from an Industrial Age model to a post-industrial model where hard skills will no longer be the only skills

required. Automation and artificial intelligence will result in a greater proportion of jobs relying on soft skills.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question (MR) was constructed based on the problem statement given in the previous section. The main research question is given as:

MR: Is learning agility a component of sustained organisational success?

To fully analyse the main research problem effectively, the following secondary questions (SQ) are identified:

What are the leadership competencies of agile leaders?

What leadership approach supports learning agility?

How can organisations develop an agile learning culture?

1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.4.1. Primary objective

The primary objective of this research is to identify whether learning agility is a necessary component for a successful organisation by determining the leadership style that is needed in any given situation, understanding what an organisation can do to assist in the developing of an agile culture and identifying the skills and competencies which is needed to identify change in a work environment.

1.4.2. Secondary objective

To achieve the above-mentioned primary objective, the following secondary research objectives are pursued:

- Describe the factors of learning agility.
- Identifying the traits of agile leaders.
- Establish the difference between an agile mindset and bureaucratic mindset.
- Investigate the distinction between different leadership approaches.

- Interviewing leaders in both the same and different industries to establish a trend between them and how agile they are to change.
- Using Atlas.ti to transcribe the raw data for data analysis.
- Interpret findings, draw conclusions, and make recommendations for future study.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was followed. This incorporates a psychological qualitative research approach with an idiographic focus. It aims to offer insight to be able to explore, investigate and interpret the experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2013). This approach assists to capture the uniqueness of the traits and skills that determine how a leader identifies change.

In terms of interpretive analysis, the methodology focuses on the factors that may influence and assist a leader's perspective on how agile they are. This research approach provides the foundation for gaining a deeper understanding of the secondary objectives in pursuit of reaching the primary objective. The secondary objectives, in support of the primary objective, aims at establishing a deeper understanding of the perspectives exhibited by individuals. Given the above motivation, this approach is deemed best suited to this study.

1.6. DATA ANALYSIS

Data was collected from nine mid- to top leaders in the private sector in South Africa. They were selected based on their experience in leadership, individual behaviour and how they lead through change. Thirteen open-ended questions were used in one-on-one interviews, using an appreciative enquiry approach to gather their insights. The data was transcribed and Atlas.ti used for the thematic analysis of each question.

1.7. DEMARCATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY

In this study, demarcation of the field of study refers to the mid- to top leaders in the private sector of South Africa. These leaders are expert practitioners in the field of leadership development and individual behaviour.

Nine respondents were selected from three of the biggest organisations in South Africa. Two of the organisations are in the consumer goods industry and one in vehicle manufacturing. All three organisations are more than 50 years old and have experienced a few changes over the years.

1.8. ETHICAL ISSUES

The research topic was submitted to the Faculty Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences for approval. The study is classified as a negligible/low risk study. The ethics clearance reference number is H19-BES-BUS-059. Proof of the Ethics Clearance can be found under Appendix B.

1.9. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter one provides an introductory overview and explanation of the scope of the research, including the background and rationale for the study, the problem statement, research objectives and methodology.

Chapter two covers a review of the relevant literature, looking at research covering the factors of learning agility, identifying agile leaders, considering the distinction between different leadership approaches and distinctions of leadership competencies for agile leaders.

Chapter three explains the research design and methodology. This includes the research paradigm, research approach and method of the study, the measuring instrument, and ethical issues.

Chapter four reflects on the empirical results obtained from the qualitative data. This chapter includes the research method used, the data collection method applied and the data analysis.

Chapter five deliberates on the results and the implications for leadership and management consideration. This chapter includes the findings of the study, the limitations and recommendations of the study, and possibilities for future quantitative research.

1.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provides a background to the purpose of the study, the research questions, research problems and research methodology. The next chapter provides the theoretical overview of the key themes covered in the study namely, definition of learning agility, identifying agile leaders, difference between agile and bureaucratic mindset and the distinction of leaders approaches and leadership competencies.

CHAPTER 2

LEADERSHIP AGILITY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The first chapter covered the problem statement, research questions, the primary and secondary objectives, research methodology and data analysis. The main RQ of this study is to establish if learning agility is a component of sustained organisational success?

The purpose of this chapter is to meet the first four research objectives which includes examining the traits of agile leaders, factors of learning agility, the difference between an agile/bureaucratic mindset and leadership approaches.

This chapter will also examine the introductory literature on learning agility, defining learning agility, identifying agile leaders, and distinguishing leadership competencies to assist the researcher to answer the research questions.

2.2. RATIONALE FOR LEARNING AGILITY

The term VUCA was first introduced in 1991 by the U.S. Army (Gruwez, 2017). Today's business environment has changed in a very similar manner and the 20th century rules will not apply and have become obsolete.

The word VUCA can be described as:

Volatile: Change is continuous, and the world is becoming more unstable today. It is impossible to determine the impact it will have and what the causes are.

Uncertain: It is becoming impossible to predict certain events and how it will unfold, past experiences lose their relevance.

Complex: Situations and the implications are multi-layered and difficult to understand.

Ambiguous: Change is not clear and hard to determine. The demands of organisations and the management are more inconsistent and challenge the personal values of the individuals.

In a world with uncertain and complex environments change, information explosion and the rapid response during crisis is the drivers for learning agility.

2.2.1. Change

Change identifies and adopt corporate strategies, structures, procedures, and technologies to deal with changes in external conditions (Connelly, 2008). The past is no longer an accurate predictor of the future. It takes ever more individual and organisational learning to deliver intelligent responses to a developing customer, shareholder, and stakeholder expectations. Change management is to implement an innovative strategy to deal with variable and sudden changes. It is critical that each leader of an organisation works collaboratively and maximise their capacity. During change there are various people with different views and personalities, and a leader must lead the team in the right direction.

The below four basic definitions for change management speak to this new way of managing:

- The task of managing change (reactive to predictive conditions): This is the most well-known definition of change management and can be divided into two segments. The first makes reference to a change based on a systematic program to increase efficiency; the second refers to the accountability of an organisation to the changes which the organisation has little or no control over in the situation e.g., socio-political changes or competitors.
- Scope of specialised task implementation (considering the significant differences among employees in terms of competence and skills): This refers to organisations who manage the change and its approaches. Organisations have similar principles but different ways to approach change (Landroom, Howell, & Price, 2006).
- Scientific content (including models, methods, techniques and other tools): The concept of change management has extended to other principles such as psychology, sociology, business management and economic management.

- Control mechanism (including conditions, standards, processes and approaches): Change management may be a very complex process with no specific approach. When the correct mechanism is implemented, change is either pre-planned or a technical necessity. Usually, the environmental demands play the most significant role (Mollahosseini & Mostafavi, 2007).

2.2.2. Information explosion

Information explosion can be described as the quick increase in the amount of published information. Wilson (2001) defines this as information overload and a situation in which leaders are overwhelmed with available information. Trying to process a voluminous amount of information, with limited cognitive information-processing capacity and inadequate time, result in information explosion.

Information overload could lead to stressful situations for leaders and Tamilchelvan (2019) found fallouts associated with the explosion:

- Exhaustion: with varied information available, prioritising urgent matters becomes difficult. Tension between the team can lead to unproductivity.
- Dull cognitive skills: information overload causes Attention Deficit Trait (ADT), which is a neurological phenomenon. Leaders with ADT struggles to specify project priorities, implement time management and making smart organisational decisions.

Information explosion must be controlled and Tamilchelvan (2019) created the following strategies:

- Filtering – sifting through information to remove irrelevant information.
- Withdrawing – withdrawing from a task and providing autonomy to the team and assigning a task to them appropriately.
- Queueing – prioritise tasks according to their importance and relevance.
- Multiple Channels – creation of a tactical communication plan.

2.2.3. Rapid response during a crisis

The coronavirus may be one of the most challenging crises for a leader. The pandemic presents a type of risk and level of uncertainty. A crisis is particularly challenging for leaders to respond to due to the unpredictability it has. Besides the obvious decision to select the correct path, leaders also face the monumental task of reassuring the employees about the future. One wrong move could erode trust and unleash unrest.

In an article in Korn Ferry (2020), adaptive leadership with well-developed crisis management skills are needed to succeed. In ordinary times leaders makes courageous decisions but during a crisis, leadership mandates that leaders must be willing to take drastic actions and launch innovative ideas.

Adaptive leaders strive to find a balance between empathy and execution and show a remarkable level of resilient leadership. Adaptive leaders show that communication is vital and that the communication should match the volatility of the situation and offer clarity and accountability.

2.3. LEARNING AGILITY

2.3.1. Defining learning agility

During the 1970s and early 1980s Doug Bray et al. recognised that it was impossible to derive an identifiable list of predisposing characteristics of successful leaders. They conducted several studies, and the overall result was that leaders, who had been classified low in terms of potential, frequently were more successful than expected (De Meuse, et al., 2010). Sternberg in the late 1980's contended that practical intelligence is the ability to solve everyday problems by using knowledge gained from experience to purposefully adapt to, shape and select the environment (Forsythe, 2019).

The concept of learning agility was developed in the early 2000's within the practitioner world. It can be defined as the readiness and ability to learn from experience and to utilise the learning competency to perform successfully under new or first-time environments (De Meuse, 2017).

In previous studies done over the past decades it was observed that learning and development requires that employees move away from their comfort zones, their habits and their routines. Employees who would “learn from doing” applies the knowledge to experience to develop new skills and new ways of thinking. This reveals that the readiness and ability to learn from experience separates high-potential leaders from others (Schwartz, 2012).

The formulation of learning agility is established largely in two different streams of research performed at the Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL). The first stream is the importance of Leadership Learning in Organisations. In this study they examined why leadership learning plays an important in the success of an organisation. The Sternberg – Wagner thinking style tool provides the second stream which indicates the reasons why executives derail (Martinez-Romera, 2018).

2.3.2. The importance of leadership learning in organisations

By the early 1980s, leadership seemed to be strongly influenced by gaining leadership experience. At this time, researchers had limited knowledge of how experience develops managers. The CCL performed several studies to address this gap - they investigated how executives learn from their work experiences. One of the important findings of these studies done by CCL are that employees differ in their ability to learn from experience and that individuals were differentiated greatly in their ability to learn from experience. During the past several years, a few publications supported the importance of learning from experience. DeRue and Wellman (2009) found that leadership-skill development started to lessen when an individual lack the necessary learning orientation. Benjamin and O'Reilly (2011) stated that leadership transitions depended on the ability to learn from the challenges brought about by change. De Meuse et al. (2010) observed that, if an individual gets promoted, most of the assignments are novel, ambiguous and challenging. Individuals need to possess several competencies to benefit from such diverse experiences.

2.3.3. Executive derailment

Research that outlined the development of learning agility was conducted at CCL in 1988 and this research investigated successful executives compared to derailed executives. Derailed executives can be described as those individuals who are identified as high-potentials and expected to achieve great heights, but who ultimately fail (Baker, et al., 2018).

Hogan, Hogan and Kaiser's (2000) research indicate that both successful and derailed executives (1) were very bright, (2) had been identified as high potentials early in their career, (3) possess outstanding records of achievements and (4) were ambitious and willing to sacrifice. One factor of derailment was observed. They found that derailed executives were unable or unwilling to change or adapt. Studies done by CCL (2013), indicates that derailed leaders fail to make the mental transition between different job opportunities, while some have not adapted to the culture of the organisation. The resistance to learn new qualities can lead to incompetence as the leader's knowledge and abilities are too limited and may be obsolete.

2.3.4. Factors of learning agility.

Learning agility is not just a single trait, but a comprehensive area that consist of at least five phases of learning. Each individual is likely to have relative skills and weaknesses in different categories. Lombardo and Eichinger (2000) created a conceptual framework consisting of the following factors (see figure 2.1). This framework can be used to assess leaders on how well they cope with change.



Figure 2.1: Original conceptual model of learning agility proposed by Lombardo and Eichinger, (2011)

2.3.4.1. People agility

Individuals with high people agility can learn from experience. They manage well under pressure and change and will assist others in solving problems. Individuals that portray this characteristic understand the value of different perspectives and surround themselves with a dynamic and diverse team.

2.3.4.2. Change agility

Individuals with change agility are curious and seek new or first-time situations. They encourage skill building activities and will develop new ideas which they present to the team before implementing the change.

2.3.4.3. Result agility

Individuals with result agility achieve results in difficult situations and inspire the rest of team to perform beyond normal. Individuals who have this skill set perform well in new situations, with the assistance of resourcefulness and inspiring teams.

2.3.4.4. Mental agility

Mentally agile individuals are curious and are constantly seeking a fresh connection. These individuals will navigate a difficult situation through a fresh point of view and

have no problem with the complexity of the situation. They will explain the process to others in a way which they will understand. These individuals may not be smart or intelligent, but they have life experience.



Figure 2.2: Revised model of learning agility (De Meuse Dai, Zwedie, Page, Clark and Eichinger, 2011)

The approach to measuring learning agility has changed over the years and a fifth factor, self-awareness, was developed by De Meuse, Dai, Zwedie, Page, Clark and Eichinger (2011). This factor was originally embedded in the “people agility factor” but research proved the importance to be a stand-alone factor (see figure 2. 2).

According to McCall (2010), experience is crucial for development. It is, however, not the most important factor. The internalisation of and reflection on experience makes the difference. Based on several after-event reviews, reflection, retrospection and self-awareness are the crucial elements of experience.

Individuals who have high self-awareness characteristics tend to be more modest and are aware of their strengths, weaknesses and blind spots. Without self-awareness, the learning and development phase can be mindless reactions to the environment. The lack of self-awareness is the single biggest factor in managerial derailment.

Recent research showed that feedback responsiveness and environmental mindfulness can be added to the learning agility concept. See figure 2.3.



Figure 2.3: Seven-factor model of learning agility (De Meuse & Feng, 2015)

Sheldon, Dunning and Ames (2014) found that managers who are high performers, tend to take corrective actions based on feedback. Receiving feedback from other individuals can assist to identify lessons from experience that, otherwise, would go unnoticed if the individual were left to process the experience on their own. According to De Meuse and Feng (2015), this element focuses directly on taking initiative to enhance skills and alter behaviours once self-awareness occurs.

The concept of mindfulness has been researched in clinical psychology and personality literature. It can be described as a state of non-judgmental attentiveness and awareness of moment-to-moment experiences (Hülshager, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013).

When individuals can perceive through mindfulness, it distances them from the content of their awareness, enabling them to see their experience of the present moment with greater clarity and objectivity. Mindfulness is proactive and is being mentally engaged and aware of one's environment.

According to Ruderman and Clerkin (2015) mindfulness can be very helpful in developing high potentials. Environmental mindfulness can be described as the ability of individuals to be fully observant of their external surroundings and are focussed on changing job responsibilities and requirements in new organisational roles (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney, 2006).

Environmental mindfulness focusses on the external encouragements, whereas self-awareness concentrates on the internal encouragements. Both these factors contribute additionally to an individual's overall level of learning agility. The seven-factor model proposed by De Meuse and Feng (2015) has the two traits which a leader need to be learning agile, thus this model will be used in the rest of the study.

2.4. IDENTIFYING AGILE LEADERS

Agile learners thrive on change and have the skills and qualities to excel within the virtual corporations of the 21st Century (Trautlein, 2016). It is necessary to identify agile learners before agile leaders can be identified.

De Meuse et al. (2010) observed that the assessment of learning agility will likely become a crucial component of talent management practices in most organisations during this decade.

Durgin (2006) stated that the best way to identify agile learners is to identify the four R's:

Resourcefulness: ability to see connections

Relationship: listen to others

Resilient: stay in control

Result Driven: focused under pressure.

The qualities that outline agile learners are usually found in agile leaders and are to some degree predictive of leadership ability (Woller, 2006). The ability to create relationships may allow a leader to participate in the workflow, but also provide the ability to direct. Resilience allows the leader to adapt to any situation and provides the confidence to ask questions and seek feedback. Resourcefulness and result driven attributes motivate the leader to be disciplined and focused.

Qualities of an agile leader (Michigan State University, 2019):

1. Good quality of distributed leadership.
2. Judgement and agility in decision-making.
3. Communication and coordination to lead others.

4. Knowledge and experience can provide techniques to make the organisation sustainable.

Adopting an agile mindset requires the development of certain cognitive and emotional qualities. These qualities develop through well-documented levels of personal development.

The leadership culture in an organisation influences the behaviour of the individual. It is necessary to assess the agility level that dominates the organisational culture, while determining the agility level of the individual (Joiner, 2009).

Learning agility consists of three leadership cultures (Joiner, 2009):

Expert (55% of leaders)

Achiever (35% of leaders)

Catalyst (10% of leaders)

Expert: the leaders believe that they are respected and lead with authority and expertise. Organisation improvements are mainly tactical and incremental. Managers tend to be overly involved in their employees' work. As a result, managers have little time to approach their own responsibilities.

Achiever: an achiever leader communicates their objectives and ensures that the correct people and processes are in place to obtain the goals. This is a customer-centric culture that encourages and rewards customer-focused teamwork. Key stakeholders are involved in change initiatives.

Catalyst: typical characteristics of this type of leadership includes teamwork, critical thinking and participation. Leaders expand their roles to that of a coach and always provide feedback that encourages and promotes change.

The pace of change and degree of interdependence in today's global organisational environment demands that senior management are capable of functioning at the Catalyst level (Inam, 2017). Organisations need to help many of their Achiever senior managers grow into the Catalyst level, and their Expert middle managers develop into

the Achiever level. The gap between the current and the desired levels can be narrowed by implementing individual and team coaching, enhanced competency models and action learning programs. An organisation needs to focus on the development of the individuals.

2.5. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN AGILE MINDSET AND BUREAUCRATIC MINDSET.

2.5.1. Agile mindset

Dweck (2006) coined the term “mindset”. She distinguished between a fixed mindset and a growth mindset. A fixed mindset is based on personality and character. This potential is determined at birth and does not change. In contrast, a growth mindset is the success based on hard work, learning and training. Some agile practitioners associated the agile mindset with the growth mindset of Dweck (2006).

An individual with an agile mindset pays attention to different kinds of information, data and concerns and uses this information, and the knowledge that was developed over years, to pursue a solution. An agile mindset cannot be developed overnight.

An agile mindset tends to be developed over hard working experience and created from lessons of trying to cope with immense change (Denning, 2019b).

2.5.2. Bureaucratic mindset

Hamel (2014) stated that the strategy of an organisation is distinguished at the top and works its way down. Bureaucracy is a profound liability in today’s environment. It misallocates power and discourages disagreement. This mindset can be associated with a Soviet-style centralisation. Bureaucratic mindset is gripped by the ideology of controlism. It does not provide any room for dreams, imagination and contribution, and causes organisations to remain incompetent at the core. Organisations have flattened the hierarchies but have not eliminated them. Organisations are advocates for innovation but have not systematically demolished the barriers that keep it marginalised (Hamel, 2014).

Organisations focus more on making profits for not only themselves, but for their shareholders and do not care about their customers.

The two different mindsets exert a powerful influence on the behaviour of their respective organisations and differences can be seen in table 2.1 below:

	Agile Mindset	Bureaucratic Mindset
Goal	<i>Customer Orientated</i> – Delivering more value to the customer.	<i>Shareholder Orientated</i> – Focus on earning money for the organisation and maximise the shareholder’s value.
Method	<i>Small Team</i> – Working in a small group and in short cycles.	<i>Bureaucrat</i> – Individual to report to superior who define the role and rules.
Organisational structure	<i>Network</i> – Organisation operates as an interacting network of teams.	<i>Hierarchy</i> – Organisation operates from top-down hierarchy, with multiple layers.

Table 2.1: The Agile mindset vs Bureaucratic mindset (Denning, 2019a)

2.6. DISTINCTION BETWEEN DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP APPROACHES

Leadership styles are based on trait, behavioural and situational approaches.

2.6.1. Trait approach to leadership

The trait approach to leadership was one of the earliest theories of leadership (Fleener, 2006). The approach focusses on personal qualities of leaders, such as physical and personality characteristics. Most of the empirical work on this approach focus on the differences between leaders and employees. The assumption was made that individuals with high-level positions have more leadership behaviours than those in lower-level positions. Gardner (1989) published a study on characteristics that appear to make a leader successful, such as physical vitality and stamina, intelligence, trustworthiness, eagerness and courage.

Northhouse (2013) identified the following strengths of a trait approach:

- Supports the belief that leaders are special and have the necessary strengths.
- Provides reference and benchmarks to identify future leaders.

Weaknesses include:

- Traits are fixed psychological structures and limits the opportunity to learn leadership behaviours.
- The list of traits is endless.

2.6.2. Behavioural approach to leadership

In the 1950's the focus of leadership changed from leader traits to leader behaviour. Leaders who follow this approach are focused on their physical, mental and emotional traits. According to Cherry (2019), behavioural approach is based upon the belief that great leaders are made, not born.

Leaders using this approach have three skills:

1. Technical – refers to a leader's knowledge and experience to process the correct technique.
2. Human – refers to the ability to interact with subordinates.
3. Conceptual – refers to the ideas of a leader which enables them to develop models and create plans to achieve the goals of the organisation.

The two main research projects are Ohio State University and the University of Michigan.

Consideration and initiating structure are the two categories which Ohio State University identified (El-Nahas, et al., 2013). Consideration is the degree to which a leader is sensitive to the other employees, respect their feelings and have mutual respect. Initiating structure referred to a leader who is task-orientated and directs subordinates towards a goal.

The University of Michigan compared the behaviour of effective and ineffective leaders (Likert, 1967). It was established that employee-centred leaders display a focus on the human needs of their subordinates.

The behaviour of a leader provides greater satisfaction to the subordinates and they recognise him as their leader.

2.6.3. Situational leadership approach

Hersey and Blanchard (1988) developed the situational approach based on Reddin's 3-D management theory. This approach focusses on leadership in situations. It was identified that different situations demand different kinds of leadership.

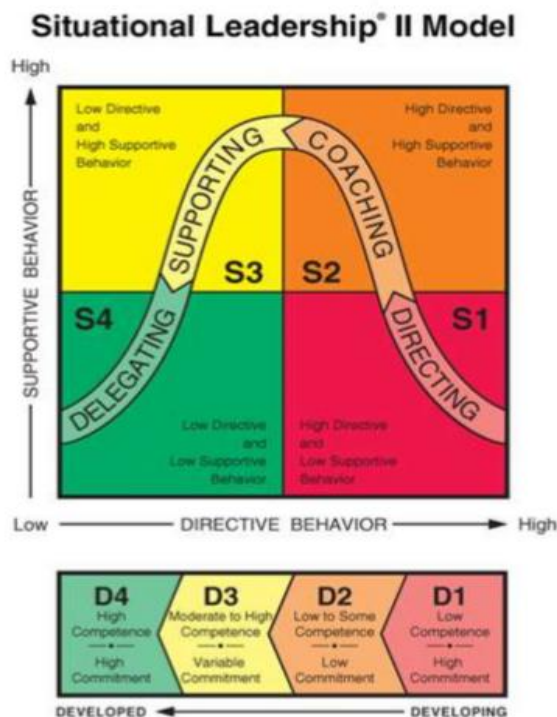


Figure 2.4: Situational model (Blanchard,1985)

A leader needs to evaluate the subordinates and assess their competencies and commitment to perform a certain task.

The model can be divided into two aspects: Leadership style and development level. Leadership style is the behaviour pattern which a leader use to influence subordinates. Directive behaviours assist subordinates by providing direction to achieve goals. It is often one-way communication. Supportive behaviour help subordinates to be comfortable and involves two-way communications.

The situational leadership II model was developed by Blanchard (1985) and illustrated the four categories in which leadership can be classified (figure 2.4).

S1: Directive Style – the leader only communicates the goal achievement and do not use supportive behaviour. A leader communicates the instructions about what and how goals are to be achieved and then supervise the subordinates carefully.

S2: Coaching Style – leader communicates the goals and supports the subordinates' needs. Leaders are interacting with their subordinates to encourage them.

S3: Supportive Approach – the leader does not focus on the goals but rather uses supportive behaviours to assist the subordinates to use their skills to accomplish the goal. By using this approach, the leader gives the subordinates the control to make day-to-day decisions and remains available for assistance.

S4: Delegating Approach – the leaders offer less task input, encourage the subordinate's confidence and motivates them. A leader who uses S4 provides control to subordinates and refrains from intervening.

A second important part of the situational leadership model is the development of subordinates. It can be defined as the level which a subordinate accomplish a given task with the necessary competence and commitment (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Nelson, 1993). In figure 2.5 the levels are classified into four categories and describes different combinations of commitment and competence. Subordinates which are at a higher level are more interested and confident about their work.

D1: Subordinates are new to a task and do not know how to perform it, but are excited about the challenge.

D2: A subordinate do have some competence and learn to complete a given task, but have low commitment and lose their initial motivation.

D3: Subordinates have moderate to high competence, but lack commitment.

D4: Subordinates are the highest in development, having a high degree of both competence and commitment. They have the skill to accomplish the task and are motivated to get it done.

Situational leadership makes it practical for any leader to use. The principles of this approach can be applied at many different levels in an organisation. The approach is best used by followers whose commitment and competence change over a period.

2.7. DISTINCTION OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

According to Ahmed (2018) competency is the primary characteristic of an individual which leads to success and performance in the future. Competencies are expressed as the behaviours that an individual need to demonstrate to perform a certain job in different organisational cultures.

If an individual's role changes from directing/managing to leading, an individual needs to have certain leadership competencies to achieve goal success. Leadership competencies can be divided into three categories:

2.7.1. Intellectual Intelligence (IQ)

According to Heath, Martin and Shahisaman (2017), intellectual intelligence is measured by the individual's attributes such as analytical, logical and reasoning skills. In the 1990's this competency assisted organisations to identify and select a leader. An individual who has a high IQ can understand the work, do problem solving, systematic thinking and can recognise patterns.

There are three types of intellectual competencies:

- **Critical analysis and judgement:**

The gathering of relevant information from different resources, the investigation of facts, making the correct decision and understanding the effects of the assumptions made.

- **Vision and imagination:**

Can be defined as the innovation and imagination of a leader who has a vibrant vision of the upcoming course, prioritise work accordingly and anticipate implications of change.

- **Strategic perspective:**

When a leader investigates a broader variety of relationships, determines opportunities and threats, and pays attention to the requirements of stakeholders.

An individual may show a high IQ but may not have the ability to lead or to influence a culture. They make decisions in a hierarchical fashion, but they lack ability to connect with people, build a team and excel at customer service.

2.7.2. Managerial Intelligence (MQ)

This competency plays a crucial role in a management position. MQ provides constant motivation to the rest of the team and encourages them to maintain excellence. Individuals who have this competency are always looking for methods to improve production and standards.

Managerial competencies have been split as per table 2.2 below:

Resource Management	Creating clear objectives and changing long term goals into action plans. Individuals with this competency use the resources efficiently and effectively. Providing feedback to employees will ensure that they stay motivated and effective.
Engaging communication	Requires an individual to be a lively communicator who engages with the rest of the team and motivates them. If there is good communication in the organisation, the employees and other stakeholders will be inspired, which creates approachability.
Empowering	Providing employees with independence, encourages them to take on challenging and demanding tasks. This encourages them to solve problems and develops broader visions.
Developing	An employee will excel if he/she knows that the leader believes in them, leading them to take on a more demanding role. The leader develops the employee's competencies and coaches them to contribute effectively.

Achieving	An individual needs to take risks and turns them into opportunities to gain advantage. The leader will show a firm determination to achieve objectives and implement decisions
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Table 2.2: Summary of types of managerial competencies (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2005).

2.7.3. Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

EQ is the ability of an individual to understand his/her own feelings, their emotions and the people around them (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). A leader with a high EQ can take action and make decisions based on the information gathered and can provide guidance for others in difficult situations.

In current times, success has become more achievable through EQ than IQ, not only in leaders' personal lives, but their professional lives too. The success of an individual depends on the ability to read other individuals' signals and emotions and to react appropriately.

To have a high EQ, one must develop mature skills which are required to understand, empathise and negotiate with other individuals. With the economy that is now global, this competency is the most important one. For individuals who fail to have these attributes, success will escape their lives and careers.

EQ has five categories which are presented below (Bradberry & Greaves, 2016):

- Self-Awareness:

The ability to identify an emotion when it happens. It requires in-depth discovering of one's true feelings. The two main elements of self-awareness: Emotional awareness and self-confidence. Emotional Awareness is the ability to acknowledge the specific emotion and the effects. Self-confidence is the certainty about self-worth and the capabilities which one holds.

- Self-regulation:

Emotions can be hard to control, but leaders can control the duration of the emotion by using several methods to ease negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety or

depression. Methods which can be used include recasting a situation in a more positive light, taking a long walk or meditating.

An individual who has a high SA will have the following characteristics:

Self-control

Trustworthiness

Reliability

Adaptability

Innovation

- **Motivation:**

To motivate oneself and other team members, clear goals and positive attitudes must develop. It takes practice to have a positive mindset. If negative thoughts appear, they will immediately be reframed to positive terms.

Motivation is made up of:

Achievement drive: Strive to improve or to meet standard of excellence.

Commitment: Align to the goals of the group or organisation.

Initiative: Prepare to act on opportunities.

Optimism: Chasing goals despite obstacles and setbacks.

- **Empathy:**

The ability to recognise other individuals' emotions. To control the signals that individual sends, the correct skills need to be learned on how to identify different emotions. An empathetic individual excels at: service orientation, developing others, leveraging diversity, political awareness and understanding others.

- **Social Skills:**

Good interpersonal skills are equal to great success. In the VUCA world of today, there is an immediate access to technical knowledge. People skills are more relevant in this current time, one must have a high EQ to understand, empathise and negotiate with other people in a global economy.

Good decision-making requires not only intellect, but leaders who drive action by building relationships, recognising their own emotions and responding to the needs of

others. IQ and MQ is still important qualities and the key to success is to have a high EQ. EQ and learning agility combined will provide success to any organisation.

2.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter introduced literature relating to learning agility and the discussion of the factors of learning agility. The definition of learning agility is a rather new concept, but it is a concept which is well-researched with several studies having been conducted. In this changing world, leaders are looking for ways to gain a competitive advantage. The conceptual framework of LA consists of four factors and was first developed in 2000, with a fifth added in 2011. In 2014, two new factors were added to this framework.

The chapter proceeds to identify agile leaders and the difference between an agile and bureaucratic mindset. The best way to identify agile leaders is to identify the four R's: Resourceful, Relationship, Resilient and Results. The two leadership cultures can be split between Achiever and Catalyst. The main difference between an agile and bureaucratic mindset is that an agile mindset focusses on delivering a steady service to customers and that the organisation can function in small self-organising teams. A bureaucratic mindset focusses on receiving the highest profit and maximising shareholders' value. They believe that an organisation needs to function in hierarchy and that the top management will define the roles and rules.

Three leadership approaches were discussed. The situational approach is a newer approach and is applicable in almost any type of organisation, at any level. It is an encompassing model with a wide range of applications.

The latter part of the literature review focus on the distinction of leadership competencies. The competencies can be divided into three categories: Intellectual Intelligence, Managerial Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence.

An individual may have a high IQ but may not have the ability to lead or influence others. Individuals who have a high MQ are always looking for methods to improve production and standards. EQ is the ability to monitor their own and other individuals'

feelings and emotions. To have a high EQ, one must develop mature skills that is required to understand, empathise and negotiate.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss and define the chosen research paradigm. The chapter continues with an evaluation and discussion of the chosen research approach, the sampling design, data collection method and data analysis. The reporting and synthesis will be outlined and will conclude with a chapter summary.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM

The primary objective of the decision-making process regarding the research paradigm, was to ensure that a suitable and appropriate paradigm was selected to match the research questions.

Interpretivism are the desired research paradigm. Interpretivism perspective provides a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and the complexity in its unique context, instead of trying to generalise the base of understanding for the whole population (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). The advantages of this paradigm include the diversifying views of the phenomenon, as it allows the researcher not only to describe the events, but also to deeply understand the social context. The second advantage is that interpretivism is more concerned with in depth variables such as feelings, values and perspectives (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

In terms of the subject of this study, the interpretivism tradition dictates the use of qualitative methods, relying on a small sample, open-ended questions and the subjective interpretation of the raw data.

3.3. RESEARCH APPROACH

The chosen research approach for this study is: Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), which is a psychological qualitative research with an idiographic focus. It

aims to offer insights into how a given person makes sense of a given phenomenon (Alase, 2017). This approach assists to capture the uniqueness of the traits and skills that determines how a leader identifies and reacts to change.

In terms of interpretive analysis, the methodology focuses on the factors that may influence and assist a leader's perspective on how agile they are. This research approach provides the foundation for gaining a deeper understanding of the secondary objectives in pursuit of reaching the primary objective. The secondary objectives, in support of the primary objective, has the aim to establish a deeper understanding of the perspectives exhibited by individuals, therefore, this approach is best suited to this study.

3.4. SAMPLING DESIGN

The sampling design for this study was: purposive sampling which focuses on characteristics of leaders to make comparisons and to identify possible trends. There are several subtypes under this chosen sampling, but homogeneous sampling is the chosen design, where participants are selected according to the needs of the study.

The sample was drawn from expert practitioners in the field of leadership, behaviour and leaders from organisations that currently maintain senior positions. The population from which the sample will be drawn consists of nine mid- to top managers in the private sector in South Africa.

The respondent's current position held, management level, gender and years of management experience are outlined in table 3.1 below.

Respondent	Position	Management Level	Gender	Years of Management Experience
Respondent A1	Branch Manager	High	Male	10+ years
Respondent A2	Human Resources Manager	Mid	Female	5+ years
Respondent A3	Trading Manager	Mid	Male	5+ years
Respondent B1	Depot Manager	High	Male	5+ years
Respondent B2	Human Resources Manager	Mid	Male	5+ years
Respondent B3	Regional Manager	Executive	Male	15+ years
Respondent C1	Dealer Principle	High	Male	20+ years
Respondent C2	Chief Divisional Executive	Executive	Male	20+ years
Respondent C3	Vice President	Executive	Male	20+years

Table 3.1: Positions held by/Experience of Respondents

The experts were selected based on the satisfaction of the criteria that each participant has significant experience on the topic of leadership, leadership development, individual behaviour and making decisions during change.

3.5. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

To provide and gather informative and relative information, the descriptive method was used. This method includes structured questionnaires and interviews.

3.5.1. Questionnaires

The questions were formulated to seek the opinions of the respondents. Thirteen open-ended questions were created to afford the respondents the opportunity to provide a wide range of answers. The questions were formulated to answer the research questions that was set out in this study. Open-ended questions facilitates the collection of large quantities of data in a short period of time.

3.5.2. Interviews

Interviews is a measurement instrument where the researcher requests information from the respondents through verbal interaction. The thirteen open-ended questions were provided to the respondents during the interviews to obtain their opinions on the subject matter. The respondents signed an agreement for the interview to be recorded.

3.6. DATA COLLECTION

Interviews were conducted with the sample, making use of open-ended questions. The data collection remains highly flexible and additional questions to probe new findings can be formulated. In terms of interaction, the interviews were carried out as one-on-one meetings. Anonymity was provided to the interviewees to increase the prospect of sharing deeper insights and personal experiences and opinions.

The questions are all related to the learning agility concept. With the questions, the respondents provided a better understanding of the type of leader they are and how agile they are to change. The questions also provide insight on how the organisation operate and how they support the leaders through change.

Each question required the respondents to provide insight into the importance of the study. Below are the thirteen questions that was used in the interviews.

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?
2. How do you lead through change?
3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?
4. What leadership style do you use?

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?
6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?
7. What, in your opinion, makes a good leader?
8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). Which would you rate more important?
9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?
10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?
11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?
12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?
13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change?
How can they sidestep it?

Recorded interviews were transcribed accurately and included in the study. Participants were approached in a formal manner regarding participation in the study, and written permission was obtained from each participant with respect to the recording of the interviews - see Appendix C.

3.7. DATA ANALYSIS

An open-ended questionnaire was used to gather the data. This questionnaire consists of thirteen questions. Face-to-face interviews was done with nine respondents who held a senior- or mid management designation. The interviews were recorded with the written permission of each respondent. The recorded data was converted into written documents and thematic content analysis was used to establish the central theme running through the responses gathered. Questions were coded according to their central theme.

The analysis of the data focused mainly on the questions relating to the primary objective in chapter one: The skills and traits a leader use during change, the appropriate responses and to provide the correct type of leadership style. The data was analysed to answer the research questions.

3.7.1. Generating Themes: Particularities, Generalisations and Considerations

The transcripts were read carefully to gain an overall understanding of each session. The importance of this stage is the detail, trying to develop the overall interview before it is divided into different segments. Identifying the themes, recurring ideas and patterns of belief that link the respondents, is a challenging phase of the data analysis and that one can integrate the entire environment (Akinyoade, 2013). Tension emerges between preserving and representing each respondent's expression, and obtaining broader meaning, interpretations and significances.

3.7.2. Coding of Themes

Each main phrase of the transcribed respondent's session was highlighted to enable a clearer presentation of the data. The theme analysis process described by Neuman (2000) was followed, where there is direct observation and communication with respondents.

3.7.2.1. Open coding

The first stage is open coding where the written transcripts were read carefully to establish an idea of how the patterns could be clustered and coded. Open coding involves naming the identified patterns or categories, breaking them down in smaller segments and comparing them for similarities and differences. The naming of patterns is called conceptualising the data, where the name represents a phenomenon (Hull, 2013).

3.7.2.2. Axial coding

The next step is the axial coding, which involves discovering the links and connections between the questions to merge the themes into clusters. Akinyoade (2013) identified that categories or themes should be consistent, but distinct from one another. By diverging the identified patterns, trends and themes of the transcripts, they provided new understanding in answering the research questions.

Four main categories emerged from the respondent's interviews; each question was merged into the four themes based on their similar patterns (fig 3.1):

1. What defines an agile leader?
2. Openness to agility
3. Organisational Support
4. Strategies/Mistake induced by change

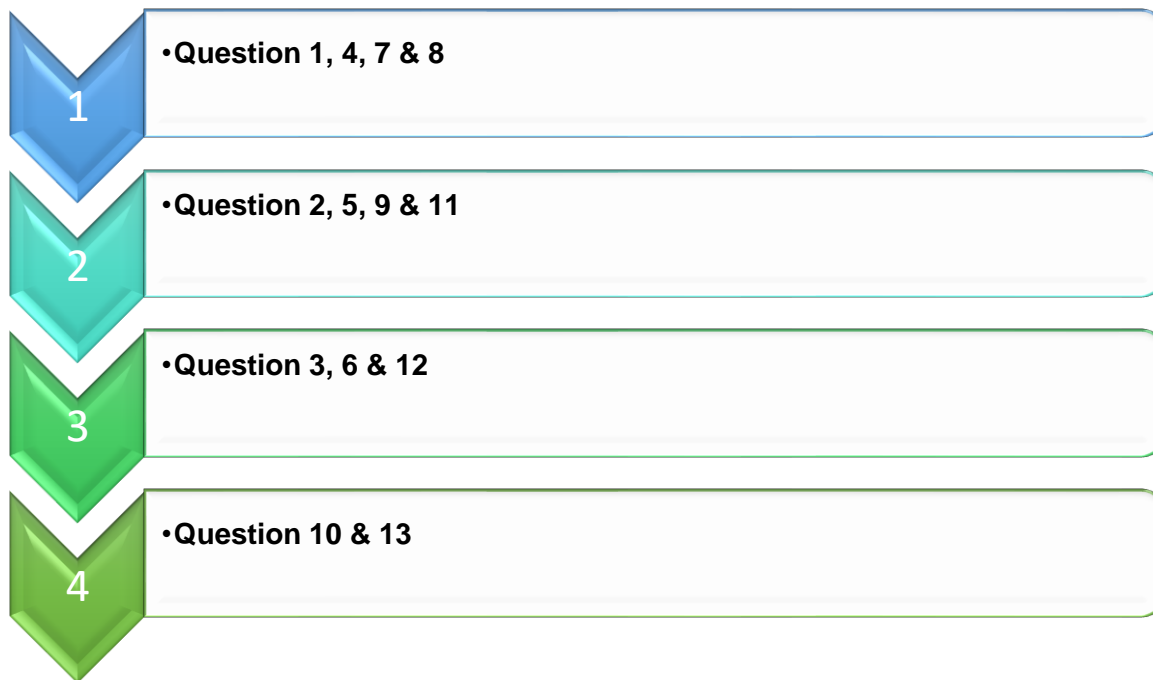


Figure 3.1: Linking questions to categories

3.7.2.3. Selective coding

Selective coding is the final process whereby all the themes were divided into a selected number that comprised the final presentation. Akinyoade (2013) describes this process as winnowing the data and reducing it into smaller segments to be more manageable to set out the themes. In table 3.2. the main themes and subcategories are outlined and will be discussed in detail.

THEMES			
WHAT DEFINES AN AGILE LEADER?	OPENNESS TO AGILITY	ORANISATIONAL SUPPORT	STRATEGIES & MISTAKES
Categories	Category	Categories	Categories
a) Idea of good leader b) Leadership Style	a) What is an agile mindset?	a) Objectives b) Support from organisation	a) Successful Strategies b) Common Mistakes

Table 3.2: Themes and categories retrieved from interviews

3.8. REPORTING AND SYNTHESIS

Qualitative data sets are large, and data needs to be managed and summarised. Characteristics and differences between the data were identified and emerging theories generated. Connections were mapped together to explore relationships between categories. The findings determine the reasons for the emergence of a phenomena, predictions on how a leader responds to a situation and identify areas that are not functioning well within the system.

3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Adhering to a code of ethics plays a fundamental role in any form of research and, in order to ensure the credibility and integrity of this research project, the researcher obtained ethics clearance from the ethics office of the Nelson Mandela University Business School.

The main reasons to pursue ethical clearance are to:

- Ensure that the research is conducted in a responsible and ethical manner.
- Minimise the risk of harm to humans and animals.
- Ensure that the research leads to beneficial outcomes.

The ethical approval of research also helps to increase the legitimacy of research findings (Hanekom, 2018). The Research Ethics and Code of Conduct Policies were read, understood and assisted with the completion of the Self-Assessment Research Ethics Checklist. No data will be collected from any person with direct connection to Nelson Mandela University and any form of disadvantage will be excluded. This study does not involve any harmful treatment and the anonymity of the participants will always be guaranteed. This study will be conducted in South Africa and all interviewees will be South African citizens. After the completion, the level of risk is very low and only faculty level approval is necessary. The ethics clearance form with reference number: H19-BES-BUS-059 is attached as Appendix B.

3.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the research design covering the research approach, data collection, the measuring instrument, data analysis and reporting method. The ethical considerations were discussed, and reference made to the necessary clearances obtained.

CHAPTER 4

THE EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focusses on the results of the questionnaires and the analysis of the data. In chapter one the problem statement suggested that it is exceedingly difficult to be an effective leader in the uncertain times caused by a rapidly changing world. It is particularly important for a leader to be adaptable and to make decisions in a very fast manner to gain a competitive advantage.

The primary objective of this research is to identify the skills and traits that determine how well a leader identifies change, understands what type of response is needed in a situation and to provide the correct leadership style to ensure success.

A purposive sample was used in this study, as it focusses on characteristics of leaders to make comparisons and to identify possible trends by using open-ended questions. Purposive sampling does not focus on the demographics of the population, but rather the characteristics to assist the researcher with the relevant information. This chapter considers both descriptive and inferential statistics to answer the research questions.

4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The questionnaire did not aim to use demographic data such as gender or age, but rather the level of management and experience of the respondents. Demographic data will not influence the outcome of this research. Purposive sampling was used, and respondents were selected based on the position they held and the size of the organisation. All nine respondents work for international organisations and occupy a mid- or senior level management (Table 3.1). Defining the parameters of the respondents, allowed for the gathering of content-rich data based on practical experiences.

4.3. THEMES

Four themes emerged from the respondents' interviews:

Theme 1: What defines an agile leader?

Theme 2: Openness to agility

Theme 3: Organisational support

Theme 4: Strategies & Mistakes induced by change

Each of these themes, with its accompanying categories, will be discussed, illustrated by meaning units and supported by a literature control.

4.3.1. Theme 1: What defines an agile leader?

Forbes Coaches Council (2019) defined an agile leader as someone who is flexible and stable, with enhanced self-awareness, variety of leadership, thriving in change, comfortable with uncertainty, who is learning and not reacting, and someone with a dynamic and holistic approach.

Category A: Idea of good leader

Question 1, Question 7 and Question 8 was identified under this category based on the relevance of the questions - question 1 covers the values of an agile leader, whereas question 7 includes the opinion of what makes a good leader. Question 8 is about intelligence and the fact that some leaders can have a very high IQ, but do not necessarily have the abilities to be a leader and may lack emotional intelligence (EQ).

Q1: The values of a good leader are a topic that is not often talked about, but which plays an important role in the behaviour and results of the leaders. Values are personal and differentiates from leader to leader. A summary of the respondents' values can be found in figure 4.1.

From figure 4.1. the comparison can be made that both respondents A1 and C1 agreed that empowering is important, whereas respondents A2 and B1 both said that leading from the front is important. Integrity is also one of the values that is among the answers

and respondents C2 and C3 agreed that this value is important. Other values that are highlighted from the interviews is honesty, adaptability and taking responsibility for their own actions.

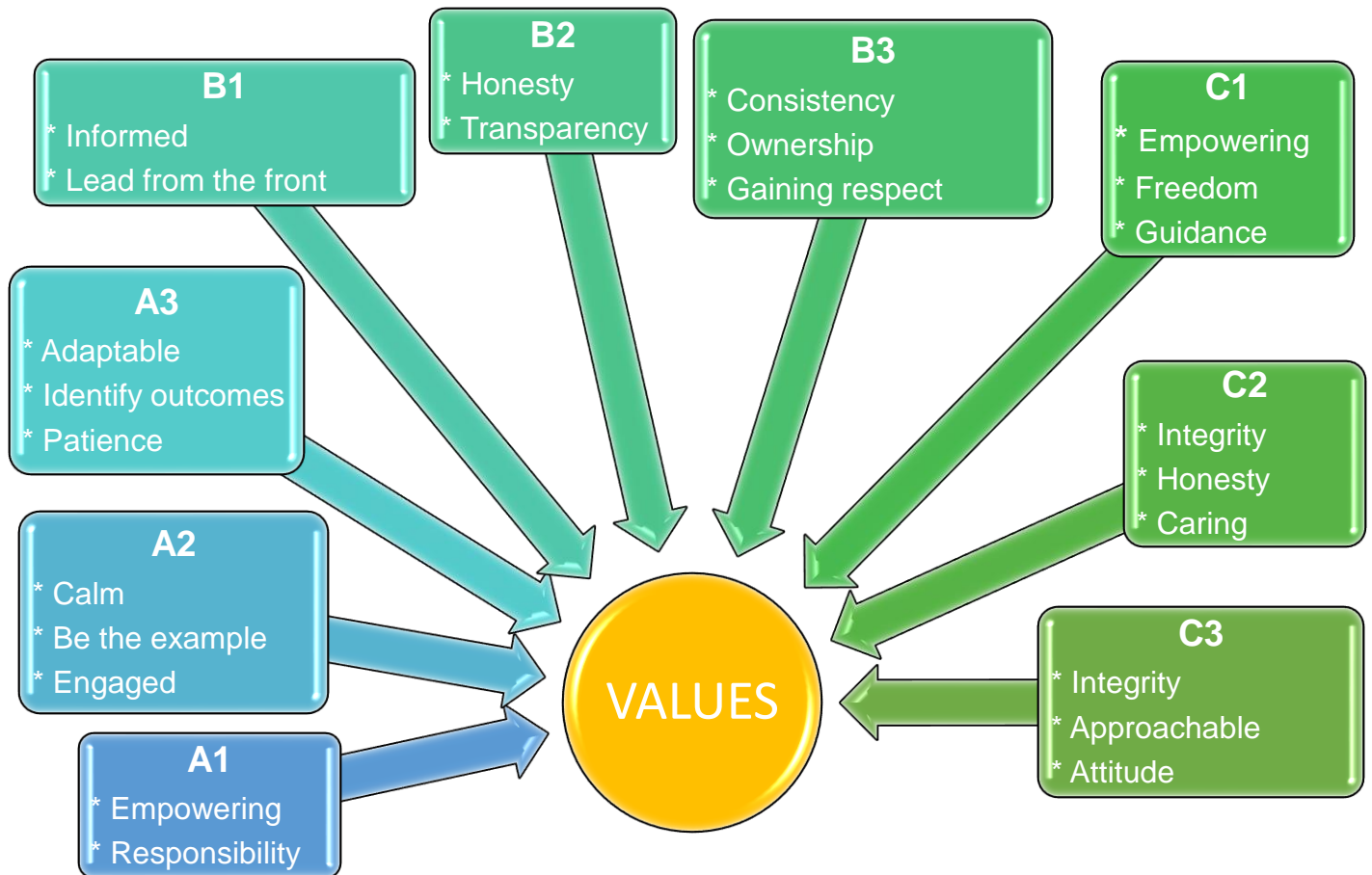


Figure 4.1: Summary of values per respondent

Q7: Respondent A1 identified a good leader as someone who can empower the rest of the team to make decisions and to take responsibility, for whom traditional leadership style will be less relevant and who needs to promote self-leadership. Both respondents A3 and C1 agreed that a good leader is someone who are setting the example. Respondent C3 identified a good leader as someone who motivates the rest of the team. Respondent A2 stated: *“You need to be internally motivated because external factors will definitely be your downfall in these trying times.”* Respondent B3 made an important statement regarding this question: *“I think, in the end, leadership is around embracing the environment that you work in and finding a way daily to*

empower people to get the best results. Because you can be the nicest guy in the world, but you get no results. To me that's important."

Q8: Segal, Smit, Robinson and Shubin (2020) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to understand, use and manage emotions and to communicate effectively with others. It assists to build stronger relationships and to achieve personal and career goals. IQ are not enough on its own to succeed but, together with EQ, it will help manage the stress and emotions facing a difficult situation.

Eight respondents agreed that EQ is the most important leadership competency and that it will become one of the top 10 traits of a future leader. Respondent B3 said that it is a combination and that a cultural fit is more important when recruiting. The main importance of EQ retrieved from the respondents are adaptability, communication and being aware of their own feelings.

Category B: Leadership style

Q4: Paduraru (2019) stated agile leadership is an innovative approach of the 21st century. He also identified that a leader who has an agile mindset, follows the servant leadership style. The first definition of servant leadership appeared in 1970, where the leader is a servant first and want to help other employees to identify their needs. A servant leader ensure engagement with all team members and promotes collaboration. Trust and support are also important traits of this type of leader.

Respondent C1 and C3 identified themselves as servant leaders. They manage the team and ensure that they understand the tasks and provide the tools needed to complete the task. The team's participation, ideas and feedback are important to the leader.

Respondents A1, B1 and C2 are participative leaders. They treat the rest of the team with the same respect, patience and understanding. It provides a boost in the team's morale by allowing them to participate. This style can also be used during stressful situations and are used in an agile environment.

Overall Respondents A3, B2, B3 and C2 do not practice the ideal leadership style for an agile leader, but they do still show some characteristic of an agile leader. A summary of the respondents' leadership styles can be found in figure 4.2.

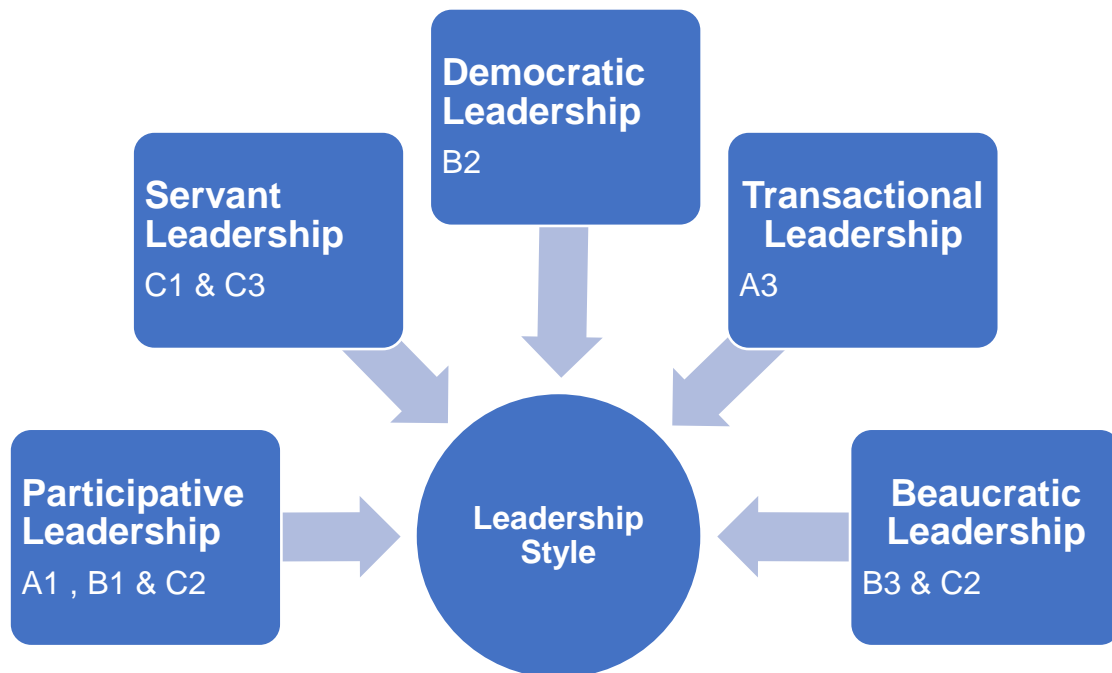


Figure 4.2: Respondents' leadership style

4.3.2. Theme 2: Openness to agility

Being agile and continuously pushing the boundaries of innovation have contributed to the culture of openness. Openness to agility encourage teams to be transparent and honest, it inspires the team to set the bar higher and to take more responsibility of their work. To be open to agility means not only being ready for new opportunities, but to encourage and inspire the rest of the team beyond present barriers.

Category A: What is an agile mindset

Q2: When asked about how the respondent leads through change, most of the respondents had the same answer. Respondents A3, B1, B2, B3 and C2 all agreed that information regarding the change or situation is gathered and analysed. They also agreed that the information is discussed with the rest of the team and the impact it will have on them. Respondent B2 said that, if there is a lack of communication, the team's performance will suffer and will not be agile for change, with open conversation and

positivity the team will work and respect the leader's honesty and transparency. Respondent A3's opening statement for this question agreed that a leader must "Be flexible and adapt easily". According to respondent C3, "*change should be a process and not an event in which we forecast that in a particular year that this is going to happen.*"

Q5: From the interviews, three qualities were identified (figure 4.4). Continuous learning, open-minded and adaptable.

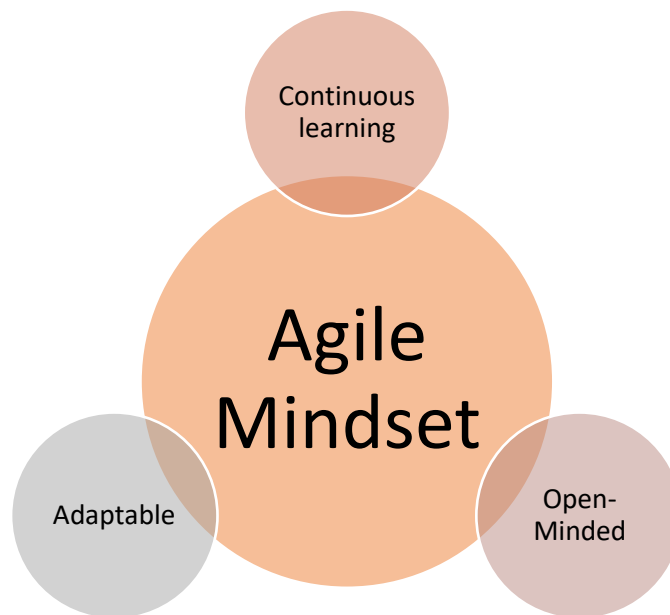


Figure 4.3: Qualities of an agile mindset

Continuous learning

It is easier for a young generation to have an agile mindset than it would be for an individual who has years of experience and knowledge. Respondents C1 and C2 agreed that the older generation still want to practice the same tactics as five year ago, and struggle to encourage them to adapt to the change. Respondents A1, C1 and C2 stated that change is a continuous learning and that there is always room for improvement. To have an agile mindset, a leader must be knowledgeable about the industry and environment and provide the correct mechanisms to achieve the results.

Open-minded

Open-mindedness is a trait that entails being open to a wide variety of ideas, arguments and information. It is considered a positive quality and important to think critically and rationally. Respondents B2 and C3 agreed that open-mindedness is important and to take the results, positive or negative, and to improve on that.

Adaptable

For a leader to be adaptable, they need to be willing to change the way they do things and change their leadership skills to according to the situation or team members. The younger generation adapt much faster and have the willingness to learn new skills. Respondents A3, B1 and B3 all agreed that they change the way they lead based on the situation or the different personalities of the team.

Respondent A2 disagree with the term agile mindset, as due to the continuous changing it can be a risk for any organisation and can influence the rest of the team negatively.

Q9: The word agile is a methodology, but Scrum is a framework to put agile into practice. Scrum refers to quickly improving by testing the idea. It allows a leader to break up the work up smaller segments and will receive the results sooner and adapt easier to change (RingCentral Team, 2020). Respondent A1 had the best answer to this question: *“The leadership need to first embrace and identify what we are going to achieve and how we are going to achieve it and demonstrate that.”* Training, incentives, communication and honesty are the key words retrieved from the interviews.

Training: Respondents A3 and B2 stated that training is required and that it will assist with the process to make any individual aware of the change, and how to handle new and challenging situations. This training will provide an opportunity to teach the individuals who are set in their ways and struggle to adapt.

Incentives: Respondent B3 identify that motivation and rewards will allow individuals to seek innovative ideas and get them to think out of the box.

Communication: According to Respondent A1, communication is critical, as it will assist the leader to share ideas with the team, provide them with the goals and how they will achieve it.

Consistency: Respondent C3 stated that, in order for a team to change, they need to have trust in their leader and the only way to achieve this, is to be consistent during change and not change the strategy every day. Respondent A2 said *“open and honesty, leading by example and showing them change is not always a bad thing. Being that leader so that they can follow you and trust your calls and inputs and things.”*

Respondent A2 do not have the knowledge to put agile into practice: *“How do you really know if somebody has EQ, because it comes over the course of time? The strategies I am using now when interviewing will not work when I'm trying to select the person with an agile mindset.”*

Q11: Being learning agile is a rather new concept for the respondents, and some do not have the correct management tools to allow innovation, agility or risk taking.

Respondent A2 said that in the organisation there is still a lack of confidence to provide ideas due to the negative feedback they will receive: *“We've got standard procedures in place that everyone abides”*. They also do not provide the team with the opportunity to take intelligent risks. Respondent B1 agreed that there are not enough opportunities to encourage innovation or risk-taking.

Respondent A1 will have regular open meetings where the whole team can present their ideas and the ideas will then be discussed and considered. The respondent also mentioned that promoting an individual within the organisation is providing opportunities, the individual already has knowledge and experience with the culture and provide motivation to work hard. Respondent A1 stated: *“for me it is one of the things that I prefer as a leader and I enjoy also to develop people and see them grow. It gives some pride in the leader as well.”*

Respondents B3, C2 and C3 said that providing a reward, such as incentives, will allow the team to be innovative and to think out of the box.

Respondent A3 did not understand the question and had no response to it.

4.3.3. Theme 3: Organisational support

The theory regarding organisational support dates back to 1986, when Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa (1986) defined the theory as the extent to which employees believe that their organisation values their contribution and care about their well-being. Most of the oldest organisations' structures and processes were developed more than a century ago and were built on control and stability. To be competitive, the organisation needs to recruit more agile leaders that will have a positive and long-lasting impact on the organisation. It is the organisation's obligation to provide the correct tools and to set clear objectives.

Q3: To achieve objectives in a fast-changing environment, the goals that are set by the organisation needs to be clear and measurable. The best is to break it down into smaller goals to simplify it for the rest of the team. Respondents A1, A3 and B3 agreed with the mentioned statement. Respondents B1 and B2 both agreed that the objectives need to be prioritised, and that it is a best approach for all objectives to be achieved. It is better to focus and provide 100% to one objective, than to give 20% on five different objectives. Other ways to achieve the objectives is to follow the opinions of Respondents A2, B2 and C1, to have regular meetings which will allow feedback regarding progress or the results. It is important to share information, as in the fast-changing environment an individual will not be able to work on the objectives alone but rather as a team, as per Respondents A2 and C1. Motivation, encouragement, communication and feedback are crucial when achieving objectives.

Q6: Respondents from organisation A agreed that their organisation does support agility. They only focus on current challenges and do not look at the future or improvements. The organisation has started to implement strategies like creating a department who focus on strategy and innovation, and they started to recruit

individuals with innovation. Respondents from organisation B stated that there are support from the organisation, but it depends on the level. The leaders are free to develop themselves, but the challenge is whether the leaders are prepared to put in the time. Respondents from organisation C have the support from the organisation. There is a training centre where leaders can work on new projects to improve processes. By implementing Kaizen, the individuals can be creative and more motivated by receiving some sort of incentive.

Q12: In the past, the culture of organisation A was to drive profit and be MQ orientated. With time, the personal touch with the employees was lost. With new management, the culture changed to be a more democratic style and focus to get the employees to be involved. Respondent A1 said that each department has its own culture, and the leader will back the rest of the team. When mistakes are made, the leader will take the criticism from the organisation, but will not shift the blame and rather grow together as a team. Organisation B changed the culture to be centralised. All decisions and planning were made at head office. Flexibility was taken away and less room was given to be agile and creative. Respondents B2 and B3 said that a leader needs to lead from the front and to demonstrate it to the rest of the team. Change may be a shock to the employees, but they need time and support to adapt to the new norm. Organisation C's culture changed over the past 20 years. They were focused on physical returns and the CEO of the organisation was untouchable. A new organisation took over the management in 1995. All the employees were scared and uncertain, but only needed one senior leader to support them and the rest followed. Today the culture is more customer- and employee orientated where, in good times, the organisation has the loyalty of the employees and, in bad times, the organisation will support the employees. Respondent C3 said that the whole team must be agile and that working together will achieve the objectives.

4.3.4. Theme 4: Strategies and mistakes induced by change

Q10: Strategies used to enhance change includes the use of technology to their advantage. Respondents A1, B1 and B3 said that they implemented new technology, such as digital communication systems, where the organisation's access to this platform will reduce time wasted on sending out an email to everyone. Information is

more reachable. Respondent A1 said that the organisation also developed a trainee manager program where graduates “*are not moved into one specific area of the business. They must learn all parts of the business, so that allows their whole mindset and their whole experience in a working environment to be more agile because they have to use different personality traits when dealing with different departments.*” This will allow the individual to learn different skills and to be a possible future leader that are agile. Organisation B also have a similar program, but this digital hub allows the individuals to develop and learn skills at their own pace and time. Respondent C3 said the implementing of the Kaizen incentive program will teach the team to be agile, to change and to maybe continuously improve.

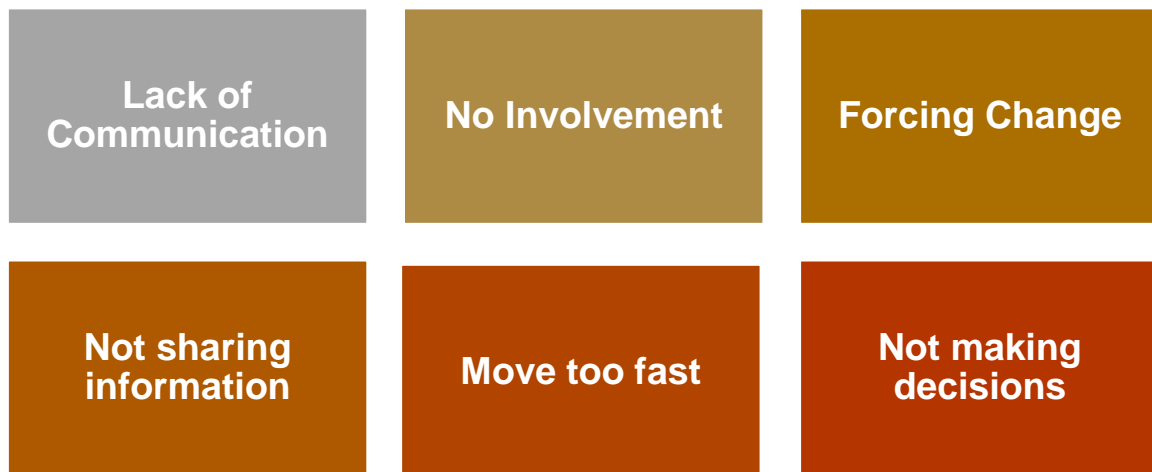


Figure 4.4: Summary of mistakes made during change

The main mistakes made by leaders during change, can be seen in figure 4.4:

Lack of communication: Lack of communication during change is one of the biggest challenges. With no communication, the team cannot adapt and see the potential of a positive result. It will lead to rejection and resistance. Respondents A3, B2, B3 and C1 agreed that lack of communication is the biggest challenge.

No Involvement: According to Respondents B2 and C2 leaders make the mistake not to get the team’s involvement and not making them part of the change process.

Forcing Change: Leaders make the mistake of forcing the team to accept the change and this will lead to a negative outcome and rejection. The employees feel that the change was made at higher level, but no involvement and discussion was made regarding the change. They feel that their values are not important and that there is no need to show loyalty. Respondents B2, C1 and C2 said that forcing change will not provide positive results.

Not sharing information: Respondent A2 said withholding information regarding change will be the biggest reason why leaders fail. The team are not prepared for the change and are uncertain about the future. They are scared and will only focus on not making mistakes. Respondent B2 said that leaders limit the information shared, as they think that it will make the team anxious, but it will build negatives thoughts.

Move too Fast: Respondent C3 stated that leaders who move too fast will leave the rest of the team behind. This will have the result that the leaders are not closely connected to the team and will not understand their frustrations and emotions.

Not making decisions: As per respondent A1, leaders tend to not make any decisions - they postpone the change. They will reach a point then where it is too late and will fall behind the competitors. It is uncomfortable for leaders to move out of their comfort zones.

The second part of this question relates to how a leader will sidestep the mistakes made.

The following ways can help leaders sidestep the mistakes:

- By sharing information which will assist to lift any negativity and the team will see that the change is not as bad as it seemed (Respondent A2).
- By involving the team, which will make them feel valued and part of the process (Respondent A3).
- By making the team understand the reason for the change and what led to this decision (Respondent B1).

- A leader must always be honest and direct, as this will lead to quicker adaptability (Respondent B3).
- By staying positive in difficult times, it will provide an impression to the team that the change is not that bad (Respondent C2).
- By staying in touch with the team's emotions and frustrations (Respondent C3).

4.4. ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions were developed from the aim of the study, which was to investigate if learning agility is a component of sustained organisational success. The process of collecting data was through interviews with open-ended questions. The research questions are analysed individually and linked to the methodology for data collection.

4.4.1. Secondary Research Question 1: Identify leadership competencies for agile leaders.

Q1, Q7 and Q8 aimed at addressing this research question. The respondents identify that a leader need to have the ability to empower the team, have integrity and be honest and transparent. Most of the respondents agreed that IQ is not enough anymore, and a leader is required to have a high EQ and have the following traits: Adaptable, good communication skills and aware of their own and other's emotions and needs. The respondents also identify that EQ will be one of the most important competencies a leader can have.

4.4.2. Secondary Research Question 2: What leadership approach supports learning agility?

Situational leadership approach is the main approach which was identified through the questionnaire. This can be defined as the relationship between leaders and followers, and provide a framework to analyse each situation. Q2, Q4 and Q9 was posed to address this research question. Respondents A1, B1 and C2 follows participative leadership style, which fall under quadrant S3 of the situational leadership model

framework, as illustrated in chapter 2. Respondents C1 and C3 follow the servant leadership style. This style is in quadrant S3 of the framework. This quadrant is the supportive quadrant where the leader allows the team to work on their own, but is available for assistance.

4.4.3. Secondary Research Question 3: How can organisations develop an agile learning culture?

Q6, Q10 and Q13 was used to address this research question. Organisation A stated that there is no support for agile leaders, where Organisation B and C are supportive of agile leaders. They have training programs in place to develop the skills of the individual and have incentive programs, such as Kaizen, to motivate the team to be innovative and continuously improve. All respondents advised that there are still a few mistakes that can be improved. The mistakes identified from the interview was:

Lack of communication;

No involvement;

Forcing change;

Not sharing information;

Move too fast;

Not making decisions.

4.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter four analysed the qualitative data obtained from the questionnaires. Organising the data made it possible for the researcher to link the questionnaire to the research questions. The analysis of the data was used to report on empirical findings of this research treatise.

In chapter five, the researcher will attempt to interpret the empirical findings, draw further conclusions, discuss the limitations, and provide relevant recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter five presents the summary of the findings and conclusions, based on the data analysed in chapter four. This chapter will summarise the demographic data and primary objective. The research questions will be answered, based on the literature and data obtained from the interviews. There are limitations that have been identified and will be highlighted in this chapter. Recommendations are made for future researchers, based on the findings presented in this study.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Key findings of the study are outlined according to the following headings:

- Demographic data
- Primary objective
- Secondary Objectives
- Open-ended questionnaire
- Research Questions

5.2.1. Findings on demographic analysis

As stated in Chapter four, demographic data was not the focus. The only aspect of demographic data that was focused on, was the level and experience of the respondents. These factors can contribute to the quality of the qualitative data that are retrieved from the interviews. The use of purposive sampling allowed the researcher to select the respondents based on their years of experience and level of management within the phenomenon being researched. The minimum requirements were that respondents held a mid- to high level of management in an organisation and have more than 5 years' experience in a management position. All the respondents complied with these requirements.

5.2.2. Findings of the primary objective

PO: The primary objective of this research was to identify whether learning agility is a necessary component for a successful organisation by determining the leadership style that is needed in any given situation, understanding what an organisation can do to assist in the developing of an agile culture and identifying the skills and competencies which is needed to identify change in a work environment.

The primary objective was achieved by following different secondary objectives. In the search of the primary objective, the empirical results indicated that there is sufficient support for a quantitative research in the future.

The researcher was able to identify that learning agility is a component for a successful organisation. Learning agility will be one of the top 10 traits in the future and will need a leader that have the ability, experience and competencies to lead their team to be motivated in uncertain situations. Learning agility will become part of any organisation's recruitment process to gain competitive advantage.

5.2.3. Findings of the secondary objectives

SO1: Describe the factors of learning agility.

A thorough literature review was done on the different factors of learning agility. In 2000, the framework was discovered and only had four factors: People, Change, Result and Mental Agility. The approach changed over the years, and in 2011 self-awareness was added to the framework. In 2015, two more factors were added: Feedback Responsiveness and Environmental Mindfulness.

SO2: Identifying the traits of agile leaders.

Identifying agile leaders was part of the literature review in chapter two and the four R's were identified: Resourcefulness, Relationship, Resilient and Result Driven. Good qualities of an agile leader were discussed and provided the researcher with insight to identify the key elements during the interviews with respondents. The respondents identified empowering, integrity and leading from the front as traits of an agile leader. One important trait identified was good communications skills, where a trend can be

identified between the literature and the respondent's opinions. Both communication and coordination are key aspects in agile leadership.

SO3: Establish the difference between an agile mindset and bureaucratic mindset.

During the literature review in chapter two, the difference between the two mindsets was discussed and analysed by comparing them in tabular form (Table 2.1). The mindsets were compared based on the goal, method and organisational structure. The literature stated that an agile mindset is based on hard work, learning and training. Question 5 of the questionnaire tend to answer this research objective. From the respondents, the following qualities was identified: Continuous learning, open-minded and adaptable. The literature and questionnaires provided the researcher with enough information to establish that an agile mindset is created through hardworking experience and lessons to adapt during change.

SO4: Establish the distinction between different leadership approaches

Leadership style are based on three different approaches: Trait, behavioural and situational. These three approaches formed part of the literature review and the situational approach quadrants were discussed individually.

SO5: Interviewing leaders in both the same and different industries to establish a trend between them and how agile they are to change.

Open-ended questions were used during the interview and are created based on the literature review content in chapter two. The interviews were done by face-to-face meetings and were recorded for data analysis purposes. The interviews were sufficient to provide the researcher with the knowledge to draw conclusions and answer the primary objective.

SO6: Using Atlas.ti to transcribe the raw data for data analysis.

Using Atlas.ti provided the researcher with the main link and connections to create the themes. The questions were grouped together based on their theme, and each answer was analysed and connections were made.

SO7: Interpret findings, draw conclusions, and make recommendations for future study.

The findings and connections are discussed in chapter five and will provide recommendations for future researchers and conclusions drawn.

5.2.4. Summary of findings from questionnaire

An open-ended questionnaire was used to obtain the primary data to provide the necessary information for the researcher to answer the primary objective. The questionnaire was provided during a face-to-face interview. Experts in the field of leadership were selected and provided a deeper understanding of learning agility as a component contributing to a successful organisation. The questions were formulated based on a review of the literature on learning agility, discussed in chapter two. The questions were also constructed to indicate if the research questions and research problem is worthy of being researched.

The summary and conclusion of each research question are discussed in tabular form (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Research Findings from Questionnaire

Research findings from Questionnaire	
Q1	The findings on Q1 provided various answers about the values of a leader. From the answers it is evident that it is important that a leader is empowering, have integrity, is motivated and leads from the front. During uncertain times it is necessary for the leader to set the example and motivate the team to be positive during change.
Q2	The important key, when leading through change, is that there is a good communication system in place between the leader and the team. Good communication will lead to positivity and respect. The respondent's answers were similar and stated that a leader needs to be flexible and adaptable first, before the rest of the team can follow.
Q3	The respondents in general agreed that the objectives are clear and measurable. Communication was again identified to be the main focus to

	achieve objectives. Half of the respondents agreed that the objectives needs to be scaled down and prioritised. Teamwork is crucial and individuals will only succeed if the rest of the team are agile.
Q4	There are different leadership styles retrieved from the respondents, where most of the respondents follow the ideal leadership style for an agile leader. Servant and participative leadership style can be seen as an agile leadership style. The rest of the respondents do show some competencies of an agile leader, but still follow a more traditional leadership style.
Q5	Most of the respondents understand the term agile mindset. The three qualities were identified: Continuous learning, open-minded and adaptable. The older generation leaders still practice the same tactics as years ago and find it difficult to adapt. Recruiting younger individuals will allow new opinions in the team. There must always be continuous learning and improvement on the processes, implementation and making use of the latest technology, and open-mindedness for new challenges. One respondent did not agree with the term agile mindset as it carries a risk for any organisation, based on the inconsistency of decision making.
Q6	The general idea is that there is little support from the organisation for the respondents to be agile. The focus of the organisations is the current challenges and solutions. All respondents agreed that support from the organisation is necessary and they started to implement learning programs, and developing the Kaizen system, to innovate and motivate individuals to be flexible. The respondents agreed that they cannot make any big changes during uncertain times but can improve current processes. There are usually a team of leaders to make decisions and provide opinions and views.
Q7	The question can be linked to Q1, as the answers are similar. Empowering, motivated and taking ownership can distinguish between an agile leader and a traditional leader. Traditional leadership style will become less relevant and self-leadership will be promoted instead.
Q8	Most of the respondents agreed that EQ will be one of the most important traits a leader can have. EQ can provide the ability to adapt, have good communications skills and be aware of his own and others' emotions.

Q9	The best way to put agility into practice is to embrace it, find solutions and then demonstrate the solution. The respondents agreed that training needs to be provided to individuals, that an incentive program will help motivate them to adapt and good communication is crucial.
Q10	The best strategy is to utilise technology available to their advantage. The respondents stated that trainee programs are successful and provide graduates the opportunity to learn about the organisation and will allow the individual to obtain different skills to be a future agile leader. Another strategy is the Kaizen incentive program.
Q11	The respondents agreed that learning agility is a new concept for them, and they do not always have the tools to motivate others and take risks. Individuals are usually uncomfortable to take risks and lack confidence to provide opinions.
Q12	The respondents agreed that the culture of the organisation changed over the years. It was driven by profit and was MQ orientated. With a new developing culture, they are now more focused on the development and contribution of employees. Some of the respondents stated that the different departments have different cultures, which depends on the type of leader that is in charge. In the past, the top management was untouchable, but now with the communication network in place, the employee on the floor can communicate with the CEO of the organisation.
Q13	There are 6 mistakes identified from the interviewees, such as lack of communication and not sharing information, but how it is resolved is important. The respondents agreed that, by sharing information regarding the change, negativity will be prevented and they will understand the reason for change.

5.2.5. Summary of findings of research questions

The questionnaire was discussed and identified the main conclusions: the main focus was to identify if the respondents understand the term learning agility and the competencies of an agile leaders, how they respond to change and if there are support

from their organisation to be agile. By conducting the interviews, the researcher was provided with the knowledge to summarise the three research questions.

RQ1: What are the leadership competencies of agile leaders?

Q1, Q5, Q7 and Q8 aimed to address this research question. From the answers received, there appeared to be an agreement that empowerment, integrity and motivation are the most important competencies an agile leader can have. The respondents confirmed that EQ will be one of the important traits a leader can have, someone that have good communication skills, is aware of their own and others' emotions, and is a leader that will adapt to any given situation.

RQ2: What leadership approach supports learning agility?

Q4 was posed to address this research question. The respondents' answers are divided. More than half of the respondents follow a servant or participative leadership style, which allow the team to make their own decisions and be open-minded. Leaders who follow these types of style provide the required tools and training to the team and have mutual respect and understanding amongst them. The rest of the respondents follow a more traditional leadership style. They still want to be involved in every task and require feedback in-process. They do show some competencies of an agile leader, but require the necessary training and development.

RQ3: How can organisations develop an agile learning culture?

Q6 and Q10 aimed to address this research question. Most of the respondents agreed that there is little support from the organisation to be agile. The main focus is to handle the current challenges. All the respondents agreed that agility is needed to be competitive. The strategies that organisations have implemented are graduate training programs and the Kaizen incentive system. The organisations need to utilise current technology to provide them with the required skills to be adaptable and prepared in uncertain times.

MR: Is learning agility a component of sustained organisational success?

The main research question of this treatise was to establish if learning agility is a component of sustained organisational success. Based on the literature and the interviews done, the researcher obtained enough insights to answer the research question. The respondents agreed that learning agility is needed for any leader to succeed. An agile leader will assist the team and rest of the organisation to be successful and obtain complete advantage. The respondents stated that a high EQ will be one of the main traits a leader can have. Most of the respondent agreed that there is more support needed from the organisation and that they can implement more training programs, allow the leaders to make their own decisions and provide them with the tools to make decisions during uncertain times.

The qualitative primary data provided sufficient evidence and the researcher are satisfied. There is enough support for further research into the subject matter.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be considered:

5.3.1. Recommendations for organisations

Based on the results and findings of this treatise, it is recommended that learning agility must be taken into consideration in the recruitment process. In the past, the qualification and experience of an individual was the only requirement. In this new VUCA world an organisation requires individuals who is agile and have a high EQ. It is difficult to establish learning agility in the current interview process. It is recommended that different scenarios and case studies are provided to the individuals. Analysing their answers will provide the organisation with the level of learning agility present. There is currently one test available, which is the Mettle learning agility assessment. It enables the organisation to identify agile leaders. There are three sections to this test, which focusses on personality profiler, learning preference inventory and abstract reasoning. These three sections will assess the

individual's behavioural traits, the preferred learning approach in any given situation and the emotional intelligence competency.

5.3.2. What leaders can do to enhance their agility

Learning agility can be developed and there are a few ways to enhance this process:

- **Be Curious**

Agile leaders do not default into the same solutions every time. The leader needs to seek improvement and development of new skills. The leader needs to regard any opportunity available as a learning tool and use the skills learned in future decisions.

- **Take Risks**

Leaders must accept risk as an opportunity to learn and improve. Challenges must be a gateway to learn new skills and responsibility. The leader must have the confidence to ask for support from others.

- **Reflect**

Leaders should take the time to understand the challenge or change. They should gather all the information and provide solutions be open to feedback and allow open conversation between the team and the leader.

From the interviews, the following strategy can help to enhance learning agility:

- Respondent C3 said that implementation of a Kaizen incentive program will allow the individual to exceed the comfort zone and will teach them to be agile. With the motivation of an incentive, the necessary agility thinking will be enhanced.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The researcher is satisfied with the insight gained and have a deeper understanding of being learning agile. Learning agility will be an important component for future success. Further research options include:

Option 1: There is enough evidence that a quantitative research study can be done. Some of the open-ended questionnaires become unrelated to the topic and irrelevant information was shared. By creating an assessment with questions and possible answer scan, allow future researchers to analyse the data faster and will receive a straightforward answer.

Option 2: Selecting a more diverse sample that consists of the following:

- Young leaders vs more established leaders
- Small organisations vs big organisations
- Leaders from different backgrounds, culture, gender and age.

With a variety of a selected sample, the quality and validity of the research topic will increase. A broader understanding will provide the researcher with a variety of opinions and views to answer the research questions.

5.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There were several limitations to this treatise. Firstly, the time constraints place a limitation due to the face-to-face interviews done. One organisation was out of town and the researcher had to travel to where they are situated.

Secondly, only a few leaders were interviewed. More diverse leaders with different backgrounds, cultures and genders would have increased the validity of the study. Additional respondents would have added more detail and diverse understanding and would have provided a better insight into the different views on learning agility and which different leadership approaches they follow.

The last limitation to this study is concept related. Some of the respondents may not comprehend an understanding of organisational support, change and learning capabilities or shared leadership. The term learning agility is a rather new concept.

5.6. CONCLUSION

This study was undertaken to determine if learning agility is a component of successful business success. The researcher has gained valuable and deeper understanding into the topic of this treatise. The most important is that a leader can be agile in uncertain times, but a leader without an agile team will not succeed. Open communication and shared information are necessary for a positive and agile team. The researcher agreed that the treatise made a meaningful contribution to this field of study.

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APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

Change the World

mandela.ac.za

June 2019

Dear Respondent

My name is Mark Hennig and I am studying towards my MBA (Master in Business Administration) degree at the Nelson Mandela University Business School. I am conducting research on how leaders will lead in a fast-changing world. I believe that my study will make an important contribution to capture the uniqueness of the traits and skills that determines how agile leaders is to change.

You are part of our selected sample of respondents whose views we seek on the above-mentioned matter. I would therefore appreciate it if we can set up a meeting to ask you a few questions and get your opinion and perspective regarding the above-mentioned matter. It should not take more than 60 minutes of your time and we want to thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Please also note that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that you have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. We also guarantee your anonymity and the confidentiality of information acquired by this interview. Neither your name nor the name of your firm will be mentioned in the study.

Thank you very much.

Contact details: Mark Hennig 083 273 0881

To verify the authenticity of the study, please contact Prof Paul Poisat at telephone number 041 504 3750 or e-mail address Paul.Poisat@mandela.ac.za

Open-ended questions to guide the phenomenological inquiry into learning agility.

An appreciative inquiry technique will be used to explore deeper underlying meanings and rationale for respondents' initial responses to the questions mentioned below:

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?
2. How do you lead through change?
3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?
4. What leadership style do you use?
5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?
6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?
7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?
8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?
9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?
10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?
11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?
12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?
13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change?
How can they sidestep it?

APPENDIX B: ETHICS CLEARANCE

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth, 6021, South Africa mandela.ac.za

Chairperson: Faculty Research Ethics Committee (Human)
Tel: +27 (0)41 504 2504

Ref: [H19-BES-BUS-059] / Approval]

13 August 2019

Prof P Poisat
Department: Graduate School

Dear Prof Poisat,

TITLE OF STUDY: THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING AGILITY AS A COMPONENT OF SUSTAINED BUSINESS SUCCESS (MBA)

PRP: Prof P Poisat
PI: M Hennig

Your above-entitled application served at the *Faculty Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Business and Economic Science, (19 July 2019)* for approval. The study is classified as a negligible/low risk study. The ethics clearance reference number is **H19-BES-BUS-059** and approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. The immediate completion and return of the attached acknowledgement to Lindie@mandela.ac.za, the date of receipt of such returned acknowledgement determining the final date of approval for the study where after data collection may commence.
2. Approval for data collection is for 1 calendar year from date of receipt of above mentioned acknowledgement.
3. The submission of an annual progress report by the PRP on the data collection activities of the study (form RECH-004 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) by 15 December this year for studies approved/extended in the period October of the previous year up to and including September of this year, or 15 December next year for studies approved/extended after September this year.
4. In the event of a requirement to extend the period of data collection (i.e. for a period in excess of 1 calendar year from date of approval), completion of an extension request is required (form RECH-005 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal).
5. In the event of any changes made to the study (excluding extension of the study), completion of an amendments form is required (form RECH-006 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal).
6. Immediate submission (and possible discontinuation of the study in the case of serious events) of the relevant report to RECH (form RECH-007 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) in the event of any unanticipated problems, serious incidents or adverse events observed during the course of the study.
7. Immediate submission of a Study Termination Report to RECH (form RECH-008 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) upon unexpected closure/termination of study.
8. Immediate submission of a Study Exception Report of RECH (form RECH-009 to be made available shortly on Research Ethics Committee (Human) portal) in the event of any study deviations, violations and/or exceptions.
9. Acknowledgement that the study could be subjected to passive and/or active monitoring without prior notice at the discretion of Research Ethics Committee (Human).

Please quote the ethics clearance reference number in all correspondence and enquiries related to the study. For speedy processing of email queries (to be directed to Lindie@mandela.ac.za), it is recommended that the ethics clearance reference number together with an indication of the query appear in the subject line of the email.

We wish you well with the study.

Yours sincerely



Prof M van Eyk

Cc: Department of Research Capacity Development
Faculty Research Co-ordinator: Lindie van Rensburg

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

RESPONDENT A1

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

Empowering your subordinates is one of the most important values for me. To make decisions on their feet and to take responsibility, whether right or wrong, that is to be discussed later but in the end of the day I need to give my subordinates that freedom or room and empower them. That is one of the most important values for me that I want to demonstrate as a leader. At the end of the day I cannot do everything myself. I need to have a team that need to do the job. So, to empower them is one of the most important for me.

2. How do you lead through change?

I think for me personally the most critical thing is to understand and to realize that you as a leader do not have all the answers. It is unknown territory, so called uncharted territory and critical for me is to embrace that. I have seen previously under leadership that I have served, where certain leaders want to still basically call the shots. The only difference is I am the leader, but we as a team we need to do it together and then get all the inputs and analyses it critically. At the end of the day to decide where we all agree in the changing environment. You know it is uncomfortable for everybody it is like you say, human nature to resist change, but it is a mindset that the leader needs to make as well. As a leader you cannot be uncertain and give the impression to your team that you are also not embracing. I need to embrace it myself before I can even start managing a team in the changing environment. So, it is a mindset; through experience one must learn what we have discussed earlier: before you come to work you prepare your mind for what is going to happen today in the working environment. Expecting ahead if you are facing change, then preparing yourself mentally for it in the end of the day. You can kick against it or resist, but it is coming, so the sooner you embrace it and make that mindset change the better, to display confidence to your team members. Then they will also follow suit, because if you as a leader are going to resist and be negative about it, then the whole team will notice and will filter down in your body language. That is how I personally lead through change.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

Small goals are also one of the things that we as a team set for ourselves in a changing environment. To achieve those small goals, we kind of get lost in the detail in a fast-paced changing environment. You got your bigger picture and your bigger goal, but in between you need to break it up into smaller chunks. At the end of the day if we are not achieving that we need to adjust our goals. Goal setting is an objective for me, one that one needs to set clear for yourself and your team.

4. What leadership style do you use?

I would say participative. I embrace a leadership style where people want their input to be valued so it is a participative leadership style or democratic whatever you want to call it. It is important for me to be led by team leaders, by fellow team members, also feel that they are important, and they are valued. It is all about the team. That is my leadership style.

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

It is a mindset that is prepared. By saying that I mean to be knowledgeable about the industry or the changing environment that we are in. One must be constantly aware of your environment, so that means that it will be a mindset that is constantly reading, constantly doing research. Be aware of your environment so you are better prepared. It is a simple principle for many years and not only in the business world. It is basic in society and sport. Life favors a prepared mind they say, so you need to be prepared. If you take golf, like Gary Player said, you can practice as much as you can but, on the day, it is a variable. You have got to know how to handle it and it is the same in my environment. People need to be game fit or match fit in their minds. Agility for me is critical, to be aware of your immediate environment.

Continuous learning and growing will never stop

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

My organization is not so supportive of that. We all know that it is coming, and it has happened in the past. I think we are a bit slow in that regard and it is also my opinion that it is not only us but in general. We are so focused on the now and the current

challenges that we face in the economy and external environmental factors that we kind of lose track of what is going to happen in the future. I think organizations can do much better to be ready for the future. We as an organization invested heavily in the past year in structure. We set up a new department called Strategy and Innovation with its own director. It is a department which is on its own now to focus on these things. I think we are slowly catching up, but it will have to be rather sooner than later because one does not want to be caught with your pants on your knees. They say changes in the next 10 years are going to be much more than in the last 30 years that we have seen. I think it is going to come rapidly especially in the big specialization era that is coming, AI, Internet and all organizations will have to take a drastic step up. Making employees aware and guiding them. Currently we are not where we should be.

7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?

I think going forward. The time for making decisions is going to be less. Things are going to happen so fast that the traditional leadership style is going to be less relevant in the future. People are going to be leading themselves. Whether there will always be a team leader is debatable. People need to lead themselves at the end of the day. That is my view of going forward, hence my style also to empower people in the workplace to make decisions to take responsibility. I think it is going to be more crucial forward. You will still get those people that will need to fall back and can't make decisions, but that is something that a leader need to be aware off and try to coach people and lead people to get to that point where they can be leaders in their own sense. That is how I see leadership going forward. I do not think leadership will be replaced by AI, whatever, we will have to see. They say we are going to see things that we have never seen before. Maybe that is something that people is going to get in this AI environment. When you are unsure about something there could possibly be something that can guide you in the areas where you need it, but in organizations and corporate leadership need to try to promote self- leadership among employees.

8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

Traditionally IQ. But it has changed so much that EQ is more relevant than IQ as we speak. EQ is an area in which I do not have much input at this stage, but I can only really relate to it. Being a manager and being a leader are two different things. I think in future that is also going to be less important.

You would write EQ most important going forward. That is what we are looking for. Obviously, the others are important. You must have IQ to have EQ. You cannot have that one without the other, but EQ will have more relevance in the future.

It is going to be in the top 10 skills with critical thinking and all those things and hence the leadership style. Like I said, people are going to be more self-empowered and you cannot make decisions like in the old days. To make decisions you will have to know how to deal with it in an emotional way as well. People handle pressure in different ways. Every individual has his own way to handle pressure, but that skill is going to be required, critical for the future

It is going to be more and more about EQ.

The problem I have when we recruit is that it is difficult to identify that skill and to test for that skill. You can only see that in practical scenarios or in practical environment. It is difficult to test somebody for that in an interview in an hour or whatever. If you have a degree like an MBA degree or whatever, it is a sign of your intelligence, your IQ. You can see he has got his IQ in place. Managerial intelligence you can have a look at his experience, but EQ is a difficult animal to test for. You can get these highly clever people with brilliant CVs, but in the workplace, they cannot handle pressure without emotional intelligence. But the nice thing about that is that it is a skill that you can learn. IQ, you either have it or you do not have it, but EQ with the right leadership, it is a skill that people can learn.

9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

In my current environment we are pretty much centralized from a head office directive but in a sense, we are also decentralized. Within parameters we can make decisions, initiatives, and stuff. To put the question in place I think leadership need to make the necessary changes. Like I said earlier, fish gets rotten from its head down. That is why leadership is there to demonstrate the preferred or the ideal way forward for subordinates. That is exactly what it is: the leadership need to first embrace and

identify what we are going to achieve and how we are going to achieve it and demonstrate that and like I said earlier, involve the people with you. So, communication is very critical in practice. When one wants to display that, talking to the people, we share a lot. In my own circumstances, especially when I started in leadership roles, you do not have the necessary experience and you operate in your own way. You kind of forget what is happening there so that communication is very important so that the people can know what we are doing, or you might forget about it or neglect it. It is critical for people to see where we are going. A clear strategy is a thing that leadership need to adopt as well. People must know where we are going.

10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to scale agile?

Yes, in a sense. Not as much as people would think in the current environment, but something small: where our buyers or our stock takers, whatever you want to call it, worked on a traditional pencil and paper method, writing everything down with hand and manual calculations, adding subtracting and reconciling, whatever. So, we make the transition into digital and we save a lot of time by achieving that. It happened before my eyes, that's the way to go. It is a couple of years ago already. We have also been looking for ways to save time at the end of the day. There are only 24 hours in the day and one have to sleep as well so you have limited resources in that regard so we need to optimize our time, finding ways to achieve that, the new era is going to solve that problem for us. It has already shown that something small can have a big impact to free up time for other things. Once we can get the full benefit of the new technologies and the new ways, we are going to see a big difference: freeing up people, the automation factor and all of that so we are trying to do much more, but we take it as it comes.

11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?

We meet once a month for whatever, we put any idea on the table, the whole management team, it is open in that meeting so everyone can feel free to put anything on the table. If it's so crazy we just laugh it off and carry on but some ideas have merit so that is how I encourage that to get the environment for people to feel safe to make contributions. That is something that we do. Even if you get one idea out of 1000 that you can implement with success it has the potential to disrupt the way we have been doing things for many years in a better way. That is how I do it.

I always believe I can put anybody in a position from outside with the necessary qualifications, it is still going to take time to adapt to our culture and our ways of doing things and learning the business. I personally prefer to develop people from the bottom up. There are a lot of benefits for the individual and the organization, for fellow employees it is the motivational aspect. We have had people that started from the entry level positions and worked their way up to management positions as we speak, from being an order picker or a cleaner over time. Develop, identify the person, like you said and give him the opportunities bit by bit. A picker now, you can give him a chance in the computer room to do invoicing or whatever, he can show he can cope with that, so we have had very good success stories. I like it personally as well, for me it is one of the things that I prefer as a leader and I enjoy also to develop people and see them grow. It gives some pride in the leader as well.

12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?

I must say in our organization, we are part of a group, but we are a division on our own, but we have our own management and we have our own board of directors, so we pretty much have a culture of our own. In every big organization you will find every department has its own culture. If you take the branch in Eastern Cape, it is a division within the company and then you get supermarkets in the Free State for example, it is part of a group, but they are two different divisions in the company. Every division has got its own culture, every division has got its own boss, every division has got its own HR, its own financial section. It is also the same with us where we are also a division in the company with our own culture, with our own team, with our own leadership. Critical in our culture, I am not talking about the broader group, is stability and leadership. We have had only two MDs in our 30 years existence. The second one is in this position now for over 20 years and the senior management under him increase the stability there. When you get that situation culture of the division stays intact. Yes, you get changes, one here and one there but you have core stability in the company, so everybody knows what the culture is. We also have very fast paced environment, e.g. you can see this when there is a week-old banana on top. So, time is against us with highly perishable commodities because of the fast-moving consumer goods in overdrive so we need to make decisions fast in our environment. We cannot wait a week to clear a decision with head of office. In that sense we make decisions here. We have got the ability to make decisions. We are a family, we care about

people, that is important. Going forward it's going to be even more critical; people need to feel that they are safe in their environment. I am sitting here in a leadership position and I know every person is going to make mistakes no matter who you are. You are going to make mistakes, but you have to have that feeling of safety: yes, I'm going to make mistakes, so what? At the end of the day I've decided whether right or wrong. If it was wrong, I'll take criticism, but nobody is going to do blame shifting, that is our family culture and it has been in place in our environment for many years since I've been there and it's never going to change. It is just improving it's almost like a brotherhood in a sporting team you get that sense that you are playing for each other, that is how I experience the culture for us. We have been growing progressively over time adapting to the changing environment. Yes, it is going to be much more in the future, but your culture is important. I've seen people and organizations that operate in silence, but it is difficult to be agile in those scenarios because it is everybody for himself and you're just protecting your own interest instead of growing as a team and organization going forward. So, one must have those elements in place where leadership must move forward with a change and that's how I experience it.

In difficult times you need guys to put their hands together.

With the new era we are moving to efficiencies and expecting to be optimized to almost 100%. Companies who are not going to be at that level will be out because of all the technology that's going to come: AI, Internet of things, automatization, all these new resources that companies are going to have. The room for error it's going to be less because everybody is going to be able to lift their game. It is that extra push that you had, imagine if you replace all the people that we had with machines to do the job and we program the machine for maximum because that is what we want so there is no room for error basically. If people are going to fight against each other within the organization to move forward by the time you wake up other companies are going to surpass you and take your market share and you will go out of business. So, people will need to trust each other in the organization leadership and believe that we move forward as a team.

There are a few things that come to mind. The first was to bring people in from outside. I said we had a core leadership in place for many years and I said there was stability but for example a guy came in from Windhoek then took in the same position that I

have. He was an older guy in his mid-50s, recruited from outside the company three years ago and he just did not fit in the culture. That is something that we have learnt from the head office level. Like I said, we believe in growing from within the company. You basically grow up like a child in the company and you learn how we do things, so to bring somebody in from outside in a top-level position is not easy and they find it hard to adapt to our culture. That is something that we have learnt, and, in the future, we won't do that again. There is always a balance: if your pool is exhausted of the resources inside, you must bring new blood in, but not at that level; maybe middle or junior level which will also give him time to grow. That is one thing.

About seven years ago we tried a new warehouse management system in Cape Town. We brought it in as a trial date as trial, an ERP system basically of how to optimize your warehousing operation with a little bit of automation. So, when a product comes in it tells you this product goes to that and that and that isle whereas we had this facility where we store this and that. So, this thing was mixing all up and then we had GPS technology to guide this and it did not work. It was a total disaster, so we abandoned that. In future we will probably try a new way again so there are definitely things that we try, and which don't work, but in terms of culture it is difficult to fit into a new culture.

Keep trying to motivate the people inside that there is room for growth for them.

Yes, that's one of the big advantages that we have.

When a guy is working hard and uncertain whether they are going to put somebody else in his place from outside

You get organizations where people are in certain positions for 10, 15, 20 years and that is wrong for me. You get certain people that prefer to stay in a position for ever but there are also people that need to grow and for their own personal growth they can't be in one position all the time. There need to have some scope and vision to believe yes, I'm going to grow. That is how you retain talent as well. With our company I believe you've got a good retention rate in senior management for various reasons but among others it is that of growth within the organization. It is tough to lose people to your opposition; for example, you have developed and invested a lot in a person to get him to the level which he has reached and all of a sudden he goes to your opposition with those intellectual abilities which he has reached and he's going to give

it to your opposition. So, we are very wary about that and when we start with new people, we contractually prohibit them to go and work for the opposition for example for two years. These are some of the things we do now but it's the same elsewhere in the industry: people canvas people from the competition to obtain certain inside information and strategies, but that person is just a pawn to get that information. People are very important in our environment where we are wholesale retail. We have seen some technologies there, but at the end of the day we still need people to do the job. It will never be fully automatic, you still have to have human element and if I compare now to the organization side of things their business is first, they chase the numbers and they work the people to death there in the stores for example. That is a culture difference within the organization that we have so there is more business, here it is more people orientated and I prefer this way. It is more sustainable at the end of the day.

You will always get the people at the lower levels, at the entry levels who think they are underpaid. Experience showed to me that things sort themselves out over time. Yes, when we start we are pretty much average payers or whatever, but show us the loyalty, show us the commitment in the long run then the benefits start kicking in if you interview a random sample of 10 people, 10 out of 10 are going to feel that they are not paid enough so it is obviously a sensitive subject for younger people especially people that started that want to earn big bucks, millennials. So that is a big challenge for leadership, for zin general at this point in time: how are we going to deal with that because it is not sustainable to pay that kind of money. It won't ease and we are in a situation in South Africa where unemployment is almost 30% officially, unofficially it's closer to 40%. These people must get work. At some point in time something is going to give and currently the legislation is at 20 Rand an hour. I still feel personally it's not a lot of money. People should earn more than that and hopefully can earn more than that but at the end of the day supply and demand are forces in the market and it should determine the price at the end of the day. To encourage economic growth, we cannot have that restriction. If people are willing and able to work for less than that to earn something, why are they being stopped. We see immigrants from neighbor countries like Zimbabwe and Mozambique who are prepared to work for food and accommodation just to sustain the living. Understanding the bigger picture.

So, we are unfortunately in a dire situation in the country, It's not ideal.

Yes, we did that in the big company. We created a new department called innovation and strategy and innovation with his own director to own team. That department drives innovative and new ways to lead us into the future that was established about a year or two ago and they are primarily focused on the future they have strategies to get us there and how to deal with the future and how to deal with change

13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change?

How can they sidestep it?

I think not making decisions at all. You get some people who ignore change, that is one of the big things we discussed earlier. Organizations in general ignore change and don't make decisions at all. That is one of the things that I think is a big mistake that people make. They try to keep a blind eye as they don't want to go there. It is uncomfortable, so they rather postpone it as much as they can, then they reach the point that it is too late. It is critical to take the bull by the horns and make the decision even if it's a difficult decision.

RESPONDENT A2

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

To stay calm in stressful situations. Another thing that I would think is to be an example to the employees so that they know what a leader should look like. Willing to do the same as your subordinates do and it also helps you to be in their shoes to know what kind of job they have. Engaging with them and working with them you are automatically engaging with them and getting their feedback as to what their experiences are than you would by sitting in an office not engaging with them.

2. How do you lead through change?

Mainly the changes that I dealt with in previous positions, was retrenchments, but what I always say to the staff is you must give your best to the end so that the company will want to give you a positive reference and that the company will want to help you to find other jobs. When they generally become negative when the letters start coming in you basically coach them to say you have to stay positive in the situations because you don't know if you are one of the people that are influenced by the retrenchments. You could be one of the people that are not influenced, but through your negativity you now change the whole structure because more people will be influenced by the retrenchments. By staying positive and doing your work you add to the company growing and to minimize the whole retrenchment process. By being negative you actually escalate the situation.

We try and grow a culture of helping each other and just getting down and doing the work instead of pointing fingers at one another comparing each other's duties. We try and have a work ethic in place where we try and help each other and the work then becomes less for certain departments because everyone is helping each other. We try not to say this is your job description, so we don't have specific job descriptions for specific people, but we tell them you have to learn all parts of your department and more so that you are able to move within the company when positions become available.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

So, achieving it is very difficult because the objectives are continuously changing, so you as a management team must continuously come to a point where are you meet.

Whether it's on a weekly basis or on a monthly basis, to make sure that we are all achieving the objectives together and not individually. Because the moment we are trying to achieve objectives individually we are missing the whole goal at the end of the day. So the whole objective is for the teams to work together to get to the target and the more fast paced it becomes, the more important it is for the team to get together and to meet and to make sure we are all on the same page and know what is required to get the job done.

We have our monthly meetings in place. If we have deadlines to meet depending how fast-paced our requirements are, e.g. financial year ends, we meet on a weekly basis. Then we basically discuss the stresses that each individual manager is dealing with it at the time and we try and give input as to helping him out of the other managers' departments or to give him advice how to do it smarter, faster and better.

4. What leadership style do you use?

I find it very difficult to delegate, I prefer to do something myself and to show the members of my team how to do it in that way. I focus a lot on my mistakes in the past to show that I'm also human and in that way, they then hopefully learn from my mistakes and don't make the same mistakes. I would say my leadership style is led by example, showing them how to do it and doing it with them, not having the status of I am better than you so you must do you it; to show them we are all at the same level, we all work as a team.

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

An agile mindset is a person that is continuously changing decision-making. I would say they are not constant with their way of decision-making; they are constantly changing their minds. It obviously influences their team negatively because the team realizes that that person doesn't really know what he's doing so the team also falls back. That's why I would see an agile mindset as a risk to the business.

As a company we now must use that to our benefit. I see it in a negative connotation because that is what will be needed for the future to survive.

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

So, they started a process where all the management teams must go through a test system where you get tested on your ability to lead and you get marks. You mark yourself and you are marked by the other managers as well. So, the whole management team had to undergo these tests and then we got the results which basically pointed out that the organization is busy moving towards focusing on the employee's own strengths and abilities. So, in our yearly conference it was emphasized that we must change our mindset towards a mindset of focusing on management skills versus their skills and what are they good at. So, you are going to be focusing more on peoples' strengths than their weaknesses. We will be putting people into teams where their strengths are instead of being closed off to you only do this. We are moving in a direction where we need staff that are brainstorming. We have a weakness as a company in innovation. So, we have to start sourcing people to bring our innovation standards up because that is where our biggest shortfall lies.

We have to start working towards that kind of training because we haven't got that in place as yet. The training we do, we have various training programs for the management particularly, but I don't see that training as having an effect on those management abilities. I don't see that the training is focusing on their weaknesses because it is just general training sessions that we do for developing managers for success. So, we would have to start focusing on specific training for weaknesses as it is our shortfall now.

7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?

A leader whose mindset can move between different ways of thinking. So, something that works for one team might not work for another team. The ability to motivate different teams in different ways I think would be important for the future. That will be one of the points. The second point is not to be influenced by others' negativity in general to remain motivated in tough times so because we cannot predict the future, we assume that it is going to be tough. So, you need a manager that can keep the team motivated and positive no matter what the situation is at the time. Some guys will make a success in one company, but when he moves on to another company in with the same job description and it just does not work.

You need to be internally motivated because external factors will definitely be your downfall in these trying times.

8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

I do believe that EQ will be the most important one because I feel that the others will fall into place if you have emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence speaks of having to deal with employees differently according to what situation they are going through, so I do believe the others will fall in place if you have a high emotional intelligence.

9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

It will take completely changing the recruitment strategy because we have been sourcing people for meeting experiential behavior that they have dealt with in certain areas of the job. But to get them to have an agile mindset, I don't know the how we are going to meet the criteria that will be involved in selecting a person that is agile enough. Hopefully there will be new kinds of assessments in the markets that will help us with that way of thinking, but now I wouldn't know how to select someone with an agile mindset.

How do you really know if somebody has EQ, because it comes over the course of time? The strategies I am using now when interviewing will not work when I'm trying to select the person with an agile mindset.

10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?

The successful strategies we had were our trainee manager programs. Our company has a program where they take in students that are fresh from the Universities and they then have to learn all parts of the business. They are not moved into one specific area of the business. They have to learn all parts of the business, so that allows their whole mindset and their whole experience in a working environment to be more agile because there have to use different personality traits when dealing with different departments. You will be more agile to think out of the box, be more confident in your own abilities because you will know all parts of the business, you will never be in a situation where you're not sure about what that department is doing. So that program

gives us managers that can work in any department, in any environment and after that they get placed in the management there anywhere in the country.

So, our aim with the program is to basically to help the possible future leader to develop his skills in becoming a leader of a team. The trainee managers usually do not have any working experience and through gaining working experience we want the ideal candidate to get the respect of his colleagues and in that way start to lead the team in a positive manner because he won't be able to lead any team if he made the team while training negative. So, we want the person to grow into a leadership role in that year not only to gain skills, but to find himself as a leader and be willing to work on those strengths to lead a team after that year.

You get a guy who is leading the team, but has not got the bigger picture or where you get a guy who has all the skills, but you can't learn to develop a new leader.

11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?

One thing that we still lack is the confidence to bring ideas to the table because a lot of the managers have a fear of negativity when they give a possible solution in that they will be ridiculed or a negative energy would come from it. So, the fear of negative feedback from the other managers is something we need to work on to improve. The managers are simply too scared to make any changes to the way we do business because of the negativity that could result from it. To make the business more open to innovation and to new ideas is something we are working on at the moment; to try and find a way forward with innovation which we don't have.

So, we've got standard procedures in place that everyone abides by. When things go wrong and we can't go according to the standard operating procedures we then meet as a management team but then again, it's not a very innovative discussion. It's just how can we get the job done in the fastest way and get more people to do. It's not really focused on innovation and better ideas or how can we do it better next time. We just focus on the now, not on the future.

We have not had the ability to give to the managers the risk taking and decision-making abilities that they need to be innovative. So, going forward we basically need a plan so that we can give them that actual ability to do that.

Always ask the staff for their input like what would their opinion be in doing something better. You can definitely see that they are not too sure if they should say anything, but try and pull it through in all parts of the business to get staff's input into how to do things smarter would be the ideal situation for agility in our business; So to have more staff input where they have the ability to give feedback and not be scared of what the negative energy or negative feedback is going to be.

12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?

I have not been with the company that long, so it is a bit difficult for me to answer on how the company's culture has changed.

The culture was very much driven towards making a profit for the business and in the process you would be losing the personal touch with the staff by basically focusing on the targets and then forgetting about the human factor: how to get people in the department to focus on your target in a way that they would feel that they are also benefiting. So, we then tried to bring in incentives like staff member of the month. That person would then be certified for being the best staff member in that department for the month and he/she would also get acknowledged by his peers in that process when that person's name is mentioned in group discussions. In that way there was more of a human factor added to the business instead of just focusing on targets by just getting the staff more involved. You then would link your targets for the month by giving that person an incentive for meeting the smaller targets on a daily basis. It is just a matter of changing a profit driven culture to a more humanly driven profit factor.

13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change? How can they sidestep it?

The changes they would face would be that they want to face challenges in the changing environment. The whole fact that we are not properly prepared yet for this whole process of agility, that would be the reason why we are not as prepared as we should be. The problem with that is that we are not as informed and when the change actually happens, we are not prepared for it. So, the risk is that we are not prepared for the whole agility thinking and flexibility scenarios. We say that we are going to focus on people's strengths, but it does not really cover all parts, for instance changing

robotics and changing the logistics of the business. So, the unknown is basically our weakest link.

To ensure his difficulties and his stress factors with his team; things that he is battling to solve in that whole change process a lot of times; you don't see a solution and if you involve your team they can have a practical solution to something which seems undoable or unchangeable to you as a manager because you are stuck in that negative stress situation. So to share the actual problem with the team and to get their input would lift some of your negativity and help you to realize that the change is not as bad as you think; so it has a lot to do to keep your mindset positive and if you are unable to keep a positive mindset, then try to involve your team and try to draw positivity from the other team members.

Sometimes it is better to say more than just what is necessary A lot of the time you as a leader want to uphold your authority over the team. Leaders are sometimes scared of losing some of that authority. You may think you have to enforce that level of respect, but it will not be lost just because you asked them for help. It does not make you less powerful as a manager just because you ask other people's input and when you asked their help. It shows that you have the ability to get other people involved as a team. You will build trust

RESPONDENT A3

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

The environment in which we work is ever changing. One week we could be fighting inflation, the next week we could be fighting deflation. It all depends on what is happening at the end of the month and how we need to adapt. One of the things that I, as a leader must have, is a team that is adaptable. You therefore must show adaptability and be flexible. You need to be quick to assess the economic system, for instance when confronted with inflation, you need to know what measures to take. I must decide whether to combat inflation or to utilize it to the advantage of the company.

Other measures include combating conditions that jeopardize our goals. It is important to get your team on board as well in order to implement measures to combat deflation for instance so that we don't have the same negative results as in the past. My experience as a training manager has been to identify outcomes and act accordingly. It is therefore important that we reach our targets and that we stay within our budget. It is very important that we as leaders assess the future and be flexible and adaptable to manage the situation. During deflation we want to push as much volume as possible to make profit for the company. During inflation you still have to push volume, but there may be resistance from the customer because the prices are too high, so you have to identify that situation and the team accordingly. Your team should be fully aware of what you are planning to do and your communication with them in this regard is therefore extremely important. They have to be fully informed what the outcomes is going to be. It is also important that you have a lot of patience especially with team mates who might not agree with you or who are slow to change adapt. One must be willing to allow time for that to happen by assisting them and coaching them as far as possible. It is still very important that this should be done as quickly as possible because of the high turnover in staff being transferred to other DCs, being promoted or leaving the company. Patience is therefore also necessary for the numerous new staff members that come in for training and the need to get them to the proper level of efficiency. These are a few of the values you have to demonstrate as a leader.

2. How do you lead through change?

Be flexible and adapt easily. As I mentioned there is always a high turnover of staff. We experience a continuous change in the environment as well as a constant change in the character of the team as well. Even one individual can totally change the motivation of the team. Such a person can drag the spirit of the team down or raise the attitude of the team. One should therefore be aware of what is happening in the team as well as what is happening in their environment and by conversing individually with the members, determine the attitude of each one. In conversations and meetings, one should also use facial expressions and other clues to determine individuals' feelings about matters. We should be constantly aware of this because of the high turnover in staff members and be fully informed to prevent the demotivation of the team especially during times of change. It is important to know whether a new team member has a positive or a negative influence on the team. As a team leader one must be capable to balance matters and to keep the team in a positive frame of mind.

Everybody should be up to date with the latest electronic media like emails, cell phones, the Internet, etc. but at the same time younger employees should be made aware of company rules and regulations, for instance not to abuse the electronic media like making lengthy private calls, making WhatsApp's and contacting family and friends during office hours. Individuals must be made aware that there are certain goals that they must reach by the end of the day. It is important to have the patience to deal with such an individual. It helps to clearly explain the reasons to employees why personal matters should be attended to after office hours. Other changes that the leader should be able to manage include political changes and the buying patterns of customers. We as leaders should get as much information as possible by conversing extensively, by reading as much as possible, by finding out how our decisions affect the customers because that in turn affects our business. So, it is a matter of gaining as much information as possible.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

In order to achieve the objectives everybody needs to know quite clearly what those objectives are. There also should be a clear way of calculating how far an individual has progressed to reach an objective, and everybody should understand how this is done and a leader should have the ability to measure this progress. Objectives are

sometimes not fully understood by everybody, for instance the end result might be only considered to be making the budget, whereas it may also include other lesser matters like reaching the volumes as that would make the customers happy. If the customers are happy that means that the budget in future will be reached much easier and quicker. To achieve this, progress must be measured and communicated to all concerned on an ongoing basis. Depending on what the task is, follow up and communication should continuously be performed. This feedback can then be used to reassess objectives. To be able to reach the right outputs employees should be supplied with the right inputs in terms of raw materials, etc.

4. What leadership style do you use?

I consider myself lenient, timid of character, humble and quiet of nature. However, I find from having conversations with individuals after having given them tasks and calling them in for conversations and questions, that it's misconstrued as being insistent, but it also depends on who the individual is. I allow individuals to use their own initiative when I give them tasks. Also, I prefer to get feedback on a step-by-step basis when an individual is performing tasks, and also to ascertain whether that person has not got a better way of performing a particular task. By having frequent communication, I keep myself continually informed of the progress of a particular task, so my leadership style is based on frequent communication. Then finally when the task is completed, I have a full analysis of the way it was executed together with the individual, so the employee is given a full opportunity to give his own input. I have to be careful that the feedback is given continuously because we are in the perishable food business where a mistake can incur heavy expenses. I also advise employees that they can come to me at any time for advice, mainly to prevent heavy losses.

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

I understand an agile mindset as meaning how quickly you can change from one mindset to another. I also understand that it means how you can use your personality to change your way of communication from one person to another which includes individuals from different generations. Each of the generations with whom I have to work requires a different approach from me; so, some people have to be told bluntly what to do while others give the best results if they are treated humbly. Being agile therefore means to me that you can change your leadership skills in the manner in

which you work with your staff. Be agile also means that I should be able to use different skillsets in my dealings with a wide variety of managers from different companies. This also applies to working with staff from other branches, from head office, from all levels in the hierarchy of the company. Also, external changes, like new technology

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

There are a number of courses which the employees have to attend but none as far as I know that focuses specific on agility. We have had courses dealing with EQ, with IQ, with negotiations, with mentoring as well as coaching. It could be that agility was touched on in these courses or in the one on change management but nothing by that name to my knowledge.

7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?

I would say one who is with his team but does not direct from behind, but leading and encouraging from the front through the difficult times. Even if you are very busy with other compulsory work, you should still make time for your team members in your department. Also take time to see what is happening in the company as a whole, what is happening in the distribution centers and also try to help out in your own as well as other departments where needed. The idea is to prevent any bottlenecks in the company and generally maximize the output of the staff as a whole. I also believe the leaders should be able to change over time and accept innovations, e.g. technology. Some people are slow to change. We have moved away from Excel to Google which is a totally different mindset. This means that I've got to learn totally new formulas, so it is a matter of a new approach and experimenting. Seeing that staff is your main output, it is important as a manager and leader to perform a great input together with them. Once again, different individuals should be handled according to their individual personalities to enable you to get their maximum output.

Lots of engagement

A good leader should infuse his staff with all the good qualities that is mentioned in all the textbooks, like mentally coaching his staff and patience with staff, customers and

suppliers. The leader should set an example so that his staff will want to copy his good qualities, and, in that way, they will learn how to become future leaders themselves.

8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

Emotional intelligence is very important because people must understand themselves, understand their feelings and understand how it impacts themselves and other individuals. Usually the best way of understanding a person's EQ is by means of an interview. I do it by asking them about the problems they experienced in the past and how they handled it and what the result was. If they haven't experienced problems in the work situation for whatever reason, I ask them how they handled problems in their personal life or in other situations. In this manner I get information about what kind of persons they are and how well they handle matters regarding their EQ. IQ for me is slightly more important because there are a large number of figures, patterns, numbers which are used to determine where we are going in the business and to observe whether we are moving in the right direction. Both EQ and IQ are extremely important but a person with a high IQ who cannot control his emotions, is ineffective.

In this case EQ would be the top requirement. MQ has to do with managerial skills where you hit the targets, but your team is unhappy.

I'll have to say EQ, then IQ and then MQ, but in the company environment where we are, we have financial targets and they are all three important to achieve this. When we recruit, we focus on all of those in successful candidates. We concentrate on candidates' EQ when we look for new staff that will fit the culture of a department. Everything will go wrong if a person that does not fit the culture of that department is appointed. There are certain jobs where IQ is of paramount importance, but since my department communicate a lot with suppliers by means of negotiations I will in retrospect put EQ first.

9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

Possibly a lot of training as well as making a person fully aware of what agile leadership actually entails including several case studies where the role of

agility can be fully indicated. Reference to actual departments and situations of the business can then be deduced from the case studies.

10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?

I don't understand the question fully

11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?

As mentioned before, letting the person know the beginning and the end of a task and then encouraging them to use their own faculties to get from the start to the objectives. If they have problems making progress, then help them and at the same time encourage them to apply these solutions to other challenges. Also encourage them to use the experience to find different solutions for different cases and apply this training to find a wide variety of innovations which specifically apply to the perishable food market. These may include anything from new produce to the properties of bags, customer preferences, quality of food, profit for the company, risk taking, area choices, anything out of the box.

12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?

The company's culture has changed. The company was goal driven, target driven, somewhat autocratic and MQ orientated, but as new individuals with different mindsets rose to take over management, control was passed lower down to distribution centers so that there was a shift towards a more democratic management style. Advice from the top replaced orders and at the same time tools and support structures were supplied to be more efficient. This has led to overall improvement also regarding company culture.

13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change? How can they sidestep it?

Lack of communication with staff during times of change. After communicating the changes to the staff, it is important to continue with follow up to determine whether the changes have been fully understood, whether there is resistance, whether it has been implemented and to identify the individuals who are not cooperating. The necessary steps can then be taken to address the situation by determining what would be most

effective, whether positive or negative measures as the matter requires. Keeping staff fully informed throughout the change is of utmost importance, as well as input from them so that they can be consider themselves to be part of the change.

RESPONDENT B1

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

I try to show that I know what the business is about and that I know what I'm talking about when I make decisions. I am not guessing stuff and not making decisions without having the facts and the second big thing is that I try to lead from the front and try to do that by not just thinking up what we are going to do next and then tell somebody else to do it, but to walk with them through that journey and try and learn with them and align what we do.

2. How do you lead through change?

It depends on the change. The one thing that works is if you make sure that whoever needs to work through the change has all the information about why is the change, what's the benefits going to be, what's the differences going to be, so that there is transparency. People tend to keep back the change when they are unsure of what is going to happen next or why it's happening. So, the one thing is to provide as much detail around the change as possible within limitation. Sometimes information is confidential. A big change like we have gone through would be to try and break it down into pieces. You deal with one part of the change first and why people are hesitant to move with it. When people are afraid that if they buy into it will cost them their job at the end of the day which in most cases isn't the case and if you can just unpack it a little bit and bring people back together and explain that the change like we went through. In a warehouse operation there is no substitute for trucks at the moment, there is no substitute for forklifts. People still have to operate those things. There is not going to be a robot here in the next year and the moment when that penny drops then you tend to move through the change and once you get over that big hurdle then it's easier to tweet the little changes because guys have as much transparency as you can. They have got a bit of assuredness they are going to be OK through the changes and clearly not affect them as individuals. Other changes can happen, so for example, something that will be difficult, let's say a company is bought over and it changes the way it operates, so it sells off parts of its business, essentially outsourcing it. Again it's a scary idea, but if you can get them to understand that again there is no substitute for trucks and somebody has to drive them and there is no substitute for the forklifts and

somebody needs to do it and somebody needs to answer the phone from customers and regardless what the company name is, the operation in essence will remain the same, with minor changes.

You cannot in a large corporation go and consult every single person about the change and then things need to be enforced, that is why there are decision makers in business and while we often need as employees, and I am an employee myself, why we need to trust in the decisions, because it can ultimately impact on us on the floor if it goes wrong. What I thought management at the time could have done differently was information sharing, engaging with the people, as much information as you possibly can give them and where there is uncertainty. Where you can't give that exact clarity at least try and give some sort of assurance of what the direction will be or a timeline when we will get to that stage. If people only know that the next two months it is not going to be an issue, but two months from now we are going to discuss it then they tend to be okay until we reach that point again and by that time you will be ready with your information and you can move along again.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

In a fast-paced world, where you have got lots of variables, things changing quickly, lots of stuff happening. Where it goes wrong, is people try to fix 10 or 15 things at the same time and then you don't fix anything. So the best way to get to it, is you decide what is the most important, the most critical, and fix them first and try and standardize it whether it is through a process or a tool, get a system that consistently works for that thing and move on through your list of actions so that when you get to that Friday into Saturday a million things need to happen. There is always going to be variables but if you have covered at least 80% of your biggest obstacles, the two that pops up is that you have time for it and that you have the resources for it to solve it. It is really just through a bit of longer-term strategic approach, implementing processes and then getting them consistent and not trying to juggle all the balls people should want.

4. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

I try to use an engaging leadership style where I try to engage as many of the people I possibly can, as often as I possibly can. And then the other one again is partaking personal accountability, so again I don't push accountability on to my line managers

for example and if it goes wrong just hold them accountable. I assist them through that process. Of course, I give instructions and they follow it through and if they do it wrong, we break it down. If it goes wrong, I don't put all the blame on them and make it their fault because in most cases it was a misunderstanding, it could've been a lack of skill, a lack of knowledge, a lack of training, whatever. Then we work through that problem and fix it and that again comes back to just engaging instead of being militant about. I would rather engage, figure out the problem, reset, go again until we get it right because in most cases people generally have good skills, good communication ability, can do the work. Some of them needs to be pushed a bit harder than others, but in general if they don't get it right it's because something else went wrong not the individual.

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

I would consider, that let's say you run into a problem in operation and that you either fall back on things that you have done in the past that worked to try and fix some of the problem. Or you want to fix it with routines that usually worked for you which is very consistent. Where an agile mindset would be to consider various options for that problem before making decisions on implementation. If we have got a problem, the first thing we ask is do we have a standard operating procedure which I think is fine in most cases, but then don't just go you have a process that will only get you that far, the people that you work with will only get it that far, but that you then open yourself up: is there technology available that can assist the people there is more and more technological tools becoming available. It is becoming cheaper and cheaper and easier to implement. In this warehouse environment we seriously need to start asking questions around diesel forklifts: is it still the right forklift, should we go to gas or should we go to battery, so we probably should've thought a little longer about that, you don't know what happens six months from now, it is really to try and cover all the variables that can be around this project of yours or this problem of yours trying to think of as many different ways to solve it and then try to find the best one. Not one standard answer for everything.

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

I think it depends on which level you are in. At certain levels you need consistency and that is typically when from top down you get a standard operating process, rolled down to you and this is how you operate, and that typically would have been out checked by various experts in the fields and from a governance compliance and legal, etc. and then that pitch rolled out especially in the business like this one with 40 plus operating sites, can't have each guy doing whatever he wants to. It will cause havoc in the greater scheme of the business. Higher up in the business you definitely need to. The bigger challenge is if you get to that point though and you keep making different decisions it means you introduce more change which leads to inconsistency in what the guys on the floor receive and that is a different type of problem. People don't like change.

External changes from the world technology for example solar panels, how do we then adapt

How the environment changes, smart warehouse systems, the way we operate is old school, there is no smart system, making the process so much faster

When you need to critically assess your operation and are you still doing the right thing on the best way, there is a lot of ways that you can make it quicker, better, faster. Obviously, the reasons why we don't is that it either comes at the cost or a significant change in the operation will maybe cause more damage than good. In the shorter term the key is that you need to critically assess if your operation, business is running like it should, which areas you can improve in. You also need to be pretty sure whatever you're going to implement you can sustain until you've paid back this investment before you need to go to the next.

What in your opinion makes a good leader?

I think somebody who is willing to learn, who keeps up with the changes, who doesn't shoot it down because he is not comfortable with it necessarily, one of these days, it would be a very difficult decision if I have to decide whether my company is going to start dealing in bitcoins or not. One of these days people are going to have to start making those decisions and you just need to have people who are open to the change, open to the ideas and understand the opportunity. Someone that is open to change, he must not dismiss it off-the-cuff, he must at least be willing to go and check it out.

7. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

It depends where you appoint the person into, in most cases you're going to have people working with people and EQ in my mind wins most of the time. You don't need to be the smartest guy, but if you at least can engage with people, speak to them. One guy sitting with all the information in his head, but too afraid to open his mouth or he doesn't want to share his ideas, he wants to hold it to himself and he is not open to engaging with people or let everyone know a little less, but at least share ideas and talk to each other and fight it out and work together in groups. Then you have a guy with a high IQ, but he does not talk. MQ is just one guy who gives direction.

EQ is going to be the most important, companies are going to look for it. EQ is about being aware about his own abilities

8. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

You can have an agile leader at the head of your company, but the only way to put it into practice is for him to have a team that is similar. He can't do it alone. If he has these ideas that are out of the box or willing to explore all these new potential market opportunities, they must not think he is crazy and must be able to follow it.

You can have an agile leader at the head of the company, but the rest of the team must at least be willing to explore it. One guy cannot win it. The leadership team of the company or the board of directors must at least be willing to explore it because if it comes down to a vote and guys are set in their ways and too comfortable where they are, they are not going to make a decision and are going to stay behind. We have seen it with many companies the last couple of years who are big companies that pretty much fell flat because they did not keep up with the pace, not all decisions are the right ones. It is the same with anything in the world. Guys who are willing to take the risk get it wrong sometimes, but if they get it right, they keep on going in the right direction. I am not saying make crazy decisions every week, better than not making decisions, explore the options, the worst thing is not making decisions.

9. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?

I don't think I've really had enough opportunity to explore. There are two examples I can give you from our operation that I was involved with, we had big success with the Moffatts and the forklifts, that was a project I ran in Isando, it was rolled out, we tested it, we piloted it and had good results, the whole thing with it was that it was a lot cheaper than having all the expenses on the vehicles and it made a lot of sense, which was great. We jumped on this because it was also cool, then I went with the tail lift, I borrowed one from a sister company and implemented it, that as well and rolled it out, like we was so caught up in the success of the one we were blind to the issues of the other one and it ended up failing horribly for the simple reason that it took too long. We stick too long in the queues and the time we lost was not worth the saving in delivery cost. The first one was successful, we shot from the hip a little bit there and the second one because of this same reason, we burned our fingers so just back to what I've previously said it is cool to try these things, but it is expensive units we got into the business and it failed and they are still sitting around in the company, but we should have done more testing, more trials, before we went ahead because of just one number which looks so good. Do not put all the eggs in one basket

There were many other things we tried. We tried trolleys that climb the stairs, electronic trolleys. We had a guy from Germany that presented this trolley that climb stairs, so we were always open to that change that was a good change for us, but we learned. The tail lift project and all the others we did not go ahead with because of the other constraints in the market. You don't realize the benefits, so I think the big thing is I am always for the change. I like the change but especially when you start investing in tools or software or whatever this stuff is. It is expensive if you get it wrong, you seriously put yourself at risk and implications, so you just need to do your diligence properly and ask the odd questions and then you also need to understand by playing devil's advocate does not make you close to the idea. You just need to cover your bases properly and that is something which people will also have to get right because people get called out as being negative to the change or the idea, but all they are trying to doing is to figure out if this is the right thing or not. The competitive world is just going to get more competitive and faster.

10. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?

I don't think we have many opportunities because we are so governed in how we need to do what we do, but the one thing I have always done is to allow my line management team to make decisions and to take chances and to do things that are a little different than the norm. If it fails and there is some money that is lost in the process, but we don't go out and blow millions, within reason, if it turns out that we fail and have lost money in the process, but we have got learnings out of it, I don't hold them accountable for the loss. We assume the risk, we understand the risk, we make a decision whether we are going to do it or not and if we then we fail, we rather focus on the learnings than to blame each other for what went wrong. We rather create an environment where they are not scared to do it because they know if it goes wrong, they are not going to sit in a hearing because of an oversight in some detail. We are rather going to take the learnings, obviously within reason, you cannot run a massive project and mess it up and sink the business. I am not talking that scale but there is a lot of small things you can do that does not require investment. I rather try to be up in it, rather than say no, let them implement it as well and we go through the learnings. There are cases obviously where ideas gets put forward that we tried in the past and we know that this does not work, then we would say you are wasting your time rather think of something else, same direction, rather tweak it a little and come back with another idea, but most of the time I would encourage them to do it.

11. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?

There was a deputy manager I worked for who was very successful in the company, left for another company and came back and was very successful again, but at the other company he struggled. And the only reason he struggled, and he spoke openly to me afterwards, was that the team did not want him and his biggest learning out of that is that you can do whatever you want if your team is not behind you, you are going nowhere. Culture change is a difficult thing. Leadership development is always important and that is why companies appoint senior directors from other businesses because in their own business they either don't have the depth to develop those leaders or the people in the business get so used to the way that the business operates that they cannot think of any other way of how to do it. When you develop your leadership, especially your future leaders, it is important to make them part of the change and to give challenges to them which are not always the same, so that

they get used to thinking outside the box, so that they are one day open to these changes and see them as opportunities and not just as changes and important from leadership point of view, it is not about them being open to take on new things, but at the same time for them to bring it back to the people so that during that leadership development phase you have to put them in situations where they have to be responsible for other people, where they have to take charge for other people, where they have to talk in front of other people, this is now typically where I have handed one of my responsibilities to somebody else and I can't do it.

I started at depot levels, the depots were little businesses on their own, the way you operate, your resourcing, all the decisions were made by the depot. Later, that changed in our business to centralise it a bit more, planning was centralised, call and collect was taken away, telesales was centralised, and they started tweaking the changes a bit and in that process. Some of the depot manager's flexibility is being allowed to take decisions, was taken away. Later, with bigger changes when the company changed new processes that were tried and tested elsewhere in the world were rolled out and that had the exact same impact just a little bit more. Now it's more governed by process and if you can achieve your results within the limits of that process then you are still deemed to be successful, the decision making that we are now discussing, most of it happens centrally where in the past a lot of it happened on the depot, you were able back then to influence more because back then for instance you had telesales on site, you had credit on site, your planner on site. When that moved away, they all reported to different departments, to different KPI's and you don't have so much pull, which from a bigger business scheme is a better idea because you have more role players making decisions in key areas to try and streamline this business. Eleven years ago you had so many resources you could mess around with it a bit and tweak the system, less flexibility, you have also taken out the fact in the system where the guys could have messed around. It streamlined the business in a sense, but from an operational point of view it gives us right now less space at this level to be creative.

12. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change? How can they sidestep it?

The biggest challenge to my mind is to get the rest of the company to follow in that change, if you just can get your people to follow you, then you can do anything but if the workforce don't align to the change, then the change won't happen. It is as simple as that. And you can enforce it however you want to get it right, then only over a very long time and not perfect because guys are going to do it because they have to and not because they believe in the system. But if you can get them to understand that this change is for a reason and not to make life more difficult, hopefully you can get them on par with you but for most of it it's just getting the people aligned. That is the biggest challenge. And where they often go wrong, is instead of giving the people as much information as possible to assist them through this change they try and limit the information because they think it will make them less anxious, but it has the inverse effect. The less information people have the more anxious they are, the more they build up stuff in their heads.

RESPONDENT B2

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

I think if you are really honest and transparent with employees they will trust you easily, they will come to you more easily to discuss things with you, so I think transparency and honesty for me is quite important.

2. How do you lead through change?

It is important for me to get the facts because usually people hear things, corridor talk they call it, and people start spreading rumours and a rumour can spread so easily and you can get the wrong end of the stick. The best is to get the facts properly and then maybe meet with the individuals and tell them: "Guys this is actually how it's going to happen and this is how it is going to affect you." Transparency and honesty with the guys and tell them this is how it's going to affect you and this is what's going to happen.

Giving them surety and if you know that it's going to impact them, don't shirk on things, just tell them," Guys this might affect you in this way." I think it's very important.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

For me it is important to structure your life in terms of what is the most important and what is the least important. Distinguish what is glass balls and what is rubber balls. The best is to concentrate on the glass balls first, for once it breaks, you can't go back, what is the most important, identify that and tackle that and if it's an important objective, do it. I always procrastinated and as you learn through experience you actually become a better person within your workplace or workspace. One on one with those individuals, encourage them, motivate them in terms of this is why we doing things, explain to them the reasons behind things, the reasons behind doing things, it is important that they understand the objective and that they understand where we are going to, why we are doing it.

4. What leadership style do you use?

Can I say democratic leadership style? I like to feed off people's ideas as well, I like them to listen to mine. I am not always right.... I can have a subordinate that's important to me and he can tell me something and I would listen to that and obviously take it to heart and maybe implement it and do it. I am not better than others. A lot of

people think that because you are a manager or people report to you that you are always right. It does not work like that. I always say if you are going to employ someone, employ someone that is better than you. It is important.

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

Agile is just maybe free minded in terms of not tunnel vision. Don't put your head in a box and just think like that. Always think out of the box. I think that for me a agile mindset is to be open to ideas as well.

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

I think there is. You do get some organisations that probably does not allow but you must encourage that. Don't be a walkover or show them that it can. I think you are the change. If you show them, it can happen they will believe it will happen. And if there is results with the agile mindset. That individual must also tell himself that it is not going to be like this forever. What if the line changes like you say and a different step that comes into play there he must adapt to that and he must show he can adapt, some guys can't. You get that individual that is stuck, but it is to their own detriment.

7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?

Look, if you are not adaptive in your leadership style then probably this fast pace environment is not for you, so I think adaptive leadership, I am not sure that is a leadership style, but you get my drift, adapt to your surroundings. If you don't show your team that you can adapt to the surroundings of the fast paced environment they are going to fall in the same rut as you. Adapt or die

8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

Definitely EQ. Why? EQ tells a lot about the individual itself. It's how you adapt to situations, how you liaise with managers or people around you. How do you get out of a situation if you are probably in a bad situation? If your EQ is quite high you know

how to deal with situations like that, so we are talking about bad situations how to get out. In an interview you can you pick up if this guy's EQ levels is there or not. We ask situational questions, how do you deal with the situation and what did you do, how do you deal with it. It is important to get your feedback. That is how you get the info out of the individual to see how he will adapt to these situations. It is important and I like someone that talks and talks to the situation not just to the point. Talk to us and we're here to know you and how you deal with situations. In interviews you look for that EQ. If it is an operator or any other position you want to know that that individual can progress within the company, that he is not going to stay there for ten years. And that is what we look for to appoint somebody: will it cost the company lots of money and you don't want to waste any resources.

9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

To put it in place if it's a new organisation I think it's quite easy, but for this company you still get your older type individuals that's still working for you so I think lots of in-house training that can assist how to deal with change, how to deal with the agile mindset, it's working on those individuals and telling them what's it about and why we are doing it and why we want the agile mindset within the Company as well.

Open and honesty, leading by example and showing them change is not always a bad thing. Being that leader so that they can follow you and trust your calls and inputs and things.

10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?

We have been talking about the teams and daily routines, just to get out of a routine no matter how agile you are. You all struggle to get out of it but you will get out of it. I think it is just telling yourself that you can get out of it. In terms of the strategy

11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?

You as a leader must be the example. Tell him about past experiences that you have experienced, because leaders might be more experienced than the subordinate, then build on that past experience, tell him how you have dealt with the change before and tell him about your positive experience and obviously negative as well and that's how you done it. Maybe that can assist him in coming out of that situation.

12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?

As a leader you must obviously, lead from the front in terms of how we are going to change, if change is coming to the front. Without you showing the way your subordinates won't be able to follow you or follow you the way you want them to follow you. So, I think you telling your subordinates this is how it's going to be done or how it can be done. I think it's important. So, you're showing them the way. And then in terms of change taking over it was a huge culture shock in the way things were done. I think people are starting slowly but surely in adapting. Obviously, it takes time, individuals are coming to the party in the way things are being done.

13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change?

How can they sidestep it?

Challenges is obviously resistance. Everybody will tell you that. Another challenge would be trying to persuade to accept the change and then just making them accept it and getting the buy-in and asking them how we can do that. It depends on the change, what type of change it is. If it's a massive change it will get that three characteristics that I mentioned. If it's something small, I am sure you can quickly get that buy-in from the individuals. I think change is there to stay, so the sooner you except it the better.

The human kicks against change.

There are four or five steps: shock, denial and how you deal with it. It's human and people must go through those steps before they going to accept it. You are going to have to start to learn to go through that steps faster. You can't be stuck on maybe, step 3. The sooner people accept that the better for them.

RESPONENT B3

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

I think if it comes to values as a leader, always portray how you operate in a business consistently, so the values that you drive would be gaining respect, leading from the front, taking ownership around the challenges ahead and in essence how you drive the culture within a business that is aligned to the values of not only the individual but also what the company wants to achieve in a company like this. We have got our 10

principles that are the values of what we want everyone in the company to live by. As a leader, if you don't live those principles, which are the values, you will not get the results or build a culture within an area that you work in; people will not look up to you and the principles or the values will fall away. It is important as a leader that you are aware of your surroundings, whether it is internal or external to ensure that you drive those values and live them. What is for me, personally, important in terms of values, is understanding the values and what they mean to you as an individual and also consistently and continuously in when you are doing updates and feedback to a team, to always take it back to the values or the 10 principles. So, when we say something like we appoint people that are smarter than ourselves, as a leader, what does it mean. Does that mean that I am going to appoint a guy that is a rocket scientist and has got a degree because I don't? No, the point is when we look at individuals we are saying to people, that we appoint people that are smart enough, that we appoint people we believe will progress fast in the business and have the potential to progress and that is a value. The point I am making, you must consistently make sure that every individual understands the values.

honest and true and live by the principles

In a company if you say these are our principles or our values, whether it is 5, 6, 10 it is irrelevant, is that if you as a leader do not believe in them, and drive them by building a culture within your company, you will never be successful.

2. How do you lead through change?

Firstly, whether it is personally or in a company, people don't like change. That everyone knows

There is no change that is easy. The changes we made in the company are significant. There are two kinds of people that handle the change. The 50% that leave and the other 50% that accept and that is reality. Depending on the type of change, people will leave and depending on the type of change, people will stay and adapt. How do you make change move swiftly and successful, is you need to have communication throughout the business? We always start with leadership but the problem with change is; leadership understand change but the individual that started in the business just two weeks ago does not and it falls back to your principles and values. When you talk about change you always need to align it back to your 10 principles or values or

whatever and say the reason for the change is as follows: which means that the impact could be this or this. Honesty in terms of the change is important. The communication channels you follow are critical. You have to get to the lowest level individual in the business as quickly as possible and you need to ensure that the sessions you have with those individuals might be longer and more frequent than potentially your leadership and the leadership needs to own change and they need to ensure that the communication gets to whatever level is there. There is different ways of communicating change but what's important is that as far as possible one needs to have a voice and that's the leadership where you have sessions where people can ask questions back and they get answers. They want to see an individual and have that personal kind of contact. That is something which is not always easy to do, depending on the size of the change that one must consider and need to ensure that you do it.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

The simplest and easiest way to do it, is you must break it down into a simple way that people can get results. What I mean by that is if there is a whole lot of things that are important there are always certain things that are more important than the others and to achieve results and objectives you need to understand what are the short term gains that you can get and focus on, and focus on that and make the people understand rather than having ten, twenty things, you have three, four things, you achieve them. Those three, four things will obviously help drive the bigger things and it is understanding what are the inputs and really being clear around those inputs that will give you the outputs and objectives that you want to achieve, less is more in a lot of cases. You have to ensure that when you have an objective, that there is a measurement in place so it is a simple going back to, I planned for this, this is how we are going to do it and execute it, and this will be the results and we will review it. So even if we talk about the PDCA principles in our business, we have to ensure that we understand the problem, what it is and then plan against that, get it done and observe it to see if it is the right thing we did and then move forward.

4. What leadership style do you use?

Sometimes we talk theoretically about the different styles of leadership. We have got the five key aspects of leadership, we talk about engaging leadership, we talk about

driving results, we talk about leading from the front and there are different styles of leadership. I think what is important is that each leader must find within his characteristics that he is, because people are different, and there is no doubt that leaders are different, and those characteristics that he has and how can he use that to lead a team, so when we talk about what leadership style is, I believe in people, I believe that people make the difference and all people are extremely different in terms of the expectations so one must be very clear around what is it that you as a company, you as a department, or you as a small area, let's call it just a sales team, what is the objective of that team within the environment that they operate and be very clear around that: what is the goal, how does each person fit in that goal and ensure that through your communication and through your management that these things are achieved. Back to objectives, that communication around those objectives if you are communicating twenty things and half of them are not being done, there is a problem, you need to understand that. We need to understand the essence of less is more and how we drive it. When we talk about leadership style it is about being passionate about driving results. Results are important. The company believes in people that deliver results and if you get that message clear to every individual the expectation should be clear: don't come to me and ask me for a higher position but you are not giving results because I have from day one told you that as a company, as a business we will celebrate success but we will also promote people that perform. And those are the basic things that I think are important. If you have a process around you people development and growth, what are the critical things that you look at. We look at our company, we look at how noble the individual is, we look at the performance and we reveal against those things and a performance is against goals and if those people are delivering results much better than the average of the other people. We want to promote those people and we want them to perform. I think for me as a leader it is important. I want to be able to talk to anyone at any time, I want to lead from the front, I want to have ownership of the results and I want my people to take ownership of the results, I want to have an open door policy in terms of them being able to speak to me but at the same time I will not accept unproductivity will not accept people lacking down and based on that your performance will be judged. People that are not productive, people that are not giving results will not be rewarded, as simple as that, but at the same time they need to understand the why. Why are you not. And the same

goes for performance. Why are you performing, that is my approach when it comes to leadership?

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

The world is telling us that we need to be agile in our leadership styles. Companies that are prepared to adapt to change, individuals that are prepared to adapt to change, especially in the way technology is going, will I think, benefit going forward. So, a leader to me in these times, need to look much more into the detail around what they are doing and the results they are achieving. Whether it is positive or negative, you need to be able to adapt. Technology is fast paced and changing. If you do not look at opportunities within your company on every aspect of what you are doing, whether it is people, whether it is systems you're going to fail. To be agile from a leadership perspective is something that you have to do but the way you do it is important and that boils down to how you drive a culture, and a culture in a business now must be fit for change. When I talk about fit for change, I talk about that we can change every day, we can change on the hour if you must, but people need to understand that yesterday does not mean today. That why I always say you need to be better than yesterday, every day, because to be agile you need to accept that things can change at any moment and if you are not prepared to adapt to that not only as a leader, but even as an individual, you will fail. It comes down to the old cliché around adapt or die but I think that adapt or die is very relevant now in terms of how you do business. The better leaders of companies and sportsmen for that matter, the competitive nature is still there and the people that are prepared to learn more, to study more in terms of what is going on and prepared to fail forward are the people that will be successful.

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

Within our company learning ability in every role from operational to sales, you commercial to your support, is important. The way we used to develop people versus the way we develop people now are different in the sense that you might have had a classroom where now it is via technology, everything is on a portal, everything is available at any time. Where you had training in a classroom at a set time, training in our company is ownership by the individual at any given time. So, you are free to learn

and develop yourself at the pace that you want. The challenge around that is that you have to have the individual prepared to put in the time to do that, but that also tells you a lot about the individual so the way that we ensure that happens is we track everything and we would say to someone you are now 40-50% through your training period. So, I think that is a great way of driving people. Let me give you an example: If you have a salesperson who is new, part of the induction into our company is that he will get to be exposed to our University and that University is not a start up to say welcome to the company, that it is part of it, but it is an introduction into the company. It's an introduction into our principles and an introduction into what are the different aspects of our business at the same time. It's a very functional development in terms of what is your role, what do you need to know. There are modules broken up and you get a percentage of where you are tracking at that in terms of material and all material is set up in such a way that you can read, you can watch and you get tested which makes the interaction around the development so much more fun and I guess it also keeps it interesting. You can change the material at any time should the company adapt to the changes that are happening. It is also the way of ensuring that people adapt to being more technically advanced and understand that media is playing so much more a bigger role in the day to day life of businesses and individual development. I think that's a great way of how our company has adapted and ensuring that people develop and take ownership of their own development but at the same time the company has got a way to ensure that people also develop within the business and not only in what they know i.e. sales. The development and the scope of development is now cross functional because we want people not only to be diverse in their thinking, so there is one thing which is absolutely critical for me as a leader and for the way forward, is that we embrace diversity as individuals but also diversity of how people think to solving a problem. We are very used to the people we know and solving a problem in the way we know. Driving diversity, developing people through diversity forums, create better understanding and scope of solving problems. Being agile means that you accept diversity and you use diversity as an advantage not as a disadvantage.

7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?

I would say for me and I think there has been a lot of things written about what is a good leader if you read the books about leadership of great companies, talk about

certain leadership styles and what makes a good leader. I think in the end leadership is around embracing the environment that you work in and finding a way daily to empower people to get the best results. Because you can be the nicest guy in the world, but you get no results. To me that's important. It doesn't matter where I go, where I work, I will drive results but I want to drive results not at the expense of people I want to drive results where people are enjoying getting the results and understanding how they got to the results and that for me is fundamentally important for leadership. Whatever you call that I don't know but that is my principle. My principle is I want people to get the results by understanding how they got to the results and why the results are important and to do that in such a way that the support and integration between departments in such a way that everyone end up at driving a common goal and that is the end to get to the dream

8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

I think a combination is important for us. I don't think that IQ purely sits by itself in terms of appointing an individual, the same with EQ and the same with MQ. I think what is important for us as a company and as leaders we appoint people through a very rigorous process in terms of fit, the right culture fit based on our values, which we call our ten principles. A person will not go to the next interview if we don't believe they are the right fit, whether they have got a low IQ, a high IQ or whatever IQ. It does not matter. The fit for us in terms of cultural fit is very important. From a leadership perspective going forward there is a balance between the IQ, EQ and the MQ and our development in terms of our business will drive but can't drive the IQ, but will drive certainly in essence the EQ and the MQ and how you develop as an individual. So, for us the importance is more around does the individual fit the culture of the business and based on that we make our decisions.

9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

I think again agile leadership, how you put it in place, is driven by the processes around the business. From training, to around on the job, to the way you have meetings, it is a day to day approach. Let me give you an example: if you have a meeting and the leader is running the meeting and talking the whole time and not

asking different people in the group around what do they think, then it is a stale meeting. Then you are not considering diversity, so agile leadership is around driving a culture of being agile within the business, which means that we accept innovation, we motivate innovative thinking, we motivate out of the box thinking and we reward people for innovative ideas which is part and parcel of this company. All our results, all our innovations and incentives, are driven to get people to think out of the box. To give example: if you can at any given time give an idea to your line manager it will be looked at. That talks to being agile, so that's how you ensure that that is the culture of the business on a day to day business.

10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?

So, to scale agility, is how you adapt to an ever-changing world. So, companies that are able to adapt to technology, changes and use technology to their advantage and how they communicate change, will adapt quicker. Let me give you an example: our platform of how we communicated as a company was predominantly email and or a meeting. Our platform of how we communicate has evolved platform-as-a-business. We have our own Facebook that is an international communicated platform called Workplace, where every single individual in this company, irrelevant of the position, can communicate what they are doing and what they are learning in this company, which is a fantastic platform. Our learning ability in our company has evolved to platforms like a university, which is on a hub within a system where people can develop and learn at their own pace and time, which is way more advanced than going to a workshop, travelling miles and sitting there for one week in a classroom and then forgetting what you have done. I think that gives a company more agility but the challenge around that is that you need to adapt to that all the time and consider and that's why we need to drive a culture in a company around innovation and innovative thinking and share that continuously. So your rewards and recognition that you drive internally within a company in the different functions, must also encourage agility, must encourage innovation, must encourage technology in adapting to technology, and that will help leaders as well as individuals to be more agile in a business.

11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?

I have touched on that. Part of our principles and values is to drive innovation as a company so it becomes part of the culture. We want to reward people that are innovative and think outside of the box. How do you also encourage innovation, is you need to understand diversity? You need to appoint diverse people, not the norm or not what you are used to. From your recruitment, right through to your development, right through to your leadership, through to the culture of the company, you must encourage innovation for innovation to happen. It does not matter in what position you are, where you are working, that needs to form part of the culture of the business and then through encouraging diversity and diverse ideas. I think then one is enabled to get innovative ideas. I think if you reward innovative ideas, it also encourages it more but then you need to ensure that people are aware of those innovations and those ideas through a forum or a platform. In our case our platform is our internal workplace communication. So, we have created our own Facebook if you want to call it that, as a company and in that we are continuously communicating new ideas, events. We are communicating day to day things that are happening and in that way a whole group of people across continents, countries, are able to see what people are doing and learn from that, that creates ability for someone to develop or understand and know and apply to an area they did not even think off because there is a platform where everyone can see everything happening on a day-to-day basis. I think that is a fantastic way for big companies to drive innovation but also cultural fit and the principles and values of a company.

12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?

I think that there is a lot of change. A big part of it is in terms of the approach that leadership have in communicating to people; so that maybe that autocratic and demanding kind of styles and you will, at the expense of to get results, is probably more around. How do we take ownership of a problem to find a solution and learn from it and share it and when we are trying to get to that problem-solving how can we incorporate different thinking to get to that? More engaging, more diverse thinking, which allows people to be more innovative and adapt more. The challenge of that is that it might not always be as fast as one want it to be, but it is extremely positive in terms of the results you get. And I can see it, because people in our company are probably seeing the positive changes only after two years, whereas in the first six months a lot of people left and could not handle it because it changed. It did not happen

as fast as they would've liked, which would have been the old company way versus the new company way, and I think that is probably the biggest learning for me in the company. But the results around that and how it has built individuals and created a culture of learning is much more positive than in the past.

**13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change?
How can they sidestep it?**

So, I think the challenge for leadership around change is do people understand the change and the reasons for the change; and sometimes changes are negative, i.e. two steps back to take 100 steps forward. And I guess the biggest challenge for leadership is around communicating the changes in such a way that people adapt to it to see the potential of a positive result in the end. I think that is the biggest challenge. So how do you communicate change in such a way that people can understand it positive or negative, so that they can adapt quicker to the change. I think that is probably the biggest challenge that leadership will have when it comes to change. I think change is the way you communicate, so it goes back to what I have just said: it is actually the way you communicate. Sometimes we don't say enough because you don't want to have people to quickly think in the wrong direction and take it the wrong way, but I think that one must be honest as a company, or as individuals, as leadership, when it comes to change. The more honest you are and direct you are in your approach in terms of change, the quicker people can adapt and decide whether they are in it or not in terms of the change. And I think that to me is something that is important. Leaders that take the message of change and can relate it to the individuals are being honest and will get the best results when it comes to change.

RESPONDENT C1

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

I think it is still the same. I've got four departments and I leave my people to do their own thing. So, I am sitting back and watching what they do, and I empower them with their own leadership style. If they get out of line, I get involved. I don't participate in all their meetings. What I do if there is a problem, is I'll go and sit in and I'll guide them, and I'll give them advice. If they take it, they take it. At the end of the day they are still responsible for their own department and the profit that they make in the department because they get commission and they get bonus out of that. I am old school, so I still believe you earn respect, you don't push it down on people, you don't just get it and that is the way that I lead this business. I am not autocratic at all, if you take my style it is totally the opposite of that. I pay people to do their work and new technology and that I provide that. If there is a new system, we are going Google Chrome, it sounds big and that but it's a small thing that is installed on all the computers and on the 1st of August it will just go automatically across. They have all got their working tools and that and I look out that they've got the best to use and what they need. Their cell phones are all up to standard.

2. How do you lead through change?

What happened now this morning we walked in and there is a new connected service on the system. So, what I do is I play myself with the system. So, I make sure that I know a little bit more than my people. Sometimes it is not possible, the youngsters are good but I'm not shy. If I don't know anything in the workshop, and I'm not technical at all. If a customer comes in and there is a problem with his vehicle, I'll take the customer to the youngsters, the apprentices, or the junior technicians or even the senior technicians and I'll ask them to explain to the customer. I don't sit and get all the information from the technician and then tell the customer or the guest what the problem is. I would rather put the youngster on the little pedestal and give him the opportunity to tell the guest in front of him what he has learnt and that is how I empower that youngster. So, I always make sure that I know and that I have a little bit of background on the problem and that, so I might go to my service manager before and just find out quickly and that's how I do. Like I said before, I always ask for a new

technology if there is new technology available because for them to do their job, they also need the best equipment available at the time.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

If you are any department of the company, I also expect you to know what you are doing. And we have got courses at this company and we have information sessions that we go to and for me, the general manager, I go to dealer council meetings and I get info from there and I bring that information back and we sit on a Monday morning, it sounds weird, but if there is important information. We sit together and we go through it quickly as a management team. And if there is a change like you say, we are waiting for the new car at the moment, and I checked this morning quickly, but if that car comes in we all go and we take a walk around the car and we see what, in case one of the guys ask me, then at least I've got the backing of the technical guy and I've got the backing of my sales manager, just to let you know. At our level and that, we know a lot and we are expected by them to know everything but that is just impossible. With that sharing and that, that's how we get to our answers, and again, I have got to empower people so for me to get somebody in the office when I'm in a corner or I don't know how to answer people, is not a problem. So that's why I said I am not autocratic I prefer to share information and get information back too.

4. What leadership style do you use?

That's going to the next question about the leadership style that you use, getting people motivated, letting them live out their skills and their knowledge and not your way is the only way.

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

I think we sit and then you think you've got this; magic moment and you've got this idea that you bring is superb. I am telling you, in our business the change is so quick that if somebody mentions something that you did not think of, you have to look at that and see how you can, even if it's one out of 5 or one out of 10 that is different, maybe bring it in and negotiate with that person or let him explain his side of the story and maybe buy in. Maybe we say to him or her it is not such a good idea but are you willing to sacrifice a little bit and we sacrifice a little bit and then we bring it in. We've got Kaizen, it's continuous improvement, so it's always nice. Let's say our workers'

presentative forum, it gets run the way that I got it from the previous person and that's quite a good example. Now I am not HR qualified so you sit there you think, and you get buy-in from your management, and there is not only management, we got from the lowest, the normal worker, and he's also got an input in that representative forum. And then about two years ago I decided to get some young blood in this thing and original owner, he is retiring in two years' time, now his son is taking over that. I started to work very closely with his son, and I'm telling you, his way is totally different to his dad's way. So, he must be about 25-26 years old and the first meetings we had, was totally opposite what we used to do the workers' representative forum. You sit and you get some questions and you get some projects and you do it and here comes this new blood and he changes the whole thing. The first two meetings we just sat there; we did not understand. He was maybe talking at a higher level to what we were used to, and we brought him down as well so that we could just understand him and the guy in the wash bay could understand him. Now let me tell you, it is one of the better meetings that I've got and on that meeting we've got two people per department and you've got a wash bay and you've got a service manager and you've got a sales executive and you've got a cleaner. And it is such a nice meeting just because of buy-ins and you see that person is there all the time; you see him as a cleaner but he has got such a good idea and we use that idea and a lot of things got changed because of those meetings and that. We see it every day and you just walk past it and he come in he says if we take that car first then and we leave that on the side and you help the customer first, stupid thing, but we never thought of that.

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

We work for this company and we are lucky. We have got a very strong marketing company and I think they will lead us in what they do, and we have got a training department there and that is where the millennium thing came out. We were on a course when they launched the new car and this car was launched for the millennials. That was a type of vehicle that a millennial would buy, and let me tell you, it was an eye-opener to go to that course and see how differently they do it. First, I was uptight, because at first, I thought they can't talk this way because they slang. Now if you sit back and you watch TV and my sons are also millennials, and the way that they carry on is exactly the same. If I say something they will go to their smart phones and they

get something there. They either say you are right, or you are wrong, and they are not shy or embarrassed to say that I am wrong. With us now they do courses and that, from the marketing side and the training side. We have got Trala, that is the training center at the company. They are geared to change and that, so from our side we have got the youngsters and there are one or two up here. If it is a little bit over my head, I get to talk to a well-qualified technician. I mean those guys are qualified; they use computers; they are not using tools and that. They are as comfortable with a laptop as what they are with a tool. They touch on the engineering side and that and sometimes that is above me because I am not interested in that. So, we have got people in our group that are able to help those type of guys and they bring it in laymans terms to us. Like the group technical manager is a qualified engineer and when he sits here, he knows I don't know much about technical or computers or things like that. Computers I do, I can help myself, but they bring it down to our level. You might think that the Workers Representative Forum will carry on with this project for a year; in six months it has changed already. The same with the radios in the cars and that. We had a problem now with one of the radio's and it does not pick up and to me it is one of those things. It can't pick up one cellular brand but picks up a other and quickly the youngsters can explain to me why and if they are not too sure I can always go to the technicians to help them with that agility and the ability to go to from there to the next level..

It is good for a leader to know he can rely on these people

There is no way that I can know everything. I think back in the day when I started the technology was so different as from now. There are some of my technicians who can't work without their computers, the laptops and those things, because he plugs it in, and it diagnoses the car. It is not that the thing tells him what is wrong, but he gets a code and he looks up what the code means, and he knows this and this and this is wrong. This is very interesting for me to go and have a look and if I know that there is a car with a serious problem, he tells that he can trace the fuel consumption of that car since the beginning. You don't think this is possible but those computers of them can determine how fast the car was driven and at this point traction control was disconnected.

7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?

I think the leader that can adapt to the change and that, that is the leader of the future. Like I said before, at my level I am a leader but the guy in the wash bay is also a leader, so like I said before, you earn respect, you don't just get respect. I've got to motivate 100 people here and by walking in here on a Monday and I start shouting, or I start kicking, or throwing things around, that's not motivation. I would rather go to him and say, "There is a plastic drum, don't you think we must empty it?" You must remember he walks past that drum and he gets used to it and rather walk with him to where he throws the drum out. Or walking to one manager's office while she is busy with her team and she made a mistake, you don't take her out in front of the team or even if it's not the sales manager or even the normal sales executive or normal person and that's why I say you rather take him to the office and sort out the problem than breaking him down in front of his colleagues and again it is empowering. You've got to give him all the equipment that he needs from a telephone to what, so that he knows what he's talking about. You might think you know everything but you take your colleagues through that car and somebody will say where is the jack in the car and you think you've got 20 or 30 different vehicles and all the jacks are different. So, to keep up with our product the leader unfortunately will have to be one step ahead of the others. I start at 6 o'clock in the morning and I leave at 6 o'clock. I am not the hero, but I always make sure that I'm here before my people.

When they walk in here, I have opened three or four doors if a customer wants to walk in and the flags are up just to show the people on the road that the dealership is open. I will never ever let somebody, unless I have to go to the doctor quickly for blood, open the door for me. The guys in the workshop and the workshop manager are here first as well. He is here 5:30 in the morning and I expect that of my leaders, but I don't demand it. They do it out of their own because I set the sample and so it runs down.

And you must see how it runs down to the youngsters. If you go to Japan, you go and look and see what their manufacturing plants are. They've got lines. Five minutes before the time they go and stand behind the line and then a siren goes and they walk across like on 7:30 and they start working and they don't talk and they carry on and when it's tea time they stand in front of the line and then move a step back. So, we also picked up on that. And I went to Japan in 2000 and a 2002 and those things are still stuck in my head, the way that they have got to travel three hours by train to get to the work. So, I don't enforce that discipline, but I was in the army, so I am used to

those types of things and with my kids as well, I still try and get discipline in the workplace or at home or whatever. Your mum doesn't make your bed, you make your own bed. Generally speaking, children are not taught discipline at school and they find it difficult when they get to the workplace after school

I think to embarrass them works and it is not embarrassment in a bad way. If I have a meeting at 7:30 I am there at 7:15, so I expect you to be there on time as well. One day I got everybody in the boardroom, and we sat there, and I waited until 7:30 and then we locked the door, and everybody was looking at me. My predecessor used to do it, but he was not there in time. He came late and he knocked, and you could hear that at first it was a very soft knock. We just ignored the knock and I carried on with the meeting. The second knock was a little bit louder and we carried on. What happened was when we had finished, he wasn't there. So, I said to the one employee to send him up to me and I had him in the office here. And I said to him I am sure you were embarrassed, and he said he had never felt embarrassed like that before in his life and I said do you know how you embarrassed your colleagues? There were 20 colleagues inside that sat there waiting, how embarrassed they were because you did not honor that 7:30 start time and that they all waited, and you weren't there. And since then never ever again. So maybe it was rough, you know at school, in the army, at boarding school I was taught discipline and you don't have to be hard with discipline. You just have to understand how to put discipline in place and the rest comes by itself. You only have to embarrass somebody as in this case, 20 of his colleagues sat there waiting for him and that and we couldn't start because he was late. It had happened every time which was not nice because he just walked in and said sorry and we could not start the meeting. That time he stood outside the door and it was a lesson for him.

8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

For me I would say emotional. Managerial, I understand it can border on autocratic because I am the leader and you do what I say.

Because I am the CA in the office, I know everything, and you have got to listen to what I say. Emotional, I think what you can do, you can adapt more than with the other two and it does not depend on the day. If I walk in here and I am in a bad mood that

is how I am going to run my day or if I am in a good mood it you can do what you want, But for me personally I would go for the emotional side of it where are you can still push a little bit of discipline down or the managerial side of it or the intellectual side of it and you can get your results from that. I don't know if I have answered the question right.

The emotional quotient is being aware of your attitude, your mood and what's happening around you. They say EQ is one of the 10 top characteristics of the future employee, an example is a millennial of 14-15, who can't converse with a person, he spends all his time with his earphones in listening, I feel sorry for such a guy, he won't have communication skills or personal skills in a job interview. Can't connect.

We also get the rough days and bad days. Sometimes you get the news that there will a takeover of the company, you immediately think there is going to be change because we are used to doing it our way and now we are going to do it the Japanese way and with the Japanese things are black or white. A customer who has been with the company for 20 years is used to paying on a Friday, so the customer also do not want to adapt to the change. But they don't care because it is my problem, they do not know the Japanese factor that is in the business. That is going to be a challenge and we have got to adapt to it and we are slowly busy with the staff where we say. And they say ja but Oom Piet* used to pay on a Friday or Oom Jack* pays with a cheque. I don't want a cheque because that cheque can bounce. So, pay EFT, no he does not know EFT, he pays with a cheque. And he makes a mistake and I need to go through a bank with the check. I don't even know how to fill in a check anymore because I have also grown with the time, you don't use a cheque, you have never signed a check in your life before so I can imagine it is quite strange for you but I just had a check that came back because the date was wrong and the bank sent it back so I've been battling two weeks to get payment out of the old man and he is set in his ways.

9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

I think it is look and learn. That would be the easiest way. You see what is available and you use it as a management tool. With a computer system on the floor we all said that the customers would not be able to use it and that we were going to stand there all the time, but let me tell you, they adapted quickly. You walk past there, and you ask the customer, "Can I help you?" and he says, "No, I worked it out." We think that

the older customer does not know what he is doing and by seeing that customer you realize this guy is a little bit ahead of me so then you go and sit with the people that did the training and you learn from them. If somebody has a good idea, and it is quickly that somebody picks up on a computer, like the app we created, and we thought it was just another app and I downloaded it because it was the first course that I went on. They asked who has got the app on their phones, and let me tell you, half of the class were youngsters and I was one of the older ones and it was more the older people that had it because you don't want to get behind. So, we had a discussion about the app and then they started explaining it and you see what a tool it is. And I came back here, and I said to my guys look what a tool this app is: you can book a service on this and they did not even know that. So yeah, I went out to the agility side of it and it is again lead by example. Now if something happens like the printed, and we don't always print, because it is also the new thing, but I am still old school, so I prefer to read.

Not scared to experience new things

Sometimes it is difficult, it is really. I have got Dukes on my phone. I listen to my kids as well. They will come up and they'll say this or that and you say maybe that's not a bad idea. Yeah so that it is that ability to change. I've got 10 years left. I've got to manage my business.

10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?

I had to think deeply. Example: I was with at the Limpopo branch. We got used to running a business with a whole team. So we had sales and we had a difficult department, that ugly Admin and I had a financial manager and I had a creditors' clerk and I had debtors' clerk, I had a costing clerk and all those and then the Financial Director came here and he said we are going to take all those people away from you. And then I said I won't be able to run my business and the HR manager, and I said to him it is impossible. I'm 3 1/2 hours away from you and I just can't do it. How can I go without my financial manager? And they pushed us and pushed and at the time I thought of my staff first; they were going to lose their jobs, the creditors' clerks and the staff. And as they got to retirement, we retired them but never replaced them and the jobs came down to Johannesburg. It was actually so simple but, in my mind, it was a

massive thing. I used to go to the financial manager every single day of my life to go and sit and look through my figures quickly although I got my B. Com degree and I could do it. I could help him even, but I had to go to somebody to find out and then eventually they started the VOCs on the system, and we got B I. So, I lost the first one and the creditors. I had to make friends with somebody here. And you fight with them because they didn't pay your guy and he doesn't want to release things and that. And it took us about a month and I thought no we've got to change and some of my managers up there were also the same, the same as me, but how am I going to get a car because I have to go and swap the car and they haven't paid. Because it was easy: you get it, you go to Financial Manager and they do the transaction. They pay the people and you take your proof and you used to go and fetch the car. At the same time there is a scan: you do the scanning; you scan it through to Johannesburg and they process the whole transaction and then scan it back to you. Sometimes it was quicker than up there and that's how it started, and you think it is so easy. I've got to come down for a meeting here; you drive 3 1/2 hours, you go back, you know more and they say that when you get there your email will be on your screen with the whole meeting, with your minutes. So that was a total mindset, first of all to convince me and then to convince the departmental managers and that, and the operators. You know you get a car quickly but now I get the car in time, but the payment was quicker than at the branch, so much easier.

And what happens now is, because I'm sitting with admin, because admin is up here, they are on the floor above us. Now whenever they have a program that they want to test, they use us now because it is easy for IT just to walk across or from here to go and have a look. So, for me it is a nice thing now because what we did with the salaries and that, we used to do a spreadsheet; our salaries are sitting in Bloemfontein by the way. So, you do your salaries and take your spreadsheet, and I can imagine the girl in Bloemfontein because you did your own spreadsheet, and now she does 20 dealers or let's call it 15. And all 15 are different which she's got to capture and do on the Business Intelligence portal. You take yours and you load it and at first I said if I make a mistake who is going to correct it and then they picked up that we've got the input and could make a mistake because it is easy to add another zero or whatever and then they put a counter on where it balances. So that was also a process, they get this bright idea, they do it and then someone like me sit there and think if I make a

mistake where do I balance? And I go to the IT guys and I just say to IT technician what if I make a mistake? He says okay I've got another plan and then he brought another program out where it gives you like I have got 13 guys here on the new; you balance with 13 and that balances. So, it is simple, but it was a process not just a thumb suck; but now it is working.

11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?

If you take the new car or the used car department, what happens sometimes is that you get a guy that will take a customer on the floor, and it happens with the youngsters, and he will sit and discuss the deal. What we say is he talks himself into a deal and he talks himself out of a deal. And then he will take a tray with coffee and sugar and things and the customer will waste an hour of his time. He talks too much and we will pick it up, because we also have analysis on the system where you see 20 customers a month and let's say you do ten deals, and it is not a bad hit rate if you do 50%. But you get a guy that is busy all the time and he see 30 customers and he close five deals. So then immediately what we do is, we take a person that is good on closing a deal such as the sales manager. She just sits back and listens to the guy and then she will walk in and say, "You know, Sir, that is the car or whatever and that is the payment," like short cutting. And when the customer leaves, she will tell the salesperson, you know you are taking too long to close the deal. You are making this customer what we call a tire kicker. It was the same when I bought my Harley Davidson. I went to 20 dealerships and you see the bike and you like the bike but if you go in on a Saturday or Sunday you cool off and on Monday you say no I don't need the bike. With a customer we try to cut the whole thing short. And especially with the youngsters, they enjoy talking to a customer but what we do now, we have programs on the company side, on the company portal and we get measured on Retention. We measure our staff on Retention to prove to a sales person that you see 30 customers, you close five deals. What if you close 15 deals? You talk too much, your upselling is not there. We have a F and I department that can help you get the finances sorted out while the customer is here. Just take him across, let the specialist do the finance. Don't get busy with that. You might see another customer in the same time. In America it was like that. There was a sales director who sat at the door when the customer came in. He greets the customer by hand, every customer, and he makes sure that he puts the customer at the right desk but there they get maybe 100 walk ins

a day, here we get ten walk ins a day. So that guy is on the phone all the time, so you must listen to the guy who is on the phone how he does the deal. To me it is a little bit easier when I walk into a place, I don't want the guys attacking me and the other option is you walk in and nobody is going to help me and I see it all the time because I greet everybody on the floor. Then you get to a customer, especially in the mornings, who says I am just having a look and you leave the customer; you know immediately. Or I say to the customer if you need advice, there is the sales consultants. But also, when I walk into a place to buy a pair of shoes and the guys on my back all the time, I don't enjoy it, and I'll tell him just give me some space. So, it is a fine balance.

It comes with time and experience.

And like you say, sometimes you get a customer - I have been here for two minutes and no one is even helping me, and you walk to him quickly because you know he wants attention.

12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?

We changed in 1995 for the first time. We were a partly owned company and then in 1995 it changed. At the time in '95 I thought that this business was going to go down because the type of people that took over was absolutely autocratic. It was horrible to work for them and then what happened, we were all scared because they bought the business and they expected the business to run immediately like the way they wanted it. And it was not a very good company that bought the place. So, the seniors did whatever they wanted to and we as youngsters looked up to them but also hated them at the same time. When we had a meeting, and they were based in the East Rand, you were basically a nervous wreck for a week because you did not know what to do. They were the type of people who would say take your stuff and go and there was no CCA or whatever at the time. So you were nervous all the time, and what happened, they appointed a person, and he is very sick at the moment but he was from head office, and he changed the whole Group* at the time. And we all looked up to this guy and I think that is where that whole thing started, because he was totally the opposite to what we had. We started following this guy and he was always protecting us from the wolves of the east; that is what we used to call them. He empowered us all do your own thing, do it the right way, think out of the box. "Look here, the youngsters are not

bad, they thought out of the box,” because we were knocked by our bosses who said this will never work. Luckily it worked.

The motto in the old days, let's call it 30 years ago, was that a principal was untouchable. He had a PA, he had a secretary and to get to him you had to go through his PA and at this company at the time the DP would walk in at 9 o'clock in the morning, take his newspaper out, close the door, had a breakfast or coffee and read the newspaper till about 9:30 and then open his door and start his business. We are here at 6 o'clock in the morning, we haven't got a PA, we have not got an HR; we do our own thing, but our leadership group higher up empowered us to be like that.

**13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change?
How can they sidestep it?**

I think one of the big things is rejection, rejection by your staff. The change is made higher up and you've got to agree with the change and then they don't agree with the change; and I am talking about your immediate departmental managers and even the staff. A couple of times this company made changes and then we as a group had to agree to that. And if your superiors don't agree then you also think it is a stupid idea but if the company pushes through with it you must adapt. There are a couple of things that could have gone the other way where we did not agree with them, but we did the change and most of the time it worked. We are going on a new computer system soon and we are all worried about it because it has changed. We did the courses two months ago and on the 1st of August we are going on the new system. And you think two months ago I did this, I am not too sure now, but it will take you a week and then you will be all right with system again. But I think the main thing is that you are worried that somebody will not buy into the change and you have got to change it.

When we started with retention, and the new CE, customer experience, it was a major block from our side. The new CE is two questions, but we had a whole list, a twenty-minute interview. We were also against that, because twenty minutes over the telephone is a long time and then they said they were going to bring it down to two questions and was either yes or no. It was marked out of five and five was a 100%, four was 75%, three was 50% and two was 25% and one was zero. The first time we thought this was like a dice, it was either a hit or a miss. The first two months it was bad, we were used to a CE of 92% or 95% and suddenly you had a CE of 70%. And

then we started analysing and we got the people in and there was what was called a detractor on the thing. And we said let's work on the detractor, and one sales person always had her CE up there and all of a sudden she was the worst. And we worked on her and even on the service side and we just got that sorted out and now they are 300 out of 300 all the time. And it was a buy-in from their side and it was a process that they had to learn where it is not like the old days. You are not going to change it. Now we are fighting for the thing where we can appeal. You can't appeal; it is either yes or no and we still push it, but we have adapted now. It is not going to get that appeal system through so now you work on the weak points.

At the same time, we had customer retention and we also did not want to participate in that. In the old days there was a card system. You look at the card and say this is Person X, this is his telephone number, let 's phone him today. Today we give you everything. Our company has a got a program where three years ago or four years ago the cars that were sold, is marked for today. So, I give the sales guy a program or a little thing and say phone those customers, their cars are so old, that's their mileage on there and that is the outstanding value if it is a TFS approve. Maybe you can sell a car there and that was the worst decision because it is like me asking you a favour to phone your customer. That's how they saw it because now it gives you something to work on. And then when one or two started following up and saying the customer said how did you know my car was so old and had so many kilometres and then it was easier for the sales executive. Now they are so dependent on that. We give them a list and you don't have to look in the yellow pages like the old days to see who lives in Chamdor. This is what we do, and believe me, this was a major, major block for them to phone that customer; now it is part of life. We get a service retention, we get a customer retention from the sales side and even on the parts side, the guys are not shy to phone because it is only those first ten calls that is difficult. And they can ask, or they can say I haven't got anything on my portal, why did I not get anything. And we also partake in that car and all the electronic stuff. It was also a mindset but it changed quickly because that was also if you don't use that program and we get marked on it so we get a quarterly incentive and I will quickly take away your car if say Person X did not phone this guy in three days. I just reallocate that lead if it was you best customer somebody else just takes him and follow up.

RESPONDENT C2

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

From my side the most important is integrity. Honesty is also very important in our business and we are also a caring organization. Integrity and honesty and caring are our most important cultural values. It's all about the people for us.

2. How do you lead through change?

We have just been through it when our organization technically crashed on the 6th of December 2017 with the Steinhoff news. There was chaos. I went on leave a week later and I came back earlier due to the fact that there was a lot of uncertainty among my people. People thought they were going to lose their jobs. What I did was to physically get into my car and to drive from dealership business to business to calm the team down. It's easy to sit here and to say they knew full well for whom they were working and we wouldn't let them go, but at floor level they said this mighty share levels of ours crashed, we are all going to lose our jobs. So, I physically got the people together after hours and put them at ease by saying nothing would change. It was actually scary at management level because they were more fears at management level than at lower levels. And I think that it was because people knew they were responsible for themselves but also felt responsible for their staff, so they were concerned about the well-being of their people as well. But the way we addressed it was for people at my level to physically go there and calm the stormy waters. I said to them guys I give you my full commitment that nobody would lose their jobs. All you need to do is to focus on your job. I said don't worry about this. We will sort it out and we will make sure we get a stronger, better share holder in the future.

Fortunately that is how it happened, but senior management intervention was necessary at floor level. I did not even send an email, I physically went there myself because the people want to see you, they want to listen to you they want to know that you are there. I gave them my commitment and I said to them if people lose their jobs, I will make sure that I'm in front of the queue. I will walk out first before you guys walk out. That's the commitment I gave to my people. I said we are one team and we will walk out as a team. I told them to calm down. I explained to them why we will not crash, why we can't fall, because we were the biggest entity in this organization, I said

if we fall, the whole group falls. There was just too much at stake, and believe you me, this is a big business, and I said you may be a little dealership in a rural town, but you are part of the bigger picture and we will not neglect you. We will not break up this group, we will make sure that we get to our end destination as one team.

I must tell you, afterwards the feedback we got from the guys was immense. They said you made the effort to come here, we are such small players in the bigger picture. And I actually said to the guys you actually miss the point, it is not how small you are in the bigger picture, you are just as important as the biggest player in the group for us. Everything is relative to your market and to what you guys are and what you produce and at the end of the day we are all responsible for all the families that depend on the employment in this business. I said on average every person that works for us, like the 2223 employees in this organization, look after at least four people at home. So, I said this is a big business we have a responsibility and explained to them there are many ways in which we can handle this matter because what happened was on the 7th of December some of the big banks just pulled our funding.

All I said to the guys was that there were a couple of things we had to do. We had always been conservative in how we spent money. I said we still need to incur production expenses. That we still had. The unnecessary ones you just eliminate. Secondly, we've got to sweat the assets and we've got to get cash. Cash is king. I said we must get the cash in. Where we could have relaxed two or three days to get cash in from the workshop, or the parts, or the vehicle debtors, I said now we've got to sweat the assets. Just keep the cash going so that we don't need to borrow so much money and I must tell you that when we pleaded to the guys they rose to the challenge. It is unbelievable how the guys just took hands and produced. I want to leave this with you, in any business cash is king. You might show a sale or a profit but it's not true profit if the money is not in the bank. It can be a profit on paper, but you need the money in the bank. Cash is king. We got to a point where my boss came to me and said I don't know how we are going to pay the salaries. I said no we will pay them, just make sure the cash is in the bank and in that December, we paid every guy because in December we pay all our low-key staff an annual bonus. So, the low-key guys get a bonus once a year but the guy who work on incentive don't get that bonus. It is called a statutory

bonus. We paid everybody their statutory bonuses, all the managers their incentives and that made the difference. We were in tough times and we came through it all but that also tested us and made us even stronger than what we were as a team.

I think it was because we've got integrity with them. We have proven over the years that what we say is what we do, and we produce on what we promise. I think there is a belief system because of our honesty, and we have never faulted on that and the commitments we gave them we have always produced on. It all goes back to integrity and what's very scary in today's modern society is that you get very few people that you can trust to do what they say when you do business with them. And that is the big issue for me. People who do business with me and my colleague always say there is one thing we know whatever you guys say. There was a point when the organization financial services were a R1.4 billion facility where they said the bosses in Europe wants sureties. I told him that there are no sureties, I reminded them that we had never dropped them. They stated that it was not about us. I told them to be careful because it was acid-based finance. I told them if they were so unsure about it why did they go and fetch the car if they thought we would double discount the car, our good name was just too important. And it went back to the integrity because the CEO said he would vouch for us because he knew us well. "I know you guys you will never drop me. Other people in the industry will not take that risk but you guys". And that is what important to us. I know we are perceived as old school, but it has worked for us. The honesty, the integrity in the tough times has pulled us through. The guys actually took it on at a board meeting where they said that you guys will lose your jobs if you believe these guys. They said. "We believe these guys, we know they will not sell a car and not settle it, so as a group then we made the decision". If I register the car as a sale to the manufacturer, I've got to settle that car on my floorplan within 48 hours. We actually settled those cars within 24 hours to show them how serious we are, that our commitment is there and that we will honor our credit facilities, and not once did we default.

We never believed in these group names and we can actually go on our knees and say thank you for it. For us the strength is in the brand, in the name and not the location. We always try and live by that belief as well or value to say you are as good as the brand. It is our responsibility whatever we do we must take cognizance of the fact that you must build on your brand and not break your brand down to the detriment

of the brand but to enrich yourself because then you are a very short term player because you are as good as your brand and that is the future for us as well that is why I say you must look after the manufacturer's interest because if they grow and they are strong I will have a strong brand that will always look after us and we can see it in tough times how the our brand just remains the better one to be with. I see what my colleagues go through. It is not easy. I think it is a case of our organization also being local management that they have not got these expats that fly in every three years, break everything and then they fly out. They've got continuity in their culture and their management style at the organization.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

I can elaborate a bit. I always say budget is a tool. When I go through a budget process, I pull in every single manager, we dissect the business and we budget for potential. We don't necessarily budget for what the shareholder wants. I know what the shareholder wants, so our process is always to get the plan from the shareholders, what are they looking at and then I budget for potential and I bring the two together and I will massage it a bit up-or-downwards, but not necessarily up because I want the buy-in from the people. They must tell me; I will give the input and we talk about it and we engage with them to say Hey guys. They sit in market factors and we think you are underperforming, look at these factors, don't you think you should and then we have a stepped approach. So that the guys believe in it that they can get there. And that is the process. It has always worked for us is to engage with the people, we help them so that they actually, we know what our objectives are but we help them but they actually draft their own objectives but it definitely aligns with my mine. So, you see what I'm doing, so we try and sell it to them, and they believe in it themselves and it has always worked for us. Because it is unbelievable when you get people to believe in themselves what they can produce, absolutely unbelievable what they can achieve. When they have the necessary support and guidance, they always get there.

4. What leadership style do you use?

I am very involved with my people, so I am definitely not an autocrat. I'm not an easy guy but I'm definitely not an autocrat. I drive a hard bargain but absolute engage style and have a very approachable policy. One guy said compared to where they were is

that I am always approachable. They can always talk to me and that is very important, because I've got skills and strengths, but my guys have a lot more of the skills and strengths and they are better in what they do. It's not my job to be a specialist in parts and service. I've got to be a leader they have got to be specialists They've got to be the best in what they do from a systems and process's point of view while I've got to be the glue that put all these things together.

Bring out the best in them and I give my guys total freedom at my dealership level. There is no limit to funding. I said to a guy you can be a small dealer in the past if you utilized ten million. If you want 20 million it's fine, you can get the stock; make sure the stock is current. Just move it, sweat the assets. What has always work for me is when I get to a dealership or dealerships is, I always compared my guys to milkshakes. The one is a chocolate milkshake, the one is a bubblegum milkshake, the other one is a strawberry but you know what, that flavor will do the business and I allow my guys to run their businesses, you must listen carefully, I fully allow my guys to run their businesses as if it is their own business. They have got that freedom to run it within certain parameters, there are certain financial controls for them and I always say to the guys, listen, the financial controls are not there to tighten your hands, it is there to protect you. It is to make sure that the potholes that are out there, that you can get around them, but we give the guys a lot of freedom to trade within their own environments effectively. For instance, a Kimberley dealership's market is very differently to a Bloemfontein dealership market, so the local guy knows his market. I can't just go there and say, Dearly, you are actually a lime milkshake, but do you have to convert to bubblegum. It is not going to work because the people get used to him and they have got a way of working with their people and I always say that is the uniqueness of our game. It is that I've got all the flavors in the market and I love it because that is what is beautiful about the human race, we are all different. We are all unique and that is what is nice for me; working with different personalities and that is what makes my life interesting, it is all the different personalities and it works for us. We give the guys a lot of freedom and it has worked for us.

That is the style, so it is a very participative, engaged type of style. I am very involved; I don't get disengaged. The guys always say I am scary, I know their numbers better than they do. But you know, numbers are a historical thing, but it tells you a lot about the business, the management information.

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

Our biggest challenge in market retail is to get people to think differently, to align their thinking to what is happening in the marketplace. Our people unfortunately, the way they've done things five years ago, they still want to do things as they did five years ago. That is our biggest challenge that people do not have that agility in their thinking, especially with our fixed operations, Parts and Services. The service guy wants to do it the way he used to do it and times have moved on because the customers' needs have changed the last 10 or 15 years. They battle to align their mindset to where the current market is, that is our biggest challenge. What helps us fortunately is that the manufacturer forces us to change and do things differently. They put in new processes and systems to force us more towards that environment. When I review them, I tell my guys to think differently but they battle to get out of that environment. We try and engage with them and we tried to sell the idea to them and eventually, if they like it or not, we force the change on to them. I try soft intervention but sometimes I have to force change the issue. That is what you have to do because when you lag behind you must meet the expectations of your customer. If you don't do it, you are going to fall behind. Usually it is the laggards that you have to force. Fortunately, in most cases the guys accept it, these are usually the younger people. Younger people have also very different expectations to older people. When they are young, they want to earn top dollar although they are not producing, and the old bulls want to do it the way they did 30-40 years ago because they say it worked for them. So, we try to show them the benefits and if it doesn't work, we force change. But we do not force it in an autocratic way, we try to show them the benefits that we do it in a collaborative way.

The Financial guy. Sometimes he says I thought you were going to rip this guy apart, but you've actually inspired him. My answer is that if a guy has bad results you can take him to pieces but when you leave, you have to give constructive criticism. You've got to leave him with ways and means to improve himself. If you leave and you've broken the person's spirit then you have achieved nothing. You have actually caused more damage. If you leave the person with something constructive you actually encourage that person. Nothing is better if after three or six months he can inform you that he and his team have achieved something substantial. We can be consultants and advisers, but they must actually do it. Give him enough encouragement to do that job effectively that's always been my approach. I always try to be as constructive as

possible. During the process we use a lot of benchmarking. Tell them you know where they are but maybe they should phone certain businesses. They are the same size as you and they've been through similar circumstances, they know exactly what to do, this is what we recommend. if you don't know what to do, go to visit your colleague and find out how they are solving the problems. This has always worked for us.

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

Not specifically addressing that but we are forced by the manufacturer that all our staff should acquire specific skills, qualifications at a certain level. So, they address all those issues and our company have become very good in the training of leadership skills for dealer principals and managers. They have been training those quite hard for the past five years and we as a group align ourselves with their training curriculum. We don't have an HR department, but we handle our HR duties at dealership level. We have top HR people and three staff members who take care of HR matters. It is an environment that where we believe has happened at general manager level. We want it to happen at floor level, we don't want an HR person shouting all the instructions from the top. We give guidance to the guys what they must do, and they must implement it at dealer level so that they are ultimately responsible. It is an area where we can get a little bit better but when we had the HR consultants, they did ten times more damage than any help they gave. The bigger corporates the more important, definitely has been smaller the less important. We try and keep it very practical. I'll be able to pay his debt. I want people to know the persons working for them inside out.

One thing to engage people in our business I want them to engage people in our business. I always tell my managers that when someone works for them they have to know that person inside out, everything about his family, everything about his pedigree, how much he needs to earn to live. So if he has a bad month and you recommend an incentive of five, but he actually needs an incentive of seven, don't let me phone you to set matters straight because you must know that person well enough to pay him more. It won't break the bank but might break the spirit of that individual. I want them to engage in the business. I had one DP who did not engage in his business and I took him out and moved him to another spot. I told him that he could not work

with people. It has all to do with people. You may have all the other good skills but if you don't have emotional intelligence to work with people you should not oversee the business.

That is the next question I am going to combine the next two questions

7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?

8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

EQ. Emotional Intelligence to me is by far the biggest; it has to do with awareness, have warmth for people, understand peoples' needs, know what makes people tick, be sensitive. My motto is to treat people the way I want to be treated. When I walk into a wash bay and they don't do their job properly, I would not scream and shout. They only get 2% of my salary and I am just very thankful for what they are doing. They do a dirty job that I don't want to do, and I respect them for it. I treat them with dignity and would rather ask them whether we need more people or better machines. I consult them to find out what we need to do a better job. When I go to a dealership I will never leave before I have walked through the whole business. When I visit the dealerships in Cape Town, I shake everybody's hand, whether it's greasy or not, because those people work nine hours a day and they work themselves into the ground. They live in the worst parts of town; they drive the worst cars and I respect them for that.

When you are a general manager, I believe you have already proven that you deserve to be at that level. There is nothing wrong with your skills and there is nothing wrong with your IQ but if you have not got the EQ you won't do well in the job. If you don't understand the dynamics of working with people to get the maximum out of your staff in order to achieve your objectives and to engage with your customers to have customers for life, you don't do the job. So, for me the most important is EQ.

General managers need EQ which is the most important KPI in my book. It is very difficult to measure, but you will definitely know whether a person has it or not in the way in which they engage with the staff and their customers. I think there is a big need for that and an advantage for me is the people that I recruit

at general manager level, is known to me. At my level I know the people. People move within a close circle or if they don't, people know people. But at a lower level we take a risk because we may think we know the people but when they get here, we find we don't really do.

People who lack those emotional skills will do well up to a certain level but if you promote them above that level, they will not do well and this may lead to a loss for the company because a lot is invested in such a person.

I think it is because we are sloppy. We don't actually calculate the cost of the investment in a certain individual because it is easy just to replace that individual with another person who is also in the game. But the cost is actually shocking and the people who have left us have been underperforming salespeople according to the statistics. This is where our record is very good because the good salespeople stay here for 20 or 30 years. It's only 10% or 20% that leave the job because they are not natural salespeople. The managers whose jobs have been terminated were all people without any EQ; they could not work with people. EQ has been proven to be of key essential importance

9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

How do you teach somebody EQ? My experience is you have it or you have not got it. If people don't realise the value of humans as a resource, they should not be in a managerial position. They could be in a specialist position, they can be engineers, architects, technicians. A technician for instance, works with a car. For them things may be black or white, right or wrong. They don't engage like us in a grey world with people with different personalities. I sometimes have to admonish a person not to talk to people in a derogatory manner and he may improve for a while, but after two or three months he is back to his old habits. You either have it or you haven't got it.

Sometimes a manager with 20 odd people under him, leaves for a new position where he is well away. But he leaves his people behind at a disadvantaged because he has done so much damage since he did not develop their abilities.

It is really a matter of engagement and I find that the DPs who engage with their staff are just at a much higher level than the people who is disengaged with their staff.

Who engages with his people? He is usually at the service centre at half past six in the early morning. EQ includes those small things which a leader understands, but which other people don't see yet take for granted. It is so important because that is how people ultimately judge a superior. And it is a natural thing for a born leader, and it comes naturally to those people. Even if you read a large number of books you won't acquire it if you don't have it naturally. People can evolve but they have to evolve early in their careers. After a few years it gets difficult to acquire new habits. For instance, it is quite difficult to change an autocratic leadership style. It is especially difficult for people who produced the results by this kind of management style, but it is also important that when a manager leaves, he should be able to name a few people who worked under him whom he helped to improve.

It is very important that when a leader disappears from the scene, for whatever reason, that there should be a natural leader ready to follow in his footsteps. I believe that when I leave my main measure of success should be gauged by what people say about me once I'm gone. For me the difference between a boss and a leader is among other things, how many people you can raise to a higher level of achievement.

The difference between a boss and a leader is that people do exactly what the boss tells them to do, but a leader gets so much more out of the people without them even asking for remuneration. I have somebody working for me who opens up shop every day at 4:15 and he waits at the panel beaters at a 5:50 to show them when they open at 6 o'clock that he is waiting for them. And I don't pay him for that but that is the commitment that person illustrates and it's not because of my abilities. I have people who leave at 3 o'clock in the morning to get through the day even though it is dangerous to be about at that hour. These are people who put in so much more than what you ask and they are good people and I told somebody that these CV people are not going to understand some of our structures, but if that will be used as a reason to get rid of them, they are going to have to deal with me. If they want them to leave, I will tell them that I will be the first in that queue. I have phenomenal people working

for me. My logistics person in Parts, will work through a Saturday night into a Sunday doing stock taking, getting everything ready for opening on Monday morning.

10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?

When I think of the past regarding our used vehicle stock parameters, we had a very conservative policy. Then we decided to do away with it and keep more stock to be different from the other dealers. The plan was also to stock a wider variety of vehicles to broaden our market appeal and to increase our volume in the market. In addition, we decided to decrease our profit margins, but we planned an increase in sales resulting in an increase in our net profit. These innovations illustrated how very difficult it was to change the mindset of especially our used vehicle dealers. They were used to their traditional sales volumes and profit margins. I also did not want to force the changes on to these people so that they would not become totally discouraged. They found it difficult to move up a level to a different mindset. To enable them to change their thinking we engaged with them and physically went through the plan step-by-step. We also use benchmarking. If we couldn't convince somebody, we referred him to somebody who had already done that and told him to go and learn from that person. As I told you before it is the most difficult thing in our business to change the mindset.

11. How do you encourage innovation, agility and intelligent risk-taking?

Selling the benefits, linking the benefits of an improved performance and then to move through all the steps back to the reward.

At the end of the day people want to know what is in it for them. We therefore try to get people to become shareholders with us by telling them if you give us more, we shall share more with you and that physical reward is used as an incentive.

12. What role does leadership development play in a change-ready culture?

I think it has changed a lot over the years. About 20 years ago the culture was very much about physical returns. Nowadays the culture is very much more customer and staff centered. We can do nothing without our people and our clients. Percentagewise we have a much lower market share than in the past but that is because the market

has become far more competitive as there are more players. And we retain our competitive edge by having the best people in these difficult times. Some of the top people of other groups want to come to us because they say that we are different. The first thing that other groups do in difficult times is to fire those first who joined last. People have no idea how demoralizing it is to you have the possibility of the hatchet of unemployment hanging over your head. We don't do that. Our motto is in good times we had the loyalty of our people, in difficult times it is our duty to support them and the best way of doing this is to ensure that these employees don't lose their jobs. If the culture is all about making money and 10% of the employees are retrenched, how do you manage the other 90% not to become discouraged? The damage that was done can never be turned around. There is always a culture of fear in such a business and we don't have that culture. We don't have that approach at all. I would rather continue building on the good work we have done over time and I have an approach of natural attrition. My strategies would rather be to preserve the good work we have done and build on it.

Our culture is genuinely about our people. We still drive the performance, but our culture went from a result culture to a people's culture and that means apart from your people it's all about customer focus and we try to keep that customer for life. It also meant that we changed our strategies resulting in the role of the accountant being less important than in the past. It's more an assistance functionality than a key functionality as in the past.

The role of the receptionist is that the first person whom the customer sees is the receptionist.

I consider that person to be a hostess and her role is often underestimated. The person who answers the phone, whom the customer first sees, is the window on the business. I often tell a DP to phone his own business to evaluate how quickly, how cheerfully, how politely, how efficiently the phone is answered. I know of at least one girl who rose to senior administrator position because of her efficiency as a hostess. I often tell my people to concentrate on the basics; people can always learn the skills later. I believe in appointing the right people and that has been vindicated by experience. In a job interview I believe one should ascertain the attitude of the candidate concerning a few

key matters. The reason why some of our best employees put in extra hours is because they have the right attitude, they take pride in their work and set an example to others.

13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change? How can they sidestep it?

The biggest challenge is when somebody forces an agenda on to somebody who does not want to buy into it. The biggest shortcoming is if you can't get buy-in from your team. You must sell your plan, your strategy, your business case very well to your people. If you change your strategy you must quantify and qualify it efficiently so that you can get buy-in from your people at once. I believe in doing it personally and not by means of emails. If you force people to accept your strategies one-sided, you will find that they won't cooperate. Our culture is one of dialogue and sometimes we get useful information from the employees too. One of the worst things that can happen in difficult times is that senior management panic in front of their employees. I believe you should go somewhere private when you feel like panicking. By staying positive in difficult times, you create the impression that you know that things are not as bad as they seem. If your attitude is negative it can create an impression of impending doom. Even if your worries are caused by the loss of a few large accounts, you may always acquire new ones.

You may influence someone who sees you as a role model

One should not be too critical of oneself. It is important that the right leaders with the right attitude and EQ should be appointed when one wants to turn around a business. If a branch performs poorly it is usually the fault of the DP. Where we replaced senior staff members in businesses that performed poorly, the business was turned around quickly. People form the backbone of our business and we should take care of them but still show a profit to our shareholders in the increasingly competitive market.

RESPONDENT C3

1. What are the most important values you demonstrate as a leader?

One of the values which I consider important for a leader today, number one is integrity. It includes that people can trust you, that people may come to you, that matters discussed will be kept confidential. That is the most important for me. The second one is that a person should be available and can be approached by people. In our environment all our top management have an open-door policy. This decision was taken a few years ago not because it is nice but to make top management approachable. I also think honesty is a very important thing. If you lie to people you lose integrity. I think that all these things are closely connected. I believe everything you do which radiates energy or enthusiasm is very important, whether it's a product, or an idea, or a concept. If you are not enthusiastic about it how can other people be enthusiastic about it.

Enthusiasm, attitude and all these things are interconnected. If you walk along the passage and don't greet anybody why should they greet you. For a leader to have good manners is very important otherwise you get the same reaction from everybody.

It is about Setting the example

If you as a leader are not prepared to do something, how can you expect your people to do something. Even if it is not my problem; like a client being dissatisfied about the tyre wear, I am still prepared to solve this problem. Even though I can't solve the problem myself, I will get somebody to do it for him. You must be all things to all people, like a father figure as well as a mother figure. You should have empathy as if somebody is ill. Empathy is another value that you should have which is interconnected to the others.

2. How do you lead through change?

In the eighties we had a slogan that cropped up at conferences, viz. "Adapt or die". Not many people in those days believed in what we said because of our major market share in our sales of cars. The question was asked why we should change. That was the situation in the eighties. Last Thursday I showed a video to our Parts Service and Sales Managers of our dealers as well as to our own dealership to whom I showed it

a year ago too. It was about an eagle that will eventually die, but which can also rejuvenate itself, but only by means of very painful actions. It has to slam its beak to pieces against a rock before it can grow a new beak; it has to pull out its feathers before it can grow new feathers, etc. It is very emotional to watch, and I showed it to the Japanese as well last year. Change is continuous and happens all the time. I think change is sometimes used to frighten people in the sense that they are warned that if they do not change, they are going to lose their jobs. These are people that don't do what they're supposed to do. People will still have jobs, but it may be another kind of job. We are using change to force people to change in order to benefit other people.

Our philosophy is to change every day, every day something changes in our industry. You must be adaptable. If a client comes to us and he says he does not want a five-year service plan for his truck, but an eight-year service plan and we don't allow it, then we are not adaptable. We are not busy with change. This kind of thing happens every day and if he cannot convince us to do that, he's going to another firm to get it there. I don't see change as something that affects 20 or 30 trucks but as adaptability that is to be implemented every day. It becomes a constant. We at the company don't change our strategy every year. We have a continuous strategy, we ask questions like which part of this strategy are we going to do this year and which part of the strategy are we going to do next year and which part of this strategy are we going to do in 2025. We have a continuous process in how we apply our strategy.

So, change should be a process and not an event in which we forecast that in a particular year that this is going to happen. It never happens. It sometimes happens later or sometimes earlier. Change is driven by your client. Everybody nowadays talks about the millennials who don't buy cars from dealers. This is rubbish. Nobody buys a car off a system, that person must see the car, feel that car and drive the car. Maybe in 20- or 30-years' time, but you must be adaptable for the people that want something as well as for the people that don't want it. You must drive change to identify opportunities and to achieve a competitive success, but in the process, there are many starts stops and people get discouraged by it. The big issue now is "Connect a car" and this is a five year project and in August the company starts with "Connect a car" and in January we start with "Connect a truck" and now we've come to a dead end with this and what you should know is how do you use your leadership qualities to continue motivating people every day especially when we can't continue with

something and we have to find a solution. I suggest forgetting about this for two days. After two days the issue should be clearer, don't try and force that thing and this is for me is important because this is how you should really lead change. People are frightened of change. The lower down a person's position is in an organization the more change affects him, but we as management change in a strategic manner: we see it, we manage it, And we can do things, secretaries have changed, they don't exist anymore, nobody in this organization, even the GM, has a dedicated secretary anymore but those people play other roles, hardly anybody types a letter when the role changes.

We are living in very uncertain times in our country that also frightens people.

How do you convince people which way to go, we are busy now drawing up service plans? I can't apply these prices to a truck because the risk is great, but we want buy backs, but it is a great risk. But the market forces you to do that and how do you manage it. We meet with finance next week and we have identified all the risks, and this is how we will manage it. In fact, there are no more risks, but you as a leader must drive it with enthusiasm and motivate everybody otherwise it will not realize. If we leave it, there won't be a franchise in five years' time and then no more new trucks will be sold, somebody else will do it. So, you are forced by the clients and competition to do it. Take Craft beer for instance, if you don't have a counter for Craft beer the brewery will cease to exist.

3. How do you achieve objectives in a fast-paced environment?

We are on a treadmill and we run on it every day, every month, every year and we are not even aware of it because we become fit. If you get off the treadmill by being away from work for a day or a week, or a month then you become aware how fast that treadmill is when you try to get back on the treadmill when you go back to work. It is quite an effort to get back onto the treadmill and it only becomes easier once you are back after a while. It is comparable to exercise. The thing about the fast sense is that you have to take decisions. You can't postpone decisions and you as a leader must allow your people to make decisions. If you don't make the decisions, you will find by next week that it is too late. You must have the best possible information and intelligence to make the decision and not postpone the decision. If we postpone the decision we may find that there are 20 more decisions to be made next week and then

you are left with this weeks' 20 decisions as well as next weeks' 20 decisions and there may be even more decisions that you should've made earlier and now you can't manage. You must make decisions. The problem arises when people don't want to make decisions as no miracle is going to happen to make a problem disappear. So, my answer is to keep up to the pace. You must make decisions, but you are not going to make the right decisions at all times. Somebody told me that you must just make sure that you make more good decisions than bad decisions.

Doing something is better than doing nothing

What happens when you don't make decisions is that the problem becomes what I call rotten and that can smell after a while and it gets into your environment, your clothes, your culture, everything. People know if you don't make decisions. I can name you who does not make decisions, I can tell you which of the dealers are hesitant to make decisions. They hope that the problem will go away. It will never go away it will only get worse.

4. What leadership style do you use?

In the present environment autocratic management is not successful because autocratic managers make all the decisions. They are the people who work late because they have no time for anything else. Every little thing that must be done means that somebody will have to come to this office with a paper and present it. You must allow people to make decisions and you must give them the confidence to make decisions because then you can help them, but you cannot help somebody who never takes a decision. If somebody makes a wrong decision, we can always consider what went wrong in taking that decision. There are many people in many organisations who have a lovely life because their bosses make all the decisions and they are never evaluated accordingly. Those people can also not get anywhere at all. I always tell people if you don't get the opportunity to make decisions, and you will make good and bad decisions, then we can never tell whether you are fit to be a future leader. And there are people who hide in positions for thirty years and when they retire, they have thirty years' experience but in reality, they have only one years' experience because for 30 years they did the same thing. These people who are here don't understand why they never were promoted. They were their own biggest enemy. They do a very great job because they are fantastic in their jobs, but they never grow in their jobs.

They don't develop, they don't like change and they just continue like that and they disappear in the process. You must allow people to make decisions. The easiest way to solve a problem when it arises is to decide, but for leaders it is difficult if somebody does not want to decide. I tell them go back and think about the problem. If such a person is helped, he will only come back and never decide himself. The next time a problem arises he will just leave that decision up to you. This is a massive problem.

Nowadays we have the millennials who all want to be MDs, but they don't want to make decisions and they don't want to accept responsibility. They don't want to gain experience. They think that if they've been a year in a position they have to move up to the next level because it is their right. We often but heads with them because they complain that they don't get the opportunities. Let me give you a very good example: We are presently developing what we call a Millennial Exco and this is for young people and it is not racist because it is for people of all colors, but they have to apply for this. Even age does not play a role because they can even be up to 35 years old because everybody who can work a phone considers himself as a millennial. On Tuesday we had a staff briefing and I tore into these people because not one person from this division put up his hand to join. This Exco is an opportunity for a young person without very much experience, but with enthusiasm and potential to become part of our Exco like the Sales and Marketing Exco or whatever exco the company has. They can become part of the projects and participate, and in that way, they can participate in a project; and then nobody volunteers. And this makes me hot under the collar.

They want to be spoonfeed

The question is how you manage this. Do you tear into them, do you motivate them? I told them that I don't see that any of them consider themselves as future leaders in that group. I went for the hard approach or is it just too much trouble to send in your CV and to promote yourself or are you not that comfortable in promoting yourself. Life is such that if you don't raise your hand nobody is going to notice you.

You have to get out of your comfort zone and remember this is over and above your usual work. People nowadays don't want additional duties. My sister mentioned to me the other day, and this is a stupid example, she is in Gansbaai and they wanted to organize a parkrun. They went to Hermanus last Saturday because they wanted to learn how to do a parkrun and then somebody asked how much she was going to be

paid to be on the organizing committee - to give up her Saturdays to organize the thing. This is scary. How do you manage that? But people consider it their right to get a raise to a new level once they've been a year or two at a level. You should apply for the position, that's when you put your hand up. You can't expect somebody to come to you and say you have been in this position for two years I want to give you a raise. They usually want to know how much money they're going to get. Sometimes people have to move sideways before they can move up. What it means is that they've got to do something else they don't want to; they must make an effort. The question is how you manage that. We at this organisation have annual engagement surveys and the question is how you are managing this in such a situation. People think there are no opportunities, but there are many. But you have to keep on motivating people no matter how disappointed you are. Somebody told me once you have many friends in organizations such as this but the higher you go the fewer friends you have and at the top you have very few.

To get back to the decision-making

Millennials don't like making decisions

How do you manage that?

Sometimes you've got to force them into a new direction. There are people who accept this and there are people who don't accept this. What we do is we rotate duties. This may be temporarily but, in many cases, the new duties become permanent. This is the case when a person is comfortable in the new position. But this can create a problem with HR because people are evaluated on performance and the person can say that he was forced into that position in which he is not good. So that rotation should be voluntary, it must be approved by HR and there are number of other processes which may be irritating as well. It may happen that you and Louis exchange jobs as well as others in order to gain experience so that you acquire new skills. You can also give somebody a project which may be out of his comfort zone, so project management is another tool which forms part of management. I can give somebody a project does ascertain how many electric trucks we may be able to sell but if he does not have regular contact it will fail. It must be managed. Somebody can answer that there won't be any electric trucks in his time so why should he be interested. This may be the case when somebody retires in five years' time, but this is

something which must be started now already. So, it is a matter of attitude because it's not about you or a person; it is about the next generation, because in five years' time you may miss the boat and then an opportunity has been missed.

You need the competitive edge to protect your brand

If all the others do it what is going to happen to you? You are going to "die".

5. What is your idea of an Agile mindset?

My people hate it when I walk in here and tell them I spent the previous night thinking because you must always be assessing the situation and an agile mindset in my opinion means that you must be open minded and you must think outside your industry. This morning I went to pick up some meat at a butchery and when I walked in there, I realized that nobody could go into that place and not buy something because the way this place displayed the meat was excellent. They are something Deli at Castle Walk. There were about 30 people working in that butchery. I was impressed by the display, the hygiene but the friendliness of the people was most impressive. Eventually I grew tired of telling the people that I have been helped and waiting, but they were so on their toes and so friendly and they were all like that, sweepers, everybody. If you want to buy a car or a truck here, you have to go past many people and if you have to force your way past many people to get to a salesperson it's not impressive. At that butchery, someone got off a ladder to come and help me. There I saw a 100% culture of friendliness and pride from every person working in that organization. So, an agile mindset is to be open and to think all the time and to be on the lookout for opportunities outside of your own industry. The question arises how you apply that to your own industry and then to think how I motivate the employees to apply this culture in our organization. In our organization about half of the people, say about 30, are not so much busy with truck sales anymore, but with logistics, and they have been on a yearlong course, an NTN4 course. We must learn the language of the client and the client does not talk about trucks, the client's language is logistics, for instance how do we move beer from point A to point B, the client talks logistics. We talk about trucks, but we must change our mindset to talk logistics and we have developed this into our system, so we have changed our culture from trucks to logistics. And I think this is agility because agility is how to change the culture. You can move fast but you can get impatient. You can't move without the people, and you can't move without systems

and procedures and the right stuff. You can often launch this forcefully but in reality, it's not the right thing. Sometimes it is better to wait a year to do it properly.

You as a leader know what you want to do but you have to get everybody in the same picture.

People have to buy into this thing, and we want something specific, we get people together from time to time from all over and nowadays we can do it online and it works because there are WhatsApp groups and other ways. Now everybody has bought into it and is enthusiastic and the first part is nice, but the middle part is difficult because you have to keep everybody motivated for the final part when the end is in sight and it becomes easier again.

6. Is there support for Agile approach in the organisation; is it used on all projects?

The philosophy of the company is creativeness. Japanese and our organization philosophy is very much process orientated which includes efficiency. Everything we do according to this system is a process. That is why Japanese companies make very few mistakes, but they take much longer to bring things to the market. It is possible to bring things much quicker to the market but then the quality is not necessarily up to standard, whether it is a course, or a truck or a car, and this may damage the brand. So, the challenge is how to improve the brand but still to do it fast enough to keep up with the implementation of change. There is a tendency in the truck market to move to automatic transmissions because many large firms don't buy a truck if it's not automatic and there are many advantages in having automatic gear shift. But we were not the first to manufacture trucks with automatic transmission as an alternative. The first automatic transmissions used by the other firms were not fully automatic but what we called ANT. Hino came three or four years later but had fully automatic gear shift transmission. Now in hindsight fully automatic was the right decision, not ANT. For a few years the companies with ANT had the advantage but fully automatic transmissions have many more advantages. The question is how you balance the change, which in this case is a big change, to get the right product. And we can't just go with anything. To make the right decision requires strong leadership. The question then is why people chose that particular product when the other manufacturers chose

a better product and now, we are left with an inferior product. So, an important question is how you balance the integrity of your brand.

Actually, an agile approach is promoted. The philosophy of the company is to get every person in the company to achieve goals in an alternative manner. If possible, this applies to everything, whether it is an administrative process, or a truck, or a marketing strategy; how can we do something in a better way.

Some managers are busy with a project where the dealers want to place advertisements. They need only come to us and we send them templates, we send them pictures; and now they can go online, and they can get the logo and they can get pictures of the trucks. They need not do it themselves. The philosophy and the support are that everybody should at least be busy with one project or part of a project where a person wants to make an improvement. The change may be small but sometimes it can have a greater impact than people anticipate, and the question is how you support the people during that process. So, there is a lot of support for change. So, Kaizen determines how can you do something in a better way. In other words, Kaizen is a continuous improvement process. It includes questioning yourself whether you are doing something in the best possible manner. This includes questions about handling demos, truck driver training for your clients. All the time you have to be busy to find ways of improving the things you do, and this is all contained within the philosophy of Kaizen and this means continuous improvement.

If you start to work here they send you on a Kaizen course, the DBD course about the organization production systems, etc. We have a joke here if you want to bring a change about, you have to set it out fully on an A3 page, not a stack of pages and there is a whole process of how it should be done. It should contain the objectives, your analysis and your solution. I simply look to see if this solution addresses the problem and then we try it. And the simpler it is, the better and Japanese solutions are very simple. Sometimes we create complicated solutions which are very confusing, but if we bring in a Japanese we are surprised at the simplicity of his solution.

We try to impress our bosses by making things complicated; Japanese impress their bosses by making things as simple as possible and that is the difference between a Western culture and their simpler way of doing things.

7. What in your opinion makes a good leader?

A person who can motivate people, a person who can lead people, a person who can give people opportunities, a person who is enthusiastic, but the person also has to be firm and apply discipline. This place I told you about earlier have all these things but also discipline. The way they talk to the owner and the way he asks them questions show that there is discipline. You cannot manage anything where there is chaos because then it is just a matter of luck and luck only lasts for a very short while in business. If you are lucky embrace it but then it has to be ordered. In business there is always chaos but there must be control over the chaos. You must be in control of the chaos not the chaos in control over you. That is when businesses go down the drain.

The thing I forgot about earlier is that one of the biggest shortcomings that we as leaders find is not a lack of intelligence, but a lack of emotional intelligence.

You get many clever people with clever ideas, but they can't convey it to other people or work together with other people to achieve this. This is a shortcoming that we find in South Africa and I don't know if it is the same overseas but that is my biggest frustration. People know how to solve a problem, but they cannot convey it to the dealer, or the client, or the supplier. They can be clever people who have the technical knowledge, but this lack of emotional intelligence is our biggest frustration and anybody in industry will agree that it is the biggest problem. Eventually that problem becomes your problem. The idea may be good but if it leads to conflict, it cannot be solved, and it reaches your level and eventually the client decides never to buy from your firm again. The client believes the person cannot even explain the matter properly. I don't know where you can address this, but this is one of our biggest challenges as leaders.

It can be that someone does not want to make a decision, or does not want to accept responsibility, cannot communicate properly, does not have emotional empathy, cannot place himself in the client's shoes, cannot understand the impact of his or her actions on the client and this is a South African problem.

We can teach somebody anything. We can teach someone technical knowledge, sales knowledge or financial knowledge, anything but it is very difficult to teach someone

emotional intelligence. Very often it is a case of personality. Initially we measure a person according to his qualifications, for instance his B.Comm. degree, etc, but is his personality of such a nature that it is a good idea to appoint him. He may have all the qualifications, but has he got the ability to tell others that the dealers don't perform, and I tell him that quite often, but it is a matter of how you tell him. He may tell you to get lost or ask you to produce the facts to prove it or I may get an irate phone call that that rubbish guy had accused him of this or that. Then I must take this guy and drive there to patch matters up and then sometimes he is so cross he does not want to see the offender. Then I suggest that he should take him for a breakfast to clear the air but usually after three months we have the same problem again.

I think it can be learned but you should be willing to do it. There are people who think that they should show a lack of emotional intelligence. They think that they should talk down to people because of the little bit of authority their position grants them, and, in that way, they would achieve their objectives. That does not work in today's culture. Business have become much more relaxed. On Fridays and Saturdays, we can now come in jeans and a T shirt. I will, however, still dress the way I do now. Nobody forces me to do this, but I feel casual enough when I go like this. Maybe it's personality or maybe it's insecurity that causes it, but it is difficult to measure something like this. I read that there are hundreds of things that drive emotional intelligence. Domestic circumstances may play a role for instance; if somebody goes through divorce or has lost a child but I am not paid to manage that.

8. Academic literature suggests a distinction of leadership competencies split into Managerial (MQ), Intellectual (IQ) and Emotional (EQ). – Which would you rate more important?

EQ, you need somebody who can at least converse with people or communicate and can at least get something done. Our situation is that we are a wholesaler and the dealer is a retailer and these are two totally different worlds. We tell the dealer what his place should look like, what he must have on his floor, what he must have in his showroom and we tell him the price of the vehicle, etc. We have managed to communicate about this over the years and sometimes we differed much, but once we have finished, we carry on and we don't have grudges about things that happened years ago.

I think that is emotionally mature and that is why we have done so well. We have done well because of their relationship with the dealer networks. We are only as good as our dealership networks. We may have the best products but if our dealer networks are useless, we won't be successful. That is what is happening with many other manufacturers; they have so much conflict with their dealers that they actually forget to do business at the end of the day.

9. What does it take to put agile leadership into practice?

Perseverance. It takes a lot of perseverance to get people together. You also have to be consistent; you can't change your story every day because then people don't know what we are actually going to do. It's interesting that people have strategies. We have not changed our strategies the past five years; we have just tweaked them a bit. We may change the objectives. The economy changes: everybody said after the election that the economy is going to improve but it did not happen, and it is not going to happen this year. So, you must be able to adjust in this process.

10. What are some successful strategies that have worked to actually scale agile?

I think that is part of our philosophy, like Kaizen which is part of our philosophy. That means everybody is indoctrinated by agility, by change, by continuous improvement. I think our values drive it. We have a value that says do the right thing when no one is watching. It's quite easy to do the wrong thing when nobody is watching. So, our value system is all about change with the focus on the client. If the client changes, you have to change. Our philosophy is not to change because of the technology, but to focus on the client. If the client needs something, we must make the adjustment. We must not develop something and expect the client to adjust to it simply because it is a big change. The question is how you identify what the client wants in 10 years' time because the situation is dynamic and competitive. There are far too many truck and automobile manufacturers in South Africa. Our market is so small, 500,000 vehicles per year, 50,000 vehicles per month and there are 65 manufacturers who are trying to sell motorcars. One of them, that is us, have a 24% market share so there is a 76% market share left for 60 manufactures. That is ridiculous. How are they able to survive? There is also a philosophy in our organization. Its focus is that every year everybody from the CEO downwards go to at least one training session for a full day. A wide

variety of people go to these courses, not only the top management, but all the way down to grade two employees. The reason is that everything that is discussed there applies to everybody, but maybe in a different manner. I think it's part of that philosophy of doing things quickly. Our philosophy is to sort the client out and to help him first. We don't believe that we and the dealer and the coach manufacturer and the supplier squabble amongst ourselves while the client is waiting. We believe in making the decision to repair the truck and afterwards we can sort out who is responsible for what because usually everybody has an excuse of not being responsible, but everybody must buy into the solution. We believe that if we can develop trust amongst us then we can become a partner of the customer and this gives us agility. This means that if a problem arises we can sort it out quickly with the dealer, if it's a bigger problem we can sort it out quickly with Japan, but if we don't have the trust amongst ourselves, like one party only protecting its own interests, we won't have the agility to solve the problem. If we do it quickly the client says that bad things happen, but we still have a good partnership. We recently sold a truck in Namibia and the owners were not happy because the truck did not seem to have sufficient ground clearance. We consulted with Japan and sent them photos of the 28-ton truck fully loaded and they assured us that it would not be damaged and that everything was 100%. It may take a week or ten days, but everybody concerned played a role in that trust and a technical expert flew to the client in Windhoek and assured them that there would be no problems. They were actually worried the truck would be too low for their roads; but that is what I call agility. So, it starts with how we can work together to establish that agility. There are many parties to agility. We can be agile on our own, but Japan may be slow, or the dealer may be slow.

those questions (11 and 12) we have covered. Last question

**13. What are the most common mistake leaders make during times of change?
How can they sidestep it?**




The biggest problem is when leaders are not closely connected to your people. You may move and think your people are moving with you, but you may move too far ahead, and they are left behind. You have to stay in touch with your people, you must be aware of what they experience, like their frustrations during times of change. To mention a simple example: we raised prices, the other manufacturers did not in this

present economic environment which is a changing environment in which we wish to continue selling. The sales chap keeps on sending me messages that our prices are wrong, so sales are not good, and I am not doing anything about it and maybe I should reconsider or rethink what are we going to do about it. So, it is a matter of staying in touch and keeping yourself motivated and you must be brave in times of change. When an issue arises, I ask myself to, do I go with a decision or not. With every project we have a "Go or No Go" meeting. If there is one person in those meetings who is against the change, then the meeting decides for no go. So, it has to be unanimous to implement change. We had such a meeting yesterday. We have a system called sign off where we all sign a document what we approved at these meetings, and in this case, it was a change introduced by Wes bank. This means that nobody can afterwards claim to have been against a decision otherwise his signature should not have been on it. This change will come about in August and the procedure is to get the full team committed to the change.

A few years ago, I was in Dubai where we implemented SAP to people who were illiterate. To determine who were able to accept to change we appointed change agents.

Once we got the change agents motivated to accept the change and be successful, they would get the other people to accept the change.

APPENDIX D: TURNITIN REPORT

Part 1				
Title	Start Date	Due Date	Post Date	Marks Available
MBA Treatise Submission - Part 1	16 Jul 2020 - 13:12	31 Dec 2022 - 13:12	1 Dec 2022 - 13:12	100
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APPENDIX E: LANGUAGE EDITOR LETTER

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4 December 2020

DECLARATION BY LANGUAGE PRACTITIONER

To whom it may concern,

I declare that by nature of qualifications and experience I am competent to check the language usage in a treatise document.

I certify that I have checked the Master's Thesis **THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING AGILITY AS A COMPONENT OF SUSTAINED BUSINESS SUCCESS** prepared by student Mark Hennig. I certify that the language usage and structure of the document comply with accepted sound English language usage and scholarly writing norms.

Regards,



—
Elizma Beets

APPENDIX F: PERMISSION TO SUBMIT



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OFFICE

Please type or complete in black ink

FACULTY: Business and Economic Sciences

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT: Business School

I, (surname and initials of supervisor) Poisat P.

and (surname and initials of co-supervisor) N/A

the supervisor and co-supervisor respectively for (surname and initials of candidate) Hennig M.R.

(student number) 217014372 a candidate for the (full description of qualification)

with a treatise/dissertation/thesis entitled (full title of treatise/dissertation/thesis):

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING AGILITY AS A COMPONENT OF SUSTAINED BUSINESS SUCCESS

It is hereby certified that the proposed amendments to the treatise/dissertation/thesis have been effected and that **permission is granted to the candidate to submit** the final bound copies of his/her treatise/dissertation/thesis to the examination office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Poisat P.' with a small flourish at the end.

1 March 2021

SUPERVISOR

DATE