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**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
University of Pretoria

**Career Capital Components and their Accrual: a Senior
Management and Executive Perspective**

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ABSTRACT

The specialised knowledge and skills of an organisation's human capital, which enable organisations to compete within the largely knowledge-based, global economy, have become the main source of sustained competitive advantage for organisations. Senior Managers and Executives, in carrying out their mandate of providing strategic direction to and managing the aforementioned human capital, rely on a portfolio of skills and competencies, amassed throughout their careers, collectively termed career capital, to enable them to effectively fulfil their roles.

The aim of this study was: (i) to identify the career capital components of Senior Managers and Executives; (ii) to identify the methods used in the accrual of these career capital components; and (iii) to identify the career capital components that have been instrumental in enabling the career advancement of Senior Managers and Executives.

A qualitative, exploratory research study was carried out using semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with nine Executives and ten Senior Managers of a large South African manufacturing entity. These individuals were either based at the organisation's head office or at one of the organisation's operating hubs. Data was analysed using the content and frequency analysis technique which involved the gathering and compressing of large interview data into specific and identifiable content categories and drawing inferences from the analysis thereof.

The final outcomes of the study were illustrated in an adapted model, the CCCP model, which relates career capital to generic organisational career pipeline levels; these include Senior Manager and Executive levels. Presented in this model are key career capital components required at the various organisational pipeline levels, the most effective methods used in the acquisition thereof per level and career capital components which serve as enablers for career advancement per pipeline level. The study adds to the findings of existing career capital and leadership development literature.



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Key Words

Career capital, Senior Managers, Executives, Knowledge economy

DECLARATION

I declare that this research is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Date: 6 November 2017

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CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM DEFINITION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

There has been increasing interest of late around the subject of career capital, defined as a portfolio of skills, competencies and capabilities acquired throughout an individual's career, which enable them to be effective in their current role and advance in their careers (Kirk, 2015; Sutherland, Naidu, Seabela, Crosson, & Nyembe, 2015). This study investigates which components make up the career capital of Senior Managers and Executives within the manufacturing sector, as well as the methods used in the accrual of said career capital. It further aims to identify the career capital components that have been instrumental in enabling the career advancement of Senior Managers and Executives.

1.1.1 BACKGROUND

Recent trends such as globalisation, mass industrialisation, technological advancement, disruptive innovation and the increased movement of a large portion of the world's economic policy to free market principles, have caused fundamental changes in the structure and composition of economies and organisations worldwide (Sutherland et al., 2015). Economies have moved from being largely factor-driven, i.e. dependent on primary factors of production such as land, unskilled labour and primary commodities, to being efficiency-driven, i.e. knowledge-based and structured, mainly to exploit the aforementioned global economic trends (Caruso, 2015; Josi & Prilleltensky, 2012).

These changes have prompted organisations to re-evaluate their overall approach to business in order to remain globally competitive and survive. In this new efficiency driven, knowledge-based economy, organisations have had to become leaner, better integrated, agile and more purposefully structured to navigate the current unpredictable and volatile business environment (Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Linnehan, 2000; Yildiz, Beskese, & Bozbura, 2015).

Scholars and business leaders alike have also come to the realisation that human capital, and the management thereof, have become critical factors in the creation of

sustained competitive advantage for organisations (Zikic, 2015) within this modern business environment. Organisations have had to focus their efforts on attracting, developing and retaining talent who provide them with the required specialised skills and knowledge to effectively compete in the knowledge economy (Campbell, Coff, & Kryscynski, 2012; Coff & Kryscynski, 2011). These employees are known as knowledge workers (Drucker, 1994).

1.1.2 CAREER MANAGEMENT IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

The structural changes in economies and the resulting changes within organisations, as previously outlined, have also been instrumental in redefining the traditional career. Adamson, Doherty and Viney (1998) defined a traditional career as positions held within an organisation, of increasing responsibility and seniority over time. There is a marked difference between the modern and traditional career due to the aforementioned changes.

The traditional career was typically limited to one or two organisations, was linear and static in nature, and was characterised by routine work, commitment and loyalty to the organisation, as well as predictable career growth (Yildiz et al., 2015). In the traditional career concept, employee development was designed and centrally driven by the organisation. The rate of vertical progression within the organisation was deemed an indicator of career success (Reitman & Schneer, 2008; Sutherland et al., 2015).

The modern career, on the other hand, is characterised by increased uncertainty around job security among the employed, a largely transactional relationship between the employee and the employer, increased employee mobility, and an increase in employees who are specialists within the organisation (Enache, 2013; Reitman & Schneer, 2008).

This new modern career outlook, from the knowledge worker perspective, requires that an employee takes ownership of their career development, career progression and the maintenance of their employability (Baruch, 2006; De Vos & Dries, 2013; Enache, 2013; Yildiz et al., 2015). This has given rise to the concept of boundaryless and Protean careers (Arthur, 1994; Briscoe, Hall, & Frautschy DeMuth, 2006).

Defilippi and Arthur described the boundaryless career as one that is not limited to a single or small number of employers as seen in the traditional career model. It embraces the need for the modern knowledge worker to be mobile and move between employers, challenging hierarchical reporting and advancement principles within organisations, and focusing on marketability both within and external to the organisation (Defilippi & Arthur, 1994).

The Protean career similarly advocates for employees to become more self-concerned, as well as to take ownership and drive their own career growth to achieve maximum personal fulfilment (Mirvis & Hall T., 1996).

To enable these modern career ideals, knowledge workers are required to continuously improve their employability, marketability and competitiveness in both the internal and external environment, through the accumulation of specific skills and competencies (Briscoe et al., 2006). These accumulated skills and competencies are further expanded on with the introduction of career capital.

1.1.3 CAREER CAPITAL

Bourdieu (1986) defined the concept of career capital as a unique portfolio of skills, competencies and capabilities accumulated throughout a knowledge worker's career. This capital portfolio enables knowledge workers to effectively carry out their duties and add value to the organisation.

Defilippi and Arthur (1994) argued that career capital is comprised of three dimensions: knowing-who, knowing-how and knowing-why. Knowing-who relates to the relational and people network aspect of career capital; knowing-how embodies the possession of technical skills and the tacit and explicit knowledge components of career capital; and knowing-why is associated with employee motivation and purpose (Kirk, 2015; Lamb & Sutherland, 2010a).

Triggered by the global transition to the knowledge economy, the boundaryless and protean career outlooks have driven the direct and indirect focus by knowledge workers on career capital accrual (Inkson, 2006; Inkson & Arthur, 2001). In addition to the aforesaid, knowledge workers have come to the realisation that their competitiveness,

employability and marketability, as well as ultimately their perception of career success, rely heavily on their ability to add value to the organisations they are employed by through their accrued career capital (Suutari & Mäkelä, 2007). This is related to the concept of the tradable nature of knowledge, which suggests that the value organisations place on employees is based on the skills and knowledge they possess and their ability to enable the achievement of organisational goals (Edvinsson, 2002).

1.1.4 THE ROLE OF SENIOR MANAGERS AND EXECUTIVES WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

The traditional role of Senior Managers and Executives, collectively known as the top management team, has primarily been that of designing organisational strategy and structure, oversight of the implementation and tracking thereof, and management of the systems and material resources that enable the achievement of organisational goals (Bartlett, 2016; Raes & Roe, 2011).

The transition from factor-driven economies to knowledge-based economies, as a result of global socio-economic trends and the adoption of the resource-based view of human capital by most organisations, has redefined the traditional organisation and subsequently the scope of responsibility for the modern top management team (Bartlett, 2016; Carleton, 2011). In addition to their traditional roles, senior managers and executives are now expected to perform other roles, including, but not limited to, driving the establishment of a strong corporate purpose and driving the growth in value of the organisation's human capital through the development of management processes that improve employee skills and capabilities (Bartlett, 2016; Campbell et al., 2012).

With the increase in employee mobility as a result of the modern protean and boundaryless career, the continuous development and up-skilling of knowledge workers is a key employee retention strategy (Nelson & Mccann, 2010). It has been suggested that knowledge worker turnover is disruptive, and turnover of top management in particular can have a substantial negative impact on overall organisational performance (Park & Shaw, 2013). The effectiveness of the top management team in their newly defined role within the organisation can therefore

influence the organisation's ability to manage knowledge worker turnover. Creating an enabling environment that allows for the accumulation of career capital will attract and retain top talent.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 ACADEMIC JUSTIFICATION

Research published by Lamb and Sutherland (2010a) identified the components of career capital and how they are accumulated over time. In the study, a *de facto* model of career capital was developed, which provided an integrated view of the components of career capital that are recognised in the knowledge economy. The study was carried out on a population of three distinct groups, namely knowledge workers who were in a management position within their organisations; human resource practitioners; and recruitment specialists.

Similar studies have been carried out in the high-tech R&D industry, the manufacturing industry, the banking industry and the public sector (Sutherland et al., 2015). These studies, similar to that of Lamb and Sutherland (2010a), investigated components of career capital within the specific industries and the methods of accumulation thereof.

Most recently, the information gathered in the above mentioned studies was used to further investigate, across the four industries based on previously gathered data, the relative importance of the identified career capital components and the different methods of career capital accrual within the specified industries (Sutherland et al., 2015).

The population of interest for the four sectors was mainly knowledge workers in middle management or lower role categories. These role categories were largely focused on performing planning, coordinating, execution and administrative roles within an organisation (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1997). Similar research has not been carried out on the Senior Management and Executive role categories however, which are less functional and more strategically focused. This investigation will thus contribute to the body of knowledge and bring key insights from this population of Senior Managers and Executives.

1.2.2 BUSINESS RATIONALE

The evolution of the notion of the career and the global transition to knowledge-based economies has had a definite impact on organisations. The dynamic and flexible nature of the work environment has resulted in increased competition between organisations, changes in overall organisational structures, and a change in the general characteristics of individual employees within organisations (Setebe, 2011).

Drucker (1994) suggested that, in the modern knowledge-based economy, key differentiators for most organisations are the specialised skills of their employees. Knowledge workers have therefore become sources of sustainable competitive advantage for organisations. The tradable nature of knowledge, as described by Edvinsson (2002), has resulted in employees taking ownership of their own career development in order to accumulate more valuable tools of trade in the knowledge economy. This has had the unintended consequences of increased employee mobility and a shift from the traditional focus on the benefit of the organisation by employees to a more individualistic outlook to employment. This has ultimately introduced the real risk of loss of tacit knowledge within organisations due to employee mobility. From the resource-based view of the organisation, employee mobility reduces the overall human capital of the organisation, and in so doing, reduces the source of sustained competitive advantage (Campbell et al., 2012; Somaya, Williamson, & Lorinkova, 2008)

It is therefore critical for organisations to understand the knowledge economy, as well as the variables such as career capital and its accumulation which influence overall employee satisfaction, and their contribution towards meeting organisational goals and retention. This understanding should allow for effective employee development and the creation of a positive employer and organisation brand as a developer of talent and career capital (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010a). This will aid in stemming increased employee attrition, as well as attract top talent from other organisations that have not yet evolved into this new type of organisation (Campbell et al., 2012).

1.3 RESEARCH SCOPE

The primary aim of this research was to identify the career capital components that are relevant at the Senior Management and Executive levels. The research also aimed to understand the methods used by Senior Managers and Executives within the

manufacturing sector, to acquire the said career capital. Finally, the study also sought to identify those components of career capital that are instrumental in enabling the career advancement of Senior Managers and Executives.

This research builds on previous work by Sutherland, Setebe, Naidu, Crosson, Nyembe and Lamb, (2015), who carried out similar studies in the research and development, public sector, banking and manufacturing sectors but did not focus on senior managers.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a consolidation of previous and current relevant academic literature on the subject of carer capital components and the methods used in their accumulation.

The literature review will begin by outlining the emergence of the knowledge-based economy and the knowledge worker. The section that follows will highlight the evolution of the concept of the traditional career path, focusing on individual employees and their understanding and perceptions of a modern career. The main body of the literature review will then follow, introducing the subject of career capital, its components, and their methods of accrual. This section will outline the seminal work on the subject to date, and critique the published opinions of various contributors to the current literature. Building on that, the section that follows will introduce the concept of Drotter's Leadership pipeline (Drotter, Charan, & Noel, 2011), and outline the skills and competencies required at the various levels within the pipeline, highlighting specifically the Senior Manager and Executive levels.

Additional discussions around the subjects of leadership effectiveness, the evolution of leadership models, and leadership development, will follow in the sections thereafter.

The last section of the chapter will conclude with the findings of the literature review.

2.1 KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY/KNOWLEDGE WORKERS

The fundamental changes in the structure and composition of economies and organisations worldwide (Sutherland et al., 2015) have been attributed to global trends such as globalisation, industrialisation, technological advancement, disruptive innovation and the increased openness of world markets.

Caruso (2015) highlighted the observed transition in the structure and composition of economies to the modern knowledge-based economy in the research paper titled: *The 'knowledge-based economy' and the relationship between the economy and society in contemporary capitalism*. The knowledge-based economy is defined as one that relies on knowledge-based activities to produce the majority of its goods and services. Within

this type of economy, there is a evident shift in value creation mechanisms from the traditional labour and property inputs to a more cognitive and knowledge-based approach to value creation (Caruso, 2015). This is expected as economies become more open and complex, and as the global demand for higher order technology goods and services increases (Drucker, 1992; Porter, Sachs, & McArthur, 2001). This has also resulted in a change in the demand for labour, which has moved from being largely focused on unskilled or semi-skilled employees, to skilled individuals with the capacity to understand and operate within the knowledge-based economy (Carleton, 2011; Oladapo, 2014).

Drucker (1994), in his paper on social transformation, outlined the rise of the knowledge worker. Drucker described this evolution from the traditional worker whose primary value offering to the organisation was physical labour, to the industrial worker who operated machinery during the industrialisation era, and finally the knowledge worker in the age of the knowledge-based economy. Drucker (1994), Naidu (2009), Staden, Toit and Africa (2012) described knowledge workers as workers who have a formal education based on theoretical principles; have contextual and tacit knowledge; have the ability to assimilate and transform knowledge into value for the organisation; are analytical; and make learning a life-long habit.

In his research paper, Bourdieu (1986) outlined the relationship between the knowledge worker and the organisation. He noted that the knowledge workers' primary offering to the organisation is not merely physical labour, as in the traditional sense of the blue-collar employee, but rather their ability to acquire and apply knowledge in the pursuit of profit and sustainable business operation. They offer this with the expectation of receiving a market related price for it from organisations in the form of remuneration and benefits.

Edvinsson (2002) built on Bourdieu's work by explaining the concept of the tradable nature of knowledge in the new knowledge economy. He proposed that in this knowledge economy, the employee and the organisation are the sellers and buyers of skills and knowledge respectively, and have a mutual dependence on this exchange in order for them to satisfy their respective needs while meeting organisational goals. The attractiveness of each knowledge worker's value proposition to the organisation is

related to the number and diversity of skills and competencies possessed by the individual. It is therefore in the interest of each knowledge worker to acquire and continuously improve a desirable portfolio of skills and competencies to increase their marketability in the knowledge economy (Briscoe et al., 2006; Lamb & Sutherland, 2010a).

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF CAREER: FROM OLD TO NEW

Adamson et al. (1998) defined a career as “a series of positions of increasing responsibility and seniority over time”. In addition, the metaphor of career path/ladder has been extensively used to describe career progression in the original concept of an employee’s career. Reitman and Schmeer (2008) and Sutherland et al. (2015) also described the traditional career as mostly limited to one or two organisations; linear and static in nature; and characterised by routine work, commitment and loyalty to the organisation, as well as predictable growth within the organisation. Employee development was also designed and centrally driven by the organisation.

Volatility in the global economy and increased competition between organisations for limited financial resources has resulted in a change in the typical organisational structure. Organisations have had to transform from their traditionally hierarchical and broad structures to flatter, leaner and more integrated structures, to enable the organisation to be more flexible and adaptable, and have the ability to quickly respond to changes in the dynamic global economy (Voulgaris, Agiomirgianakis, & Papadogonas, 2014). Organisations have achieved this through downsizing, reduced managerial layers, outsourcing nonessential structures and driving self-managed teams (Parasuraman et al., 2000).

This has had a direct impact on the traditional employee career. The modern career is characterised by increased uncertainty amongst employees regarding job security and internal promotion prospects. The relationship between the employee and the organisation has also moved from a “loyalty to the company” outlook to a more transactional basis, where the primary concern of the employee is their personal growth and development (Reitman & Schmeer, 2008). The responsibility for the management of the employee’s career development has also shifted from the

organisation to the employee in the modern career context (Baruch, 2006; De Vos & Dries, 2013). The aforementioned characteristics describe what is today known as the protean career.

The modern career has also seen an increase in employee mobility, especially in the knowledge worker population, due to the increased demand for their specialised skills and knowledge, and their willingness to move across organisations (Defilippi & Arthur, 1994; Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). There is a huge focus by knowledge workers on their marketability as perceived by external companies. Employees are also generally challenging the traditional hierarchical career advancement model and are willing to move horizontally within or between organisations. This emerging career outlook is known as the 'boundaryless career' (Defilippi & Arthur, 1994; Setebe, 2011).

Key enablers of the boundaryless or Protean careers are the various career capital components accrued by employees throughout their careers. These increase the marketability of employees and ultimately enable employee mobility, as they are deemed attractive to other companies and competitors who seek to develop or maintain their human capital-based key competitive advantage through external recruitment (Zikic, 2015). In attaining the said career capital components, the employee frequently has to be the driver of their own development, as described by the Protean career ideology (Grimland, Vigoda-Gadot, & Baruch, 2012; Yildiz et al., 2015).

2.3 CAREER CAPITAL, ITS COMPONENTS AND METHODS USED IN THEIR ACCRUAL

2.3.1 CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS

In his article, *The Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu introduced the four forms of career capital (1986). These are Social Capital, which is the relational and social networks aspect of career capital; Cultural Capital, which is centred around an individual's attitude, their ability to use cultural goods (machines, books etc.) and their attainment of status and recognition through formal education; Symbolic Capital, which relates to understanding the written and unwritten social rules of engagement; and finally Economic Capital, which is largely linked to the monetary aspect of career capital (Mohyuddin & Pick, 2016).

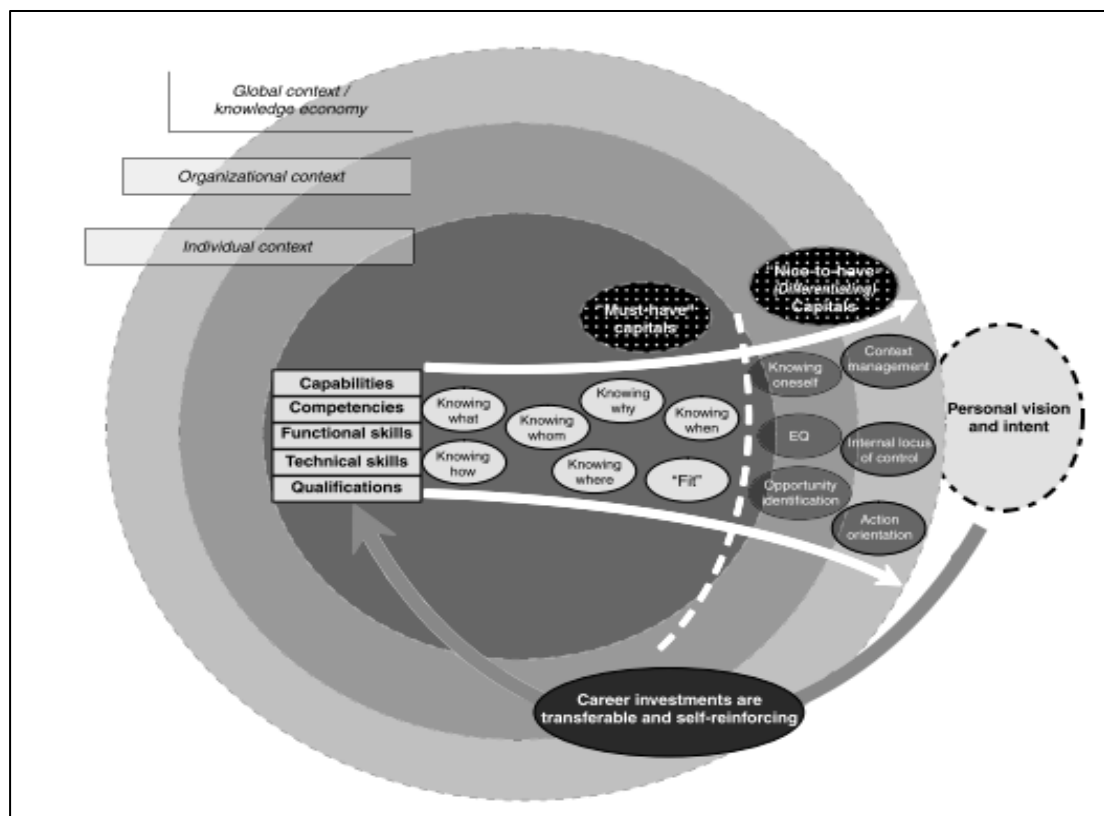
In addition to the work of Bourdieu (1986), Defilippi and Arthur (1994) proposed that career capital is comprised of three dimensions: knowing-who, knowing-how and knowing-why. Knowing-who, similar to social capital, relates to the relational aspect of career capital; knowing-how is comprised of the technical skills and knowledge components of career capital; and the knowing-why dimension, related to cultural capital, is associated with employee motivation and purpose (Kirk, 2015; Lamb & Sutherland, 2010a).

Jones and Defillippi (1996) carried out further studies that expanded on the work of Defilippi and Arthur (1994), by introducing three additional career capital dimensions. The first component is knowing-what, which is described as having a strong awareness of the industry and firm a knowledge worker works in. This includes the ability to identify threats and opportunities, and to identify industry criteria to be met for career progression. The second dimension, knowing-when is timing related. Timing is a critical aspect in knowledge workers' decisions on career moves, projects to be involved in, and opportunities to exploit. Incorrectly timed career moves can limit career progression. The last dimension is knowing-where, which is described as having an understanding of the optimal level from which to enter a new industry or move to a different firm. Traditionally the career path for new employees was fixed, allowing an employee only to enter an industry initially as a trainee and then progress up the career ladder. With the advent of the boundaryless career, the knowledge economy and the integration of different job roles, knowledge workers are no longer limited to a single career entry point. Having the ability to identify the optimal level at which to change careers and to undergo further training can be a key determinant of career success (Naidu, 2009).

Lamb and Sutherland (2010) suggested the addition of two more dimensions of career capital, namely “emotional maturity and intelligence” and “action orientation”. The emotional maturity dimension relates to self-awareness, locus of control and social skills, while the action orientation dimension deals with context appropriate decision making ability, innovation in the approach to making decisions and achieving results, and the ability to take the initiative in driving the achievement of business results.

Through exploratory qualitative research on the subject of knowledge workers and their career capital, and taking into consideration previous academic work as inputs, Lamb and Sutherland (2010) developed a *de facto* model of career capital (Figure 1 below). This model illustrates the three contexts - the individual, organisational and knowledge economy - in which the different forms of career capital exist. The model further distinguishes between “must have” capitals, which ensure basic career competence for knowledge workers, and “nice-to-have” capitals, which add marginal value above that of basic competence, to a knowledge worker’s career capital. The model also illustrates how knowledge workers move through the different career contexts and the applicable career capital in each career context.

FIGURE 1: THE DE FACTO MODEL OF CAREER CAPITAL



Source: (Lamb and Sutherland,2010)



TABLE 1: EVOLUTION OF COMPONENTS OF CAREER CAPITAL LITERATURE

Bourdier (1986)		DeFillippi and Arthur (1994)	Jones and DeFillippi (1996)	Lamb (2007)	8 Components of Career Capital (2009)
Economic capital					Economic capital
Social capital		Knowing whom		Network of peers, colleagues and leaders	Knowing whom
Cultural capital	Embodied component	Knowing why			Knowing why
	Objectified component	Knowing how		Drive execution and delivery	Knowing how
	Institutionalised component			Qualification and calibre of education	
			Knowing What	Context Management; Fit	Knowing What (Context Management)
			Knowing When		
			Knowing Where	Opportunity Identification; Fit	Knowing When and Knowing Where
				Knowing oneself	Knowing oneself
				EQ and Social Intelligence	EQ
				Action orientation	Action orientation
				(Initiative in the business context)	(Initiative in the business context)

Source: (Naidu,2009)

2.3.2 CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL

Lamb (2007) suggested that all knowledge workers start with a portfolio of career capitals that are inherently based on their nature, cognitive ability or personality. This portfolio of capitals grows throughout the knowledge worker's career. Through their research, Lamb and Sutherland (2010) identified 20 methods of career capital accrual by knowledge workers as they progress throughout their career.

The top five from the aforementioned findings include:

- Developing a broad and diverse level of experience both internally in the organisation and through moving between organisations. This method is linked to the knowledge worker's career mobility and role diversity;
- Developing leadership ability and business acumen to enable the knowledge worker to navigate organisational politics and make context-appropriate decisions. Decisiveness and persuasion-related skills are examples of the skills that contribute considerably towards this career capital accrual method;
- Developing the ability to self-reflect and assess one's emotional intelligence and maturity. This takes into consideration factors such as the orientation of the knowledge worker's locus of control;
- Continuous networking to ensure visibility at levels within the organisation that have an influence on the knowledge worker's career progression. This method requires the knowledge worker to build alliances and both formal and informal networks, internal and external to the organisation; and
- Developing a purpose and personal career intent, this informs the knowledge worker's goals and targets.

2.4 THE LEADERSHIP PIPELINE AND ROLE OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND EXECUTIVES

Drotter, Charan and Noel (2011), in their book titled *The Leadership Pipeline*, highlighted the increasing demand for executive and management talent, which have the prerequisite skills and competencies required to effectively carry out their mandate of increasing shareholder value and ensuring sustainable business practices. Drotter et al. (2011) attributed this increase in demand to employee attrition, poor succession

planning, and the inadequate training and development of workers within organisations to effectively operate at these strategic organisational levels.

Drotter et al. (2011) introduced the concept of the six leadership passages, i.e. manage-others, manage-managers, manage-function, manage-business, manage-group, and at the highest organisational level, manage-enterprise. In their work, Drotter et al. further outlined the skills and competency requirements of the various leadership passages, which ensure the effectiveness of employees at each stage.

Manage-others is the first leadership pipeline level. This typically consists of employees who have demonstrated competence as individual contributors to the business, and who have also been identified as having some form of leadership ability. The role introduces the incumbent to the management of personnel. Within this role, the incumbent plays a dual role involving the execution of tasks by him/herself, as well as planning and assigning work to his/her team. The role is typically focused on an individual unit within the organisation. The skills and competencies required for this role are comparable to the know-how aspects of career capital, as outlined by Defilippi and Arthur (1994). Functional skills, technical skills and qualifications, examples of what Lamb and Sutherland (2010) listed in their *de facto* model of career capital cluster under “must have capitals”, are key enablers of effectiveness at this pipeline level.

Manage-managers is the second leadership pipeline level, which involves purely managerial work and is largely a coordinating role. At this level, the primary role of the incumbent is achieving results through the effective management of personnel by managers reporting into his/her structure. The role also requires the incumbent to be involved in the development of the organisation’s future leaders through training, performance management, mentoring and coaching. This role places a large emphasis on an incumbent’s leadership abilities. Critical skills include the ability to create trust within the team one is managing, the ability to provide direction without physically carrying out the task, and the ability to identify and further develop the key skills that enable one’s subordinates to be effective at their roles. As defined by Defilippi and Arthur (1994), the aforementioned critical skills would fall under the know-who component of career capital, which revolves around the relational aspects of management skills and competencies. The know-how aspect of career capital is also

relevant at this pipeline level, as it forms the fundamental skillset required to guide, coach and coordinate.

The manage-function level is focused largely on the management of the organisation's strategic objectives. According to Drotter et al. (2011), the required competencies for operating at this level include the ability to see the big picture and integrate the operating variables that drive organisational performance, the ability to effectively delegate, the ability to develop and implement organisational strategy, and the ability to demonstrate a certain level of maturity and emotional intelligence befitting that specific organisational level. This role requires the incumbent to shift their viewpoint from being primarily focused on a single business unit for which they are responsible, to that which considers cross functional and intra-company relationships that have the potential to influence overall organisational performance. These competencies are comparable to the "must have capitals" and "organisational context capitals" outlined by the *de facto* model developed by Lamb and Sutherland (2010). These capitals include self-awareness, the ability to identify opportunities, and possession of a high level of emotional intelligence.

The manage-business level is primarily concerned with providing strategic direction to functional managers. These leaders are the local custodians of group policies and strategies, and are responsible for translating them into function specific strategies. At this pipeline level, there is increased complexity with regards to inter-function interdependency. The incumbent in this role is also responsible for the coordination and integration of the various functions, and the creation of an environment that enables the achievement of the organisation's key strategic goals. The effectiveness of their management depends largely on their interpersonal skills and their ability to inspire trust in their competence from their subordinates (Drotter et al., 2011). These competencies are comparable to the knowledge economy context capitals as identified in the *de facto* model, which include context management, internal locus of control and action orientation.

The manage-group level is largely focused on optimal capital allocation and the assessment of the effectiveness of business strategy. Individuals who occupy this role are also expected to assume short-, mid- and long-term views of the organisation and

its viability, by looking specifically at the mix of businesses under the organisation's umbrella, their allocated resources and key performance enablers. Fundamental requirements for effectiveness in this role include a broad understanding of the business and its drivers, the ability to identify opportunities, the ability to manage within various contexts, emotional maturity, and effective stakeholder engagement. The aforementioned skills, competencies and attributes are described under the nice-to-have capitals within the *de facto* model.

The highest level within an organisation is the manage-enterprise level, which is typically occupied by individuals who hold the Chief Executive Officer title. The primary focus of the incumbent within this role is achieving overall business performance through the effective management of the entire enterprise with its respective businesses. The individual achieves this by being able to articulate a clear vision for the organisation, managing the organisation's global or macro interfaces and stakeholder relations, driving continuous improvement, and developing a high performance culture within the organisation. These individuals typically have a high sense of self-awareness, emotional intelligence, a fundamental understanding of business drivers, are highly adaptable, and constantly seek new and more efficient ways of achieving results. The skills, competencies and traits described are closely related to the nice-to-have capitals under the *de facto* model.

According to Drotter et al. (2011), Senior Managers and Vice Presidents, as per the naming convention of the organisation of interest and per their definition, fall under the manage-function and Manage-group pipeline levels respectively, and it is expected that the findings of this paper will corroborate the aforementioned career capital components identified by the *de facto* model developed by Lamb and Sutherland (2010b).

2.5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERS

One of the primary roles of leadership within an organisation is to increase shareholder value through the effective management of the organisation's resources and personnel (Choudhary, Akhtar, & Zaheer, 2013). Senior Managers and Executives, who make up the organisation's senior leadership team, are specifically tasked with providing

strategic direction to the organisation and ensuring the effective execution of the said strategies (Drotter et al., 2011).

Due to their direct influence on an organisation's bottom line, the effectiveness of leaders has historically been a subject of interest to academics, investors and business leaders alike (Landis, Hill, & Harvey, 2014). Numerous leadership theories have been developed in an attempt to identify the ideal make-up of effective leaders and to serve as predictors of overall organisational performance. While the career capital approach to determining leadership effectiveness focuses largely on specific skills and competencies possessed and developed by certain leaders, traditional leadership theories focus on traits, behaviours and leadership styles.

2.5.1 THE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORIES

The initial formal attempt at understanding leadership and its make-up started with the Trait Theory. The premise of this theory revolves around leaders having certain qualities that they are either born with or develop over time, which enable them to be successful in their leadership roles (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). Examples of these traits include extroversion, high energy, self-confidence, intelligence, an internal locus of control, sensitivity to others, flexibility and integrity (Lousier & Achua, 2007; Robbins & Judge, 2013). It can be suggested that there is some correlation between the aforementioned traits and career capital components identified in the *de facto* model (Lamb and Sutherland, 2010), specifically the "must have" capitals, know-why and know-whom and the "nice-to-have" capitals, Action orientation, emotional intelligence and internal locus of control, found in the organisational level context of the *de facto* model.

The main school of thought around leadership then shifted towards Behavioural Theory, which focuses on a leader's actions, rather than their personality traits (Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan, 2009; Lousier & Achua, 2007). Leader behaviours were clustered under task-orientated behaviour, relationship orientated-behaviour, or production-orientated behaviour (Landis et al., 2014). Task-orientated behaviour was defined as initiating, clarifying, information gathering and organising, all of which focused on goal attainment. Relationship-orientated behaviour was characterised by developing mutual trust, having regard for employees' feelings, being

considerate, encouraging, mentoring, coaching and listening. The production-orientated behaviours, meanwhile, revolved around the technical aspects of a specific job and the accomplishment of tasks (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Each of the aforementioned behaviours were seen as key enablers of leadership effectiveness. It is suggested that within the Behavioural Theory, there are elements of the relational, knowing-whom aspect of career capital, as well as the organisational context emotional intelligence component of career capital, as per the *de facto* model (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010a).

The 1960s saw a rise in the popularity of contingency theories, which claimed that management styles are influenced by contextual factors and that there is no best leadership style applicable for all situations (Dinh et al., 2014). Contingency Theory suggests that there needs to be a match between leadership style and the degree of control a leader has in a specific situation (Landis et al., 2014). The contingency theory proposes that three situational dimensions determine the effectiveness of a leader: leader-member relations; task structure; and position power. In analysing the three dimensions, organisations are able to match the correct type of leader to a specific situation and ensure maximum effectiveness. Other contingency theories were developed which included the Situational Leadership Theory, the Path-Goal Theory and Leader-Member Exchange. These theories encompass adaptability, contextual management and emotional intelligence, which are all included in the *de facto* model of career capital components (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010a).

The next shift in Leadership Theory was the introduction of the neocharismatic leadership theories. These theories focused largely on the impact that leaders' behaviours have on the emotions of employees (Robbins & Judge, 2013), and included Charismatic Leadership Theory, Transformational Leadership Theory, and Authentic Leadership Theory.

The premise of Charismatic Leadership Theory is that employees believe that certain qualities of leaders set them apart from ordinary individuals. These qualities are perceived by employees as endowing charismatic leaders with almost supernatural or superhuman abilities, which motivates employees and teams to perform to the best of their abilities and go beyond normal expectations in order to achieve a leader's desired

end goal (Germain, 2012). The effectiveness of charismatic leadership is dependent on the leader's vision and articulation thereof, their willingness to take on personal risk, their sensitivity to their followers' needs, and the perception they create regarding their behaviour being contrary to the norm. It can be suggested that these charismatic leadership qualities are somewhat related and comparable to the "nice-to-have" capitals as outlined in the *de facto* model of career capital components (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010a).

Transformational Leadership Theory revolves around a leader's ability to inspire employees to "transcend their self-interest for the sake of the organisation" (Robbins & Judge, 2013). The transformational leader achieves this by providing a vision and a sense of mission, expecting employees to perform to the best of their abilities and making them aware of this expectation, simplifying the organisation's purpose such that all employees understand and buy into the said purpose, intellectual stimulating employees, and treating each employee as an individual who is valued by the organisation.

Authentic Leadership is defined as a leadership style where the leader is self-aware and true to themselves (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). Demonstrating the aforementioned traits leads to the establishment of trust, as well as a perception by employees of a leader who is ethical, possesses integrity and goes beyond self-interest. This leadership style encourages calculated risk-taking, commitment to the task at hand and information sharing between employees, which increases employee productivity and overall team effectiveness (Robbins & Judge, 2013).

2.6 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Not all leaders are born with inherent leadership abilities; a large proportion acquire the skills and competencies required for effective leadership through company or self-initiated training and development initiatives. These initiatives typically come in the form of company development programs, job rotation, on the job mentoring and coaching, the use of self-help books and manuals, and the studying of other successful leaders. Due to their influence on organisational culture and overall company performance, identifying and developing effective leaders is a major priority for organisations (Daily,

McDougall, Covin, & Dalton, 2002; Gagnon & Collinson, 2014; Mabey & Ramirez, 2005). Leadership development practices, like the accrual of career capital, aim to provide employees with certain skills and competencies which enable them to be effective in their roles and allow them to advance within their career ladder.

(Day et al., 2014) suggested that leadership development is not merely about identifying an ideal leadership theory that is suited to an organisation's espoused culture, and developing within the potential leaders, traits and behaviours that are aligned to the chosen theory. Rather, they proposed that leadership development involves a complex combination of intrapersonal factors, such as experience and learning, skills, personality, and self-development, and interpersonal factors, such as social mechanisms and the development of authentic leadership. (Day et al., 2014), in their paper, explained how the aforementioned factors are linked to leadership development as follows:

- **Experience and learning** play a critical role in determining the effectiveness of a leader. An employee's work experience and the relevance of the said experience within the leadership context determines their leadership potential and eventual effectiveness. The structuring of development efforts to ensure relevant exposure enables the creation of an effective leader.
- For effective leadership, the **skills possessed** by an employee must be **relevant** at the organisational level the employee is operating at. An example of this is the observation that as a leader occupies higher positions within the organisation, it becomes critical for them to acquire strategic and business-related skills rather than interpersonal and functional skills, as they have more influence in their overall effectiveness at that specific level.
- A **personality** which supports conscientiousness is a key enabler of effective leadership. This involves developing the drive to always do one's work thoroughly to the expected quality standards.
- Classified under **self-development** is an individual's desire to continuously improve, to master their current role and to grow into larger roles with more responsibility. This needs to be actively developed as not all individuals are inherently ambitious.
- The ability to network and mentor are examples of traits that fall under the social mechanism aspect of leadership development. These need to be honed,

as they become critical the higher one progresses within an organisation.

- The growth of the authentic leadership aspect of leadership development involves the ability to develop trust amongst one's employees, to enable a transparent working environment, to develop a strong self-awareness, and to project a level of authenticity to one's direct reports. All of these factors play a critical role in motivating and inspiring employees, and developing a high performance culture within the team one leads.

There is seemingly a relationship between leadership development and the concept of career capital and its components, as there are numerous similarities between the key traits identified within the leadership development framework and the career capital components identified in the papers by Sutherland et al. (2015) and by Lamb and Sutherland (2010a).

2.7 CONCLUSION

The literature review began by highlighting the impact that the evolution of the traditional economy has had on organisations' human capital requirements, specifically the skills and competencies required by the modern organisation to effectively compete and remain a viable entity.

Using the boundaryless and protean career concepts, the literature review described employees' perceptions of the modern career and career progression, the drivers of increased employee mobility, and the modern, largely transactional, relationship between employer and employee.

The literature review then introduced the fundamental concepts around the subject of career capital components and methods used in their accrual. It outlined the most recent studies around the subject, and described the *De Facto* Model of career capital (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010b).

Through the work of Drotter, Charan, & Noel, (2011) on *The Leadership Pipeline*, the literature review then highlighted the leadership competencies required in the modern knowledge-based economy, specifically at Senior Management and Executive levels. The literature review, based on previous studies, was used to suggest a correlation

between Drotter's leadership pipelines, the competencies required at the various pipeline levels, and career capital as per the *De Facto* Model.

The literature review provided an overview of the evolution of the traditional leadership theories and how they related to the effectiveness of an organisation's leadership. The section also established some correlations between the aforementioned theories and the career capital view of leadership effectiveness.

This chapter ended by presenting information on leadership development and associated practices. As the motivation behind accruing career capital is related to improving an individual's overall effectiveness within their role, the literature suggests that there should be a relationship between leadership development theory and the theories on career capital and its accrual.

Although the body of knowledge around career capital components and methods used in their accrual is growing, it would appear that very few studies have been carried out specifically at the Senior Management and Executive levels, hence this research.

The outcomes of the research will build on existing academic literature and benefit both organisations and aspirant career capitalists, by enabling focused development and hiring and retention strategies aimed at the Senior Management and Executive levels.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aimed to further explore the subject of career capital components and their accumulation, specifically within the manufacturing industry at senior management and executive levels.

The answers to the research questions listed below will add to the current knowledge base around the topic of career capital components and their accumulation, and will address the knowledge gaps identified in the literature review presented in Chapter Two.

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What are the career capital components at the senior management and executive levels in the manufacturing sector?

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What are the methods of career capital accrual used by senior management and executives within the manufacturing sector?

3.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What are the top three career capital components that set senior managers and executives apart from their peers and enable their career progression?

By identifying and ranking the career capital components, as per research questions one and three, organisations will be able to better structure their employee training and development interventions to enable the effective accrual of career capital. This should lead to a reduction in the tangible and intangible costs associated with knowledge worker mobility, specifically at the senior management and executive levels, through the building of an active and effective learning culture and Human Resource management practices which support processes which enable knowledge management (Nelson & Mccann, 2010).

The information gathered on the methods used in career capital accrual will also create a blueprint for organisations to create work environments that will attract effective and high performing knowledge workers, Senior Managers and Executives.

From the employee perspective, the information gathered for the research questions will allow aspiring career capitalists to identify and acquire outstanding career capital components in their own career, which will enable them to develop into competent Senior Managers and Executives, thereby increasing their overall marketability and competitiveness in the knowledge worker market.

For those employees who aspire to become Senior Managers or Executives, or who are already at those levels but want to further develop themselves and their competitiveness outside their organisation, the information gathered for these questions will be invaluable.

There is a financial cost associated with any Human Resource (HR) intervention. Specific, focused HR interventions are at times necessary to manage the overall costs of employee training and development, and to meet specific organisational strategic objectives. A better understanding of specific career capital components, the method of their accrual, and the marginal benefits they provide employees, will allow organisations to prioritise and focus their employee development and retention efforts, as well as to grow their talent pipeline as per any identified organisational need.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The first three chapters of this document covered the justification, both business and academic, for this study to be carried out, the available literature and the resulting research questions arising from the aforementioned literature. This chapter outlines the research design and methodology used for this study.

4.2 RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

This research had three main objectives, as highlighted by the research questions. The first was to identify the career capital components acquired by Senior Managers and Executives within the manufacturing sector throughout their careers, the second was to identify the methods used by the Senior Managers and Executives to accrue the said career capital components, and the third was to rank the identified career capital components in order of marginal value-add to the Senior Managers' or Executives' careers.

The research carried out was qualitative in nature over a cross-sectional time-horizon. Qualitative research has grown in popularity of late due to its broad applicability. It is well suited for studying real-world conditions, for gathering insights through the views of individual participants, for application in studies where contextual factors play a major role in understanding observed phenomena and for when using multiple sources of information (Yin, 2011). Qualitative methods are also ideal in the investigation of subjects that revolve around motivation, beliefs and perceptions (Milena, Dalnora, & Alin, 2008).

Information was gathered using semi-structured, in-depth interviews with Senior Managers and Executives from a large South African manufacturing company. As previously mentioned, the research intent was to discover new insights into career capital components and the methods used in their accrual, but from a more specific Senior Management and Executive perspective. Saunders and Lewis (2012) suggested that exploratory research is best suited to qualitative studies, as described above.

The subjective nature of the research, specifically around the social phenomenon of career capital accumulation involving the organisation and its 'social actors', Senior Managers and Executives, resulted in an interpretivist research philosophy being adopted (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Interpretivism is ideal for understanding the world from the subjective experiences of the population of interest, and requires one to carry out the research study without prior developed concepts, allowing them to be developed based on interactions in the "field" (Creswell, 2013). This research philosophy was therefore ideal for the current study.

An inductive research approach was employed in this study, as this approach is ideal for converting specific observations of patterns and occurrences to broader generalisations and theories (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This method allows for the development of an initial hypothesis, which is further developed into an overall theory as the information gathered is analysed and interpreted (Creswell, 2013).

The research strategy employed was an abbreviated form of the Grounded Theory approach, which is defined as the development of theory as data are generated through interactions with, or observations of, the population of interest (Creswell, 2013; Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The approach is termed the abbreviated format of the Grounded Theory approach as only the primary data set was used for comparative analysis, negative case analysis and theoretical sensitivity. The research questions were open-ended and did not pre-empt an outcome. The data collection method of semi-structured interviews was compatible with a study grounded in theory.

4.3 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The unit of analysis was the individual portfolio of specific skills and competencies, collectively termed 'career capital', amassed throughout the careers of Senior Managers and Executives within the manufacturing sector, and the methods used in their accrual.

4.4 POPULATION OF INTEREST

The manufacturing entity on which the research was carried out has five operating hubs in South Africa. A Senior Vice President (SVP) heads each hub's executive, and has between six and eight Vice Presidents (VPs) reporting directly to them, who form

part of their executive. The VPs are the heads of operational business units and support functions, which include HR, Finance, Corporate Affairs and the Health and Safety department. Each VP has between four and seven Senior Managers reporting to them.

The population of interest was Executives and Senior Management level employees from the Head Office Hub and one of the Operating Hubs, who are knowledge workers that are responsible largely for providing strategic leadership and direction to employees within the two hubs.

4.5 SAMPLING METHOD AND SAMPLE SIZE

Purposive sampling, a non-probabilistic sampling technique, was used. In this method, researchers use their experience and knowledge to select the members of a population of interest, from whom information gathered will best suit the purpose of the research being carried out (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). As a result of the careful selection of the sample, this method generally yields meaningful and relevant information. It is critical to note that this method works best when the sample is diverse with regards to perspective and does not exclude those who offer views contrary to the general school of thought (Yin, 2011). Purposive sampling is typically used if the research aim is to make logical generalisations based on the observation of a specific population of interest, as was the aim of the current study of Senior Managers and Executives and if there are time constraints related to the research at hand (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2011).

The sample on which this proposed research was carried out consisted of a total of 19 knowledge workers, ten of who were Senior Managers and nine of whom were Executives. Of the ten Senior Managers, four were from the organisation's Head Office, while the remaining six were based at an Operating Hub. Of the nine Executives, six were based at an Operating Hub and three at the organisation's Head Office. The two sub-sample groups, Senior Managers and Executives, were considered homogenous, as they are at the same organisational level within the same firm.

The criteria used to select members of the sample population of interest were as follows:

- The employees were knowledge workers within the operating entity, who were either a Senior Manager or an Executive. This was as per the research objectives.
- The employees had been in their current organisational level for at least three years. This was done to ensure that the selected individuals had the necessary experience to be able to effectively assess the position's career capital requirements and methods of accrual to generate credible data (Patton, 2002).

4.6 INTERVIEW DESIGN

The interviews were designed using the semi-structured interview question method outlined by Saunders and Lewis (2012). The questions were open-ended to enable the participants to voice their perspectives and lived experiences, without being influenced by the researcher and his past experiences or expected research outcomes (Creswell, 2013). The interview guide can be found in Appendix 2.

The interviews consisted of a total of six questions. The question types included:

- Introductory type questions around the subjects of career capital components and the methods used in their accrual.
- A structuring question to allow for the transition from career capital components to methods used in the accrual thereof.
- Probing questions revolving around the participants' career progression and the career capital components, which enabled the aforementioned progression.
- Direct questions on the specific components of career capital and the methods of their accrual, identified in the work of Lamb and Sutherland (2010a).

4.7 DATA GATHERING PROCESS

Primary data were gathered through the qualitative technique of semi-structured in-depth interviews. These interviews were purposeful discussions that revolved around a set of predetermined themes (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The interviews were carried out face-to-face with all the participants. An introduction into and definition of the concept of career capital, as well as its components and the methods used in its accrual, were provided to the participants. This was followed by six questions that the participants were required to answer.

A pre-populated list of 20 career capital components and 20 career capital accrual methods was also given to the participants during the interviews. The interviewees were then asked to select a maximum of ten components and methods. This data were used to triangulate and ensure the reliability of the responses received from the other questions. Detailed note taking was carried out during the interviews, which was not limited solely to the participants' responses, but also included observed body language, tone and the general level of animation of the participant. All the interviews were recorded to ensure that they were available for further scrutiny to address any ambiguities. Permission was granted by the participants to record their interviews. The average interview duration was 53 minutes.

4.8 CONSISTENCY AND RELIABILITY OF DATA

Due to the exploratory nature of the research undertaken and the semi-structured interview approach, the interview questions were not always exactly identical for all the participants; the interviewer at times had to modify the questions to align with the context of the conversations and responses received from the participants. To ensure the consistency and reliability of the data gathered, an interview guide (Appendix 2) was developed with a view of providing broad guidelines on the pertinent subjects to be discussed. This guide was developed based on the interview design components outlined in the previous section. Included in the interview guide was the prepopulated list of 20 career capital components and 20 methods used in its accrual. The participants were required to choose 10 components and 10 career capital accrual methods which best described their own career capital and methods they had used to accrue it. The responses were used to verify the data captured from the responses to the other questions in the interviews.

A pilot test was carried out on two GIBS MBA classmates who were executives in the banking and medical fraternities, to test the clarity of the questions asked and the adequacy of the time allocated for each interview. The research supervisor approved the final interview guide after assessing the researcher's interview technique and assessing whether the questions were clear and not leading.

4.9 DATA ANALYSIS APPROACH

The analysis of the interview transcripts was carried out using the content and frequency analysis technique. This technique involves “the gathering and compressing of large interview data into specific and identifiable content categories” (Koekemoer, 2014). Data within these content categories are further clustered into common themes, which are ultimately used by the researcher to generate inferences from the data in conjunction with available literature (Saldana, 2009).

The first step involved going over the detailed notes gathered during the data gathering process, and highlighting the prevalent themes from each participant’s answer to the interview questions. During the first round of analysis, each respondent had on average between 25- 35 themes. These themes were then grouped based on similarities.

The second round of analysis involved further clustering of the aforementioned themes into constructs. The framework used to develop the said constructs was based on previously published literature on career capital, its components, and the methods used in its accrual (Sutherland et al, 2015). An allowance was made for the capturing of new information not previously observed in any of the historical literature. The average constructs generated per participant were 10 to 15.

The final step of data analysis involved the capturing of the constructs on an Excel spread sheet, counting the number of times these constructs were mentioned, and ranking them in order of highest frequency of mentions. This was then summarised in table form and is presented in the following chapter.

The content and frequency analysis took an average of 70 minutes per participant.

4.10 LIMITATIONS

Purposive sampling, a non-probabilistic sampling technique, was used. This inherently introduces bias as the sample is selected based on the subjective views of the researcher (Yin, 2011).

As with most qualitative research techniques, the presence of the researcher introduces bias (Creswell, 2013). Some of the respondents in the selected population

of interest had a working relationship with the researcher, involving daily interaction, as they were all employees within the same Operating Hub. There is a possibility that the collected data may thus not have been an accurate reflection of their own career capital components and the methods they used in their accrual, but rather what the participants perceived to be appropriate responses to the interviewer. Creswell (2013) highlighted this as one of the disadvantages of face-to-face interviews, as it has the potential of introducing bias in the data collected.

The interviews were also carried out in a single company; therefore the outcomes of the research may not accurately represent the views of the entire manufacturing sector. Further, the analysis of the information provided by the participants was subjective, and could possibly be influenced by the researcher's own perceptions of career capital components and the methods used in their accrual.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the in-depth, semi-structured interviews, specifically relating to the three research questions discussed in Chapter Three of this document.

5.1 SAMPLE PROFILE

The aim of the first interview question was to develop a profile of the participants. The participants were requested to provide a high level overview of their experience to date, the different roles they had occupied at the various organisations they had worked in, and a general overview of their current roles and related responsibilities.

As described in the previous chapter, the total sample size was 19 participants. The participants interviewed belonged to four sub-sample groups: Executives based at an Operating Hub, Senior Managers based at an Operating Hub, Executives based at the organisation's Head Office and Senior Managers also based at the Head Office. Tables 1- 4 below summarise the key descriptive variables for each participant within the various sample groups.

TABLE 2: SAMPLE GROUP 1 – EXECUTIVES IN AN OPERATING HUB

Participant	Organisational Title	Race and Gender	Years of Experience
1	Vice President HR	White Female	27
2	Vice President Supply Chain	African Male	17
3	Vice President Technical Support	White Male	23
4	Vice President Corporate affairs	African Male	31
5	Vice President SHERQ	Coloured Male	23
6	Vice President Operations	White Male	23

TABLE 3: SAMPLE GROUP 2 - SENIOR MANAGERS IN AN OPERATING HUB

Participant	Organisational Title	Race and Gender	Years of Experience
7	Senior Manager Security and Risk	African Male	18
8	Senior Manager Planning and Optimisation	Indian Male	12
9	Senior Manager Electrical and Instrumentation	African Male	27
10	Senior Manager Operations	White Male	36
11	Senior Manager Maintenance	White Male	25
12	Senior Manager Electrical and Instrumentation	White Male	34

TABLE 4: SAMPLE GROUP 3 – EXECUTIVES IN HEAD OFFICE

Participant	Organisational Title	Race and Gender	Years of Experience
13	Vice President HR	African Female	21
14	Vice President Supply Chain	African Male	16
15	Vice President Governance and Regulation	African Female	18

TABLE 5: SAMPLE GROUP 4 - SENIOR MANAGERS IN HEAD OFFICE

Participant	Organisational Title	Race and Gender	Years of Experience
16	Senior Manager EC&I Sourcing	African Male	22
17	Senior Manager Planning and Optimisation	White Male	12
18	Senior Manager Sales and Marketing	Indian Male	21
19	Senior Manager Commercial: Oil	African Male	14

The total sample consisted of 16 males and three females. The average years of experience for both Executives and Senior Managers were 22 years. Although the sample consisted mainly of African and White males, as the participants were based at different business locations, it was considered to be sufficiently diverse and representative within the specific context of a manufacturing entity. This will be discussed further in the following chapter.

5.2 FINDINGS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1

The first research question was as follows: **What are the career capital components at senior management and executive level in the manufacturing sector?**

Tables 6 to 9 below summarise the outputs from the analysis of the responses captured from questions 2, 3 and 4 of the interview guide, which relate specifically to research question 1. As described in the previous chapter, the content and frequency analysis technique was used to analyse the responses, which were then used to develop the constructs presented in this chapter in rank ordered tables based on frequency of responses. These results are for three sample groups, i.e. the combined total sample, the Executives sample and the Senior Managers sample.

TABLE 6: CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS OF TOTAL SAMPLE

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENT	FREQUENCY
1	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment-related to situational awareness	17
2	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	16
3	Determination and perseverance	15
3	Multi-disciplinary experience; experience in multiple roles within an organisation	15
5	High sense of self-awareness	14
6	Having a reputation of keeping to your word and delivering on commitments	11
6	Ability to influence and/or inspire	11
6	Ability to lead a team	11
9	Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal	10
10	Astuteness	9
11	Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; the big picture	7
11	Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes	7
11	Ability to participate and add value in a group setting; team player	7
14	Being passionate about the role you occupy within the organisation and its associated deliverables	4
14	Educational qualifications	4
16	Technical ability	3
16	Relevant hands on knowledge and experience	3
18	Having a reputation for honesty and integrity	2
18	Understanding your reactions and feelings	2
18	Ability to identify management challenges, process constraints and system inefficiencies	2

Below are the descriptions of the top ten most frequently occurring constructs, as well as examples of the individual participant responses that were classified under these constructs.

The construct, **The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment-related to situational awareness**, which ranked the highest for both the total sample and the Executives sample, can be described as encompassing aspects of emotional intelligence, adaptability and flexibility, situational awareness, and a fundamental understanding of the appropriateness of certain behaviours within specific contexts. One of the Executive respondents said that: "I've always had the ability to read a situation, to tell people what they need to hear and not necessarily what they want to hear, and I'm always mindful of the impact my words will have on them at that specific moment". Another Senior Manager said: "What I learnt early in my career was not to let stress and pressure get the better of me. Keeping my cool and responding appropriately to the situation at hand was what set me apart from my peers".

Personal motivation and having a solid work ethic was another popular construct for most respondents. This construct revolved around understanding the need to go the extra mile and to put in the additional hours in order to deliver on expectations and be known for high performance. Most respondents expressed that achieving their desire to be the best at the roles they occupied was enabled by not shying away from additional work, and being willing to take on the tasks that most of their counterparts were not willing or were afraid to take on. The following quote from one of the executives is an illustration of the themes that were clustered under this construct: "From a young age I knew that I wanted to be the best at whatever I attempted. This at times meant that instead of being out chasing girls, I was spending those additional hours going over new concepts or concepts I hadn't understood in class. I carried this with even to the workplace where I didn't mind working twice as hard and reading twice as much as everyone else in order to be at the top of my game".

The career capital component, summed up by the construct **Determination and Perseverance**, was ranked high by both the Executives and Senior Managers. Most

participants felt very strongly regarding the importance of this construct, for example: “... no one has ever gotten to the top by sitting and waiting for someone else to pull them up. I worked very hard throughout my career because I understood very early that I was the driver of my own career and growth. While my friends easily settled into a routine of finding what was wrong with our work environment and reasons why people like us were not likely to succeed and resigned themselves to obscurity, I had a fundamental belief that I had what it took to make it” and “I joined the company almost 30 years ago through their learnership programme. Within a year of completing my training and becoming an artisan, I knew that this couldn’t be it; I would not be able to settle for being an artisan for the rest of my life. Difficulties aside, I knew that I was willing and able to take whatever was thrown at me and would eventually get to the top.”

Multi-disciplinary experience; experience in multiple roles within an organisation was also highlighted by numerous participants as one of the top career capital components which enabled their growth within the organisation and in their overall careers. “Multi-disciplinary or cross-functional experience is essential if you are to be effective at being at the helm of any organisation. This type of experience is not the stuff you learn from an MBA or post graduate degree, it’s the practical experience of being on the floor and knowing what the technical teams, supply chain, HR and accountants who you manage actually do. The only way to learn or understand this is to be in that role or be involved in multi-disciplinary project teams which include such roles. I have been fortunate to have worked in more than four different functions within this organisation and in multiple project teams where I was exposed to various disciplines. This is what gave me the edge over my counterparts.”

Another respondent stated: “Rotate, rotate, rotate! It’s very difficult to get to the top if all you know is one plant, one role or one discipline, as a senior manager I have been an artisan, a technician, a project engineer and finally a manager. In each of these roles I have gained a skill I would not have gotten had I not worked in that specific role”. Both of these quotes – one by an Executive and one by a Senior Manager respectively - illustrate the general perceptions of the two sample groups with regards to multi-disciplinary experience being a key career capital component and enabler of their career progression.

An example of one of the responses classified under the **High Sense of Self-Awareness** construct was: “Knowing who you are, truly understanding yourself and what you stand for is key. People can also tell that you are a solid person who has found themselves and their mission. Evidence of this will be seen in how you carry yourself, how you express your opinions, how you engage with others and your ability to walk away from things that damage your brand and overall reputation.”

Another construct highlighted by numerous participants as being a key career capital component was **Having a reputation of keeping to your word and delivering on commitments**. This construct encompassed elements of trustworthiness, integrity and accountability, as per one Senior Manager who said: “...the best thing you can do for your career is to be known as a person who always follows through on their commitments. People need to feel that they can trust what you say and that you will exhaust all efforts to meet and agreed deliverable”.

“You get to a point in your career where your success is largely dependent on the people you manage. Your job is to ensure that they are always committed to delivering to the best of their ability; to meeting your specified quality standards and that they know that what they put out represents the quality of your leadership. You need to have the ability to inspire your guys to be the best they can be!”, said one of the Executives interviewed, which was classified under the construct **Ability to influence and/or inspire**. Some participants felt very strongly about this construct, which was evident in their change in demeanour when articulating their views on this theme. One of the participants suddenly became more animated, using hand gestures and various facial expressions to drive the point home.

“In my career I’ve moved from being responsible for my own technical delivery as a junior employee, to where I am now as an executive, where I lead a very senior team of people with varying specialised skills. I’ve had to learn that I no longer need to know in detail all aspects of my individual team member’s roles, but only need to have the skill of asking the right questions at the right time. That in essence is what it means to get results through others. Allowing them to do what they are skilled at doing yet maintaining some degree of oversight in order to provide direction as and when needed.” This quote from a participant from the Executive sample was one of the

responses classified under the construct **Ability to lead a team**. Other responses that revolved around the subject of effective team management skills and learning to achieve results through others were also classified under this construct.

The construct **Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal** revolves around a leader's ability to build meaningful working relationships through their understanding of their own emotions, views and personality, as well as those of their colleagues, seniors and stakeholders, and how to effectively manage all of these to enable seamless collaboration. One of the Senior Managers gave the following example: "I started working for our organisation as a technician in 1995. This was just after our country had transitioned into a democratic republic. Within the operations environment, there were still individuals, both senior and junior, who found it difficult to accept that a young black man had gotten his position within the organisation by meeting the qualifications and experience requirements. I made it my mission to have the difficult conversations, to create a comfortable space where some of these individuals got to understand me and those of my kind who they saw as a threat. In the end, I became very good friends with a lot of those who were antagonistic towards me when I started my job. What assisted me was my approach and understanding of what possibly informed their perceptions of me."

The **Astuteness** construct, meanwhile, is described by an Executive's quote: "I developed a reputation of being a person who got things done. If you were pressed to achieve a deadline on a project or task which was of strategic importance, I became the guy to go to."

Tables 6 and 7 below present the top five career capital components for the Executive and Senior Manager samples respectively, in rank ordered tables based on frequency of responses.

TABLE 7: TOP FIVE CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS OF EXECUTIVES

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS	FREQUENCY
1	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand or environment; related to situational awareness	8
1	High sense of self-awareness	8
1	Multi-disciplinary experience; experience in multiple roles within an organisation	8
4	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	6
4	Determination and perseverance	6

TABLE 8: TOP FIVE CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS OF SENIOR MANAGERS

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS	FREQUENCY
1	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	10
2	Determination and perseverance	9
2	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand or environment; related to situational awareness	9
4	Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal	8
4	Ability to influence and/or inspire	8

From Tables 6 and 7, it can be seen that the career capital components of **Personal motivation and solid work ethic; Determination and perseverance** and **The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand or environment-related to situational awareness**, were common for both Executives and Senior Managers.

In addition, the Executives chose the career capital components **Multi-disciplinary experience; experience in multiple roles within an organisation** and **High sense of self-awareness** the remaining two components in their top five. These two additional components are related to an Executive's breadth and diversity of work experience and their overall emotional intelligence levels.

Senior Managers, on the other hand, included the **Ability to influence and/or inspire** and **Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal** constructs as the two

additional career capital components in their sample's top five. These constructs represent the functional skills that form the generic management skills arsenal.

5.3 FINDINGS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2

The second research question was as follows: **What are the methods of career capital accrual by Senior Management and Executives within the manufacturing sector?**

Tables 8 to 10 below summarise the outputs from the analysis of the responses captured from questions 4, 5 and 6 of the interview guide. As described in the previous chapter, the content and frequency analysis technique was used to analyse the individual participant responses, which were then used to develop the constructs presented in this chapter, in rank ordered tables based on frequency of responses. These results are for three sample groups, namely the combined total sample, the Executive sample and the Senior Manager sample.

TABLE 9: CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHODS - TOTAL SAMPLE

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHOD	FREQUENCY
1	Willingness to learn	15
2	Networking within the company	13
3	Willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working	12
3	Temporary job-rotations, secondments - multi-disciplinary exposure	12
5	Challenging the status quo	11
6	Frequent stakeholder engagement and networking	10
6	Having a vision with specific goals and a supporting development plan to enable the achievement of the said vision	10
8	Honouring your commitments	9
8	Identifying opportunities to create visibility at higher levels, specifically to key decision-makers within the organisation	9
8	Changing jobs within the organisation	9
11	Studying and exposure to successful individuals within the organisation	8
12	Being mentored or coached	8
13	Constantly seeking to find more innovative and efficient ways to achieve expected deliverables	7

13	Staying abreast with current affairs and advancements within your industry and role	7
13	Studying and exposure to successful individuals outside the organisation	7
16	On-the-job training	5
16	Developing a complete competence in your role before seeking new opportunities	5
18	Increasing skills and competence through formal study - post graduate degrees etc.	3

Below are the descriptions of the 10 most frequently occurring constructs, as well as examples of the individual participant responses captured under these constructs.

One of the key constructs identified by the total sample of Executives and Senior Managers as a career capital accrual method was **Willingness to Learn**. Throughout the interviews, a recurring theme was how the participants had always had the desire to continuously upskill themselves and stay abreast of developments within their fields or disciplines. An example of this is a quote from one of the Executives interviewed: "I've always enjoyed working with electronics. Believe it or not, I worked part-time from the age of 15 at an electronics repair store. I was genuinely good at tinkering with electronic devices, interested in the field and always willing to learn how to repair more complex devices. I used to even read up on then obscure subjects such as writing computer programmes and various codes. To this day I try and read as much as I can and as broadly as I can because I believe being knowledgeable on broad subject matter is a key differentiator and source of competitive advantage for an executive."

The construct, **Networking within the company**, also came out as a popular method of career capital accrual. Both Senior Managers and Executives indicated that networks within the organisation were instrumental in creating opportunities for them to grow and develop specific skills and competencies they wouldn't have otherwise developed on their own. According to one respondent, "...there'll always be a subject matter expert on a specific subject or skill within the company, the key is developing a relationship with these individuals in order to learn from them or to be able to call upon them when you need their expertise to achieve a certain deliverable. You cannot survive in our industry if you haven't built yourself a library of experts who are a call away and are always willing to assist you", while another noted that, "...Women

generally don't network enough. Looking back at my career, what I've found is that the higher I got with respect to organisational level, the more I started getting opportunities through recommendations from individuals who I had worked for or worked with who had been impressed by the quality of my work and my skills and abilities. The professional working relationships I had developed became instrumental in my career progression." The **Networking within the company** construct incorporated the themes arising from responses such as those to question 5 of the interview guide.

"Companies like Google and Apple were built on innovation. They were led by mavericks that were always looking for simpler, better ways of addressing society's needs. People like that get noticed and are usually successful at whatever they do. The key is actively seeking out smart ways to carry out tasks which are considered complex or mundane. This quoted response was one of the themes which were captured under the **Willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working** construct.

Temporary job-rotations, Secondments - Multi-disciplinary exposure result in the creation of opportunities for employees to acquire new skills and competencies, otherwise termed career capital, which enables the said employees to be effective in their roles. "One of the tasks I had to do when I began my career at one of the country's breweries was to join the brewery's General Manager and his Exco on their weekly site inspection. My role was to minute the deviations and ensure that they were actioned by an Exco member to the appropriate discipline manager. I was a glorified scribe. What I must say though, is that through this scribing I was exposed to the workings of maintenance division, procurement, the capital steering committee, executives and the General Manager. This multi-disciplinary exposure equipped me with a better understanding of the business drivers and what truly mattered to individuals at the top. To this day I use this knowledge as it is applicable in running any business entity and it has advantaged me throughout my career." This response was one of the themes captured under the **Temporary job-rotations, Secondments - Multi-disciplinary exposure** construct.

The **Challenging the status quo** construct was also a popular construct among respondents, especially Senior Managers. This can be seen through the fact that more than 50% of the total sample indicated that it was a method they had used to acquire

career capital. An example of a response that was clustered under this construct was from a Senior Manager who said the following: “Questioning how things are done and why they are done in a specific way is the best way to learn and get a deeper understanding of the intricacies of any process. I was never afraid to ask why things were done in a specific way, and at times I found that in some instances, no one truly knew why certain tasks were carried out in that specific way. That realisation then prompted me and whoever was the custodian of that process to investigate if there were better and more efficient ways of carrying out that specific task. This enabled me to get a deeper understanding of most systems and processes which gave me an advantage over my peers. I also developed a reputation for being the guy who questioned everything and kept changing how things were done. This was not always a positive thing in the eyes of those rooted in the traditional way of doing things.”

Ten out of 19 participants indicated that **Frequent stakeholder engagement and networking** was a key career capital accrual method they had used throughout their career. One of the Senior Managers from the Sales and Marketing department had the following to say: “...the best way to learn is from feedback from our customers or stakeholders. You need to have a relationship where they are comfortable engaging with you regarding their expectations, allowing you to adjust your approach, offering or value proposition to them and others like them to meet the said expectations. This then creates a perception that you are always on top of your game and that you truly understand your stakeholders which is always a plus for your career growth”.

“You need to know what you want in life, you need to think about how you can get it, you also need to have an idea when you want it. Explicitly stating your dream or vision and actively taking steps to bring that vision into reality requires you to take steps to acquire certain skills and competencies which enable the achieving the said vision.” This response, provided by one of the Executives, was captured under the **Having a vision with specific goals and a supporting development plan to enable the achievement of the said vision** construct.

Nine respondents indicated that **Honouring your commitments** was a key enabler for the accrual of career capital. These individuals felt very strongly about this career capital accrual method, as was evidenced in their pronounced body language, the use

of hand gestures, and the change in their tone of voice when they were responding to questions related to this subject. They believed it was a fundamental requirement for all who aimed to progress within their careers and acquire the skills to be effective in their roles. “People must believe that once you commit, you will deliver. If they feel this, they are generally more than willing to go the extra mile for you and open doors for you which you would not have ordinarily had access to”, was a response from one of the Senior Managers.

One of the Executives responded as follows during their interview: “The higher you go, it becomes no longer about your technical expertise, but more about who knows you and knows what you are capable of within the work environment. This includes your management ability, leadership style and interpersonal skills. You need to ensure that you are within the radar of key decision makers. You get to a stage where there are many like you with the same skills and competencies that you possess: those who progress are those who are noticed and actively put their hand up to be noticed”. This response was classified under the **”Identify opportunities to create visibility at higher levels, specifically to key decision-makers within the organisation.**

The **Changing jobs within the organisation** construct was aptly described by the following response from an interview with another Executive: “...I’ve learnt a new skill in every role I occupied within the company; each of these skills were unique and suited for that specific role. In hindsight and specifically taking into consideration our current discussion, I realise that all of these skills I have acquired throughout the different roles I have held, have opened doors to new opportunities and collectively enabled me to be effective in my current executive role. It’s very dangerous to your career just to know one thing or occupy the same role for a prolonged period because, yes you will definitely master those specific skills required for that role, but you will not be able to compete with the likes of me who bring to the party a multitude of skills and competencies. You need to move around.”

Tables 10 and 11 below present the top five career capital accrual methods for the Executive and Senior Manager samples respectively, in rank ordered tables based on frequency of responses.

TABLE 10: TOP FIVE CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHODS - EXECUTIVES

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHOD	FREQUENCY
1	Willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working	6
2	Willingness to learn	5
2	Temporary job-rotations, Secondments - Multi-disciplinary exposure	5
4	Networking within the company	4
4	Having a vision with specific goals and a supporting development plan to enable the achievement of the said vision	4
4	Staying abreast with current affairs and advancements within your industry and role	4
4	Being mentored or coached	4
4	Identify opportunities to create visibility at higher levels, specifically to key decision-makers within the organisation	4
4	Changing jobs within the organisation	4

TABLE 11: TOP FIVE CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHODS - SENIOR MANAGERS

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHOD	FREQUENCY
1	Willingness to learn	10
2	Networking within the company	9
3	Challenging the status quo	8
4	Temporary job-rotations, Secondments - Multi-disciplinary exposure	7
4	Frequent stakeholder engagement and networking	7

From Tables 10 and 11 above, it can be seen that three constructs are identical in both the Executive and Senior Manager sample group's top five career capital accrual methods. These are **Willingness to learn, Temporary job-rotations, Secondments - Multi-disciplinary exposure** and **Networking within the company**.

In addition to the three aforementioned common career capital accrual methods, Executives also selected **Willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working, Having a vision with specific goals and a supporting development plan to enable the achievement of the said vision, Staying abreast with current affairs and advancements within your industry and role, Being mentored or coached, Identify opportunities to create visibility at higher levels, specifically to key**

decision-makers within the organisation and **Changing jobs within the organisation** as their top five career capital accrual methods. These constructs are related to innovation, being a practical visionary, continuous improvement in networking, and the occupying of various roles within an organisation as a means of skills acquisition and diversification.

The Senior Managers sample, on the other hand, had in addition to the three common career capital accrual methods, **Challenging the status quo** and **Frequent stakeholder engagement and networking** constructs as the most frequently used career capital accrual methods used.

5.4 FINDINGS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3

The third research question was as follows: **What are the top three career capital components that set Senior Managers and Executives apart from their peers and enable their career progression?**

Tables 11 to 13 below summarise the outputs from the analysis of the responses captured from questions 4 and 6 of the interview guide. These results are presented for three sample groups, which are the combined total sample, the Executives sample and the Senior Managers sample respectively. It must be noted that this research question focused specifically on identifying career capital components that were enablers of the respondents' career progression and the key differentiators between them and their peers' career trajectories.

TABLE 12: CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT - TOTAL SAMPLE

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT	FREQUENCY
1	Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship: The big picture	9
2	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	7
3	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment - related to situational awareness	6
3	Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes	6
5	Ability to lead a team	5
5	Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal	5
7	High sense of self-awareness	4
8	Multi-disciplinary experience; experience in multiple roles within an organisation	3
8	Technical ability	3
10	Determination and perseverance	2
10	Having a reputation of keeping to your word and delivering on commitments	2
10	Ability to influence and/or inspire	2
10	Being passionate about the role you occupy within the organisation and its associated deliverables	2
14	Action orientation	1
14	Having a reputation for honesty and integrity	1

From the above table, it can be seen that there was not an overwhelming consensus on specific career capital components. This was due to the subjective and specific nature of research question 3, unlike the more broad and generic research question 1.

Below are the descriptions of only the top five most frequently occurring constructs, which were taken from the responses to the questions related to research question 3. These top five career capital components had, at a minimum, a sample response frequency of five out of 19 respondents.

The **Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; The big picture** construct contained responses that related to general business acumen, the

understanding of business unit interdependencies, and true drivers of business performance. One of the Executive respondents stated the following: “Every successful business leader has a strong understanding of the variables which impact their business’ overall performance. Without this, you are almost running blind. You need to understand how each unit fits into the puzzle and how one action in a certain unit can influence the performance of multiple units. The quicker you are at understanding this, the quicker you rise through the organisation.”

Another response captured under the same construct was from a Senior Manager who said: “You know what set me apart from the rest of my peers who I started with in this organisation; I always wanted to know how the piece of equipment I had just fixed, fit in the bigger picture. I was always curious about what impact that specific piece of equipment had on the overall performance of the plant. I had a desire to understand how the work carried out by the other disciplines affected the performance and reliability of this piece of equipment I was responsible for maintaining. The big picture view was always very important to me. This led me to asking questions, becoming friends with artisans from other disciplines beside my own and developing a very broad understanding of systems, processes and business drivers. This was far from the limited, specialised knowledge most of my peers possessed.”

Within the career progression context, one of the Senior Managers responded as follows when asked about the top three career capital components that had enabled his career progression: “You’ve got to believe you’re the best there is in your current role. I don’t mean to sound arrogant but whenever I walk into a room I know that I’m either the smartest or second smartest in the room. I also know that I’m not just smart but I work harder than almost all the people in that room. It’s only a matter of time ‘til one gets to the top, how high I want to reach is what I’m mulling over now.” This was captured under the **Personal motivation and solid work ethic** construct.

One of the responses from an Executive for research question 3, captured under **The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment-related to situational awareness**, was: “You’ve got to have the ability to adapt to any situation thrown at you. I think that’s what I did well; in fact I think that’s what I did better than most people. Put me in a room with anyone at any level

within the organisation and I'll always be able to hold my own and constructively participate in the discussion or task at hand." The central theme for this career capital component was adaptability.

Another career capital component identified by the respondents as being a key enabler of their career progression was possessing a **Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes**. This career capital component revolves around technical understanding and the ability to apply one's technical ability to real workplace problems. One of the Executives had the following to say with respect to this subject: "I started off as a plant engineer for the first few years of my career, and then I left industry to become a lecturer at a local Technikon. From the lecturing experience I developed a comprehensive understanding of the theory and design aspects of manufacturing processes. When I returned to industry, I had an advantage over my peers because I found it very easy to understand, in-depth, various processes and systems."

An example of a response captured under the **Ability to lead a team** was from an Executive who noted: "Having the ability to lead from the early stages of your career sets you apart from your peers. Some are fortunate to enter the work environment having already had the opportunity to occupy various leadership roles. I, for instance, was Head Girl at my high school and captained various sports teams. I learnt from a very young age what it meant to lead and the responsibilities which came with that. I found it easier than my peers to take on work opportunities which required leadership skills and this enabled me to deliver on those opportunities and be given larger assignments. This enabled my rapid career growth."

The **Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal** construct relate to one's ability to engage both professionally and socially within the work environment and one's understanding of the etiquette around managing professional business relationships. As per one Senior Manager: "I've always understood people and how to work with people. Because of this, fellow employees usually found it easier to work with me and to go the extra mile for me. This allowed me to achieve better results through

others than most of my peers. You get the people aspect of your job right, you will grow in this organisation.”

TABLE 13: CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS - EXECUTIVES

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT - EXECUTIVES	FREQUENCY
1	Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; The big picture	5
2	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment - related to situational awareness	4
2	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	4
2	Ability to lead a team	4
5	Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes	3

TABLE 14: CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS - SENIOR MANAGERS

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT - SENIOR MANAGERS	FREQUENCY
1	Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal	4
1	Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; The big picture	4
3	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	3
3	High sense of self-awareness	3
3	Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes	3

From Tables 13 and 14 above, it can be seen that three constructs are identical in both the Executive and Senior Manager sample groups' top five career capital components related to career advancement. These are **Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; The big picture**, **Personal motivation and solid work ethic** and **Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes**.

In addition to the three aforementioned common career capital accrual methods, Executives also selected **The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment - related to situational**

awareness and the **Ability to lead a team**. These constructs are related to adaptability and leadership ability.

The Senior Managers sample, on the other hand, in addition to the three common career capital components related to career advancement, highlighted **Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal** and **High sense of self-awareness** constructs as their top five career capital components related to career advancement.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the data gathered from 19 face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. This data were analysed using the content and frequency analysis technique described in the previous chapter. The chapter which follows will discuss, in-depth, the analysis of the results presented in this chapter with the aim of gathering new insights, relating them to the available literature, and adding to the body of knowledge on career capital, its components, and methods used in its accrual.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to analyse and discuss the results presented in Chapter 5. This chapter will draw comparisons between the results and the various literature sources and seminal work on the topic of career capital, as presented in the Literature Review section of this report. This will be done with the aim of gathering further insights to add to the body of knowledge around the subject of career capital. The aim of this chapter is also to answer the three research questions as presented in Chapter 3 of this document which are: (i) What are the career capital components of Executives and Senior Managers?; (ii) what are the methods used in the accrual of these career capital components?; and (iii) Which career capital components have been instrumental in enabling the career advancement of Senior Managers and Executives?

6.2 POPULATION OF INTEREST

As outlined in Chapter 4 of this document, the population of interest was knowledge workers in the manufacturing sector, who had at least three years' experience in their current positions and were either Senior Managers or Executives within their organisations. From this population of interest, a sample of 19 participants from a large South African manufacturing entity agreed to participate in this study.

The aforementioned participants were from either the Head Office or the Operating Hub of the said manufacturing entity. The decision to have a sample comprised of individuals from both Head Office and the Operating Hub was taken purposefully to allow for insights to be gathered from a much broader perspective not limited to a geographically imposed culture or view. Of the 19, 9 were Executives and 10 were Senior Managers.

Of the complete sample, only 16% were women with the remaining 84% being men. The sample is considered somewhat representative as it is characteristic of the South African manufacturing sector, which on average has a female representation of 21.6% for the Executive and Senior Manager levels combined (Department of Labour, 2015).

There was an overall general willingness to participate by all the respondents. This was enabled largely by the support of the Head Office and Operating Hub ExcOs, with the Human Resources executives of both areas playing an active role in facilitating the appointments and commitment to participate from the respondents.

6.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What are the career capital components at senior management and executive level in the manufacturing sector?

The aim of the above question was to identify the career capital components possessed by Senior Managers and Executives within the manufacturing sector. Tables 6, 7 and 8 presented the rank ordered career capital components of the three sample groups namely, Senior Managers; Executives; and Executives and Senior Managers, as captured during the face-to-face semi-structured interviews and analysed using the thematic analysis and coding methodology described in Chapter 4.

In their paper titled; The career capital components of knowledge workers in the knowledge economy, Lamb and Sutherland (2010b) introduced the *de facto* model of career capital. Using this model, they classified career capital under two main categories: must-have capitals and nice-to-have capitals. Must-have capitals generally encompass generic management skills, competencies, traits, functional skills, technical skills and qualifications. Within this grouping are the know-who, know-why, know-how, know-when, know-what, know-where and fit career capital components as described by Defilippi and Arthur, (1994) and Jones and Defilippi, (1996). Nice-to-have capitals are what Lamb and Sutherland (2010) termed, differentiating capitals and include knowing oneself, emotional intelligence, context management, internal locus of control and action orientation. These career capital components can be considered higher order capitals as they increase a knowledge worker's marketability through their generic and tradable nature and drives their demand in the knowledge economy

Tables 15-17 below present the career capital components of the three sample groups previously mentioned, i.e. the total combined sample, the Executives sample and the Senior Managers sample respectively, extracted through analysis of the 19 face-to-face

interviews. These career capital components have been further clustered, using the de facto model (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010), into forms of career capital as defined in the model.

TABLE 15: CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS OF EXECUTIVES AND SENIOR MANAGERS RANK ORDERED BY RESPONSE FREQUENCY AND MAPPED TO LITERATURE

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENT	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment-related to situational awareness	17	Context Management
2	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	16	Know- why
3	Determination and perseverance	15	Know-why
3	Multi-disciplinary experience; experience in multiple roles within an organisation	15	Know-when
5	High sense of self-awareness	14	Emotional maturity and intelligence
6	Having a reputation of keeping to your word and delivering on commitments	11	Know-whom
6	Ability to influence and/or inspire	11	Context management
6	Ability to lead a team	11	Know-whom
9	Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal	10	Know-whom
10	Astuteness	9	Action Orientation

The highest ranked career capital component for the combined total sample of Senior Managers and Executives was: **The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment-related to situational awareness.** Of the 19 respondents in the total combined sample, 17 indicated that this was an important career capital component within their arsenal of skill, traits and competencies. This component encompasses an individual's ability to read the situation, to adapt to various business contexts and to align their behaviour in order to

achieve results within the specific context. It is related to an individual's business acumen, specifically around the elements of flexibility and responsiveness within the business context. Kaiser and Craig, (2011), in their paper titled: Do the Behaviours Related to Managerial Effectiveness Really Change with Organizational Level? An Empirical Test, suggested that successfully climbing the corporate ladder and becoming effective in any new role requires a level of flexibility, an understanding of how to lead within a specific context, situational awareness and a level of self-regulation. Lamb and Sutherland, (2010) classified this career capital component under the context management which falls under the nice-to-have career capitals.

The second and third highest ranked career capital components for Senior Managers and Executives within the manufacturing sector were **Personal motivation and having a solid work ethic** and **Determination and perseverance respectively**. According to the literature, these components fall under the know-why career capital components, a must have capital according to the *de facto* model (Defillippi & Arthur, 1996). Know-why embodies an individual's sense of meaning towards their work, as well as their motivation, energy and drive which typically result in a personal commitment to delivery irrespective of the challenges faced. The technical and output focused nature of the manufacturing environment, with its numerous deadlines, personnel challenges and cost pressures requires a special type of individual who is driven and willing "to go the extra mile" with respect to work demands.

Almost 80% of the respondents indicated that another important career capital component for Senior Managers and Executives within the manufacturing sector, ranked tied for third, is: **Multi-disciplinary experience; experience in multiple roles within an organisation**. Using the available literature, this career capital component was mapped under the know-when career capital components. Know-when relates to the timing of the uptake of any new role or the decision on the duration to be spent in a specific role, such that the individual enjoys maximum exposure to new learnings and insights and develops relevant skills and competencies which enable his/her progression. The individual is then able to apply the skills and competencies he or she has amassed throughout their career.

The construct, **High sense of self-awareness**, classified under the career capital component emotional maturity and intelligence as per the *de facto* model, was ranked fifth by Senior Managers and Executives. This career capital component falls under the nice-to-have capitals and is considered a key differentiator as one progresses within one's career, especially at the manage-function level and above, as per Drotter's definition (2011).

The construct **Ability to influence and/or inspire** was ranked sixth with regards to the career capital components relevant to Senior Managers and Executives. This component, when mapped against available literature, was classified under the context management basket of career capitals which fall under the nice-to-have capitals (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010).

Having a reputation of keeping to your word and delivering on commitments, Ability to lead a team and **Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal** were ranked sixth, sixth and ninth respectively in regard to the top 10 career capital components for Senior Manager and Executives within the manufacturing sector. As per the definitions provided by Defillippi and Arthur (1994) and the *defacto model*, these career capital components can be collectively clustered under the must have capital component of knowing-whom. This component describes the relational aspect of one's career related competencies, such as networking, influencing, and building trust and unity within the work environment.

The construct **Astuteness**, which is defined as one's ability to effectively execute tasks and see them to completion, was ranked 10th of the top 10 career capital components for Senior Managers and Executives. When mapped to literature, this closely correlates to the career capital component of action orientation as defined by Lamb and Sutherland, (2010).

From Table 15 and the career capital explanations and mapping above, the following is observed:

- Four of the top 10 career capital components relevant at Senior Management and Executive levels are higher order, nice-to-have, differentiating capitals as defined in the *de facto* model (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010). The fact that these

are deemed relevant at Senior Manager and Executive levels, both high levels within an organisation, supports the seminal work of Lamb and Sutherland (2010), which suggested that nice-to-have capitals, which include components such as; EQ, knowing oneself, opportunity identification, context management, internal locus of control and action orientation, are in fact key differentiators that enable career growth and progression, marketability and ultimately the job mobility of knowledge workers.

- Another three of the top 10 career capital components relevant at Senior Manager and Executive levels are related to the relational aspect of one's career and the mastery thereof. This includes the building of strategic relationships and partnerships and collaboration efforts within or outside the organisation. This is achieved through networking, mentoring and frequent engagement with stakeholders and key decision makers alike. Traditional leadership development literature outlines the observed general transition from possessing functional skills and competencies to more strategic, intangible and largely relational skills and competencies, witnessed when an individual advances in the level they occupy within an organisation (Kaiser & Craig, 2011).
- Two of the top 10 career capital components relevant at Senior Manager and Executive levels are related to the know-why element of career capital, which encompasses personal attributes such as motivation, determination, goal orientation and drive. These attributes are essential throughout an individual's career as they directly influence the individual's work ethic and diligence, both fundamental requirements for high performance.
- The action orientation career capital element represents the one remaining career capital component relevant to Senior Managers and Executives in their top 10.

TABLE 16: CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS OF EXECUTIVES RANK ORDERED BY RESPONSE FREQUENCY AND MAPPED TO LITERATURE

RANK	TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS FOR EXECUTIVES	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand or environment-related to situational awareness	8	Context Management
1	High sense of self-awareness	8	Emotional Maturity and Intelligence
1	Multi-disciplinary experience; experience in multiple roles within an organisation	8	Know-when
4	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	6	Know-why
4	Determination and perseverance	6	Know-why

TABLE 17: CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENT OF SENIOR MANAGERS RANK ORDERED BY REPOSE FREQUENCY AND MAPPED TO LITERATURE

RANK	TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS FOR SENIOR MANAGERS	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	10	Know-why
2	Determination and perseverance	9	Know-why
2	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand or environment-related to situational awareness	9	Context Management
4	Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal	8	Know-whom
4	Ability to influence and/or inspire	8	Know-whom

From Tables 16 and 17 above, the following is observed:

- At Executive level, two of their top five career capital components are nice-to-have capitals, also referred to as differentiating capitals. These are responsible for increasing the value of a knowledge workers tradable skills and competencies and serve to further distinguish them and accelerate their career advancement and growth. Specifically for this study at Executive level, these

two career capital components encompassed elements of **flexibility, responsiveness, adaptability** and a **high level of emotional maturity and intelligence** respectively. In comparison, at Senior Manager level, nice-to-have capitals only make up one of the five top five career capital components relevant at that organisational level. This one component is related to **flexibility, responsiveness and adaptability**.

- Another unique career capital component which makes up the top five career capital components of executives is knowing-when. This relates to the ability to make career choices and moves based on **specific timing** which is seen by the knowledge worker as enabling one to be **exposed to and exploit opportunities** within a specific industry. It informs the choices a knowledge worker makes regarding the roles and projects they take on.
- At Senior Manager level, the know-why career capital components make up the top two of their top five career capital components. These career capital components are related to personal motivation and drive, instilling a sense of meaning to a knowledge worker's day to day activities and the determination to see all tasks allocated to them to completion irrespective of the challenges experienced. These two components also make up the remaining two top five career capital components of Executives albeit that they are ranked fourth and fifth at Executive level.
- Although ranked 4th and 5th in the top five career capital components at the Senior Manager level, the know-whom career capitals only feature in the top five capitals for Senior Managers and not Executives. These career capital components revolve around and relate to the relational aspects of career capital which include one's ability to lead, influence and inspire personnel to maintain a high performance culture.

The results described above were expected and are supported by Drotter, Charan and Noel's publication titled; The Leadership Pipeline (Drotter et al.,2011). Drotter et al., propose that the essential skills, traits and competencies possessed by individuals change with a change in organisational level. These aforementioned skills, traits and competencies (career capital), transition from being largely functional and focused on technical skill, explicit knowledge and the execution of tasks by the individual at the lower organisational levels of manage-self and manage-others to more strategically

focused, largely relational orientated skills and competencies which focus on achieving results through others at the manage-function and above levels.

The results suggest that in general, in order to be effective at either Senior Manager or Executive levels, the knowledge worker needs to develop or possess a 50:50 combination of higher order, nice-to-have, differentiating career capital components and must-have, functional career capital components (see Table 15). EQ, opportunity identification, context management, internal locus of control and action orientation are some examples of the relevant higher order capitals with personal motivation, perseverance and determination, networking, mentoring and frequent engagement with stakeholders and key decision makers being examples of critical must-have career capitals which make up the other half of the essential portfolio of capitals.

The results from the Executive sample highlight the importance of, adaptability, responsiveness and a high level of emotional maturity and intelligence at that organisational level. These aforementioned career capital components enable the achievement of the Executive's primary mandate of increasing shareholder value, effective strategy formulation and implementation and the achievement of business results through providing leadership and direction to those who report to them. One of the key distinguishing career capital components between Executives and Senior Manager is the Executive's ability, throughout their career, to make well-timed career choices and moves which enable them to be exposed to and exploit opportunities to succeed and grow within their industry and career. This ability informs the choices that a knowledge worker makes regarding the roles and projects they take on.

The results gathered from the Senior Manager sample highlight the fact that the portfolio of capitals relevant at the Senior Manager level consist largely of must-have capitals. This is expected as the manage-function/Senior Manager level within the organisation is still required to have some focus on overseeing the execution of tasks and requires an appreciable amount of the functionally orientated must-have capitals as defined by the *de facto* model. The critical capitals at the Senior Manager level include perseverance and drive, a solid work ethic, determination and strong interpersonal skills. These increase a senior manager's effectiveness by enabling them

to lead, influence and inspire personnel to maintain a high performance culture within their teams.

6.4 RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What are the methods of career capital accrual used by senior management and executives within the manufacturing sector?

The aim of this question was to identify and rank the methods used by Senior Managers and Executives to acquire career capital. Tables 8, 9 and 10 in the previous chapter, present the rank ordered career capital accrual methods used by the three sample groups namely: Senior Managers; Executives; and Executives and Senior Managers, as captured during the face-to-face semi-structured interviews and analysed using the thematic analysis and coding methodology described in Chapter 4.

Lamb (2007) suggested that all knowledge workers possess a basic portfolio of career capitals whose composition is largely influenced by their nature, personality and cognitive ability. This portfolio grows as an individual advances in their career. With the advent of the Boundaryless and Protean career ideologies, resulting in increased employee mobility, knowledge workers are now exposed to more diverse career capital components and have more opportunities to acquire these. The successful career capitalist is one who has developed the skills of effectively acquiring these career capital components and using them to increase his/her effectiveness in their current role and to drive their career advancement.

Tables 18 to 20 below present the methods used by the three sample groups previously mentioned, namely; the total combined sample, the Executives sample and the Senior Managers sample respectively, extracted through analysis of the 19 face-to-face interviews, to acquire career capital components relevant to them. These methods have been further classified, using findings from the work of Lamb and Sutherland (2010).

TABLE 18: CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHODS USED BY EXECUTIVES AND SENIOR MANAGERS RANK ORDERED BY RESPONSE FREQUENCY AND MAPPED TO LITERATURE

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHOD	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	Willingness to learn	15	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment
2	Networking within the company	13	Networking and visibility at all levels
3	Willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working	12	Openness to change
3	Temporary job-rotations, Secondments- Multidisciplinary exposure	12	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment
5	Challenging the status quo	11	Challenging complacency through stretched vision, goals and developing a high performance culture
6	Frequent stakeholder engagement and networking	10	Networking and visibility at all levels
6	Having a vision with specific goals and a supporting development plan to enable the achievement of the said vision	10	Challenging complacency through stretched vision, goals and developing a high performance culture
8	Honouring your commitments	9	Networking and visibility at all levels
8	Identify opportunities to create visibility at higher levels, specifically to key decision-makers within the organisation	9	Networking and visibility at all levels
8	Changing jobs within the organisation	9	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment

The highest ranked career capital accrual method for the combined sample of Senior Managers and Executives was **Willingness to learn**. Of the 19 respondents, 15 indicated that this method was one of the most effective ways to acquire the skills,

traits and competencies, collectively termed career capital, required at their current position and for career advancement. This component was mapped to literature and eventually clustered under the overarching theme of **Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment**. This cluster represents an individual's hunger to continuously acquire new information and knowledge related to their industry or role, an ability to identify areas of development based on a skill or knowledge deficit and put in place measures to address this gap through the acquisition of new skills, knowledge and competencies (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010). Day et al., (2014) suggested that experience and continuous learning play a critical role in increasing the effectiveness of a leader. Other career capital accrual methods similarly clustered under the ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment theme include; **Temporary job-rotations, Secondments- Multidisciplinary exposure** and **Changing jobs within the organisation**, which ranked third and eighth respectively according to frequency of responses.

The second highest ranked career capital accrual method for Senior Managers and Executives was **Networking within the company**, which was highlighted by 13 of the 19 respondents as an effective way to build career capital. Based on the findings from existing literature, this was further classified under the overarching theme **Networking and visibility at all levels** which encompasses the building of alliances and partnerships, and collaboration opportunities through the managing of the relational and human aspect of one's workplace engagement with peers, line management and stakeholders alike (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010). Other career capital accrual methods similarly clustered under **Networking and visibility at all levels** include **Frequent stakeholder engagement and networking**, **Honouring your commitments**, and **Identify opportunities to create visibility at higher levels, specifically to key decision-makers within the organisation** which are ranked sixth and tied for eighth respectively .

The third highest ranked career capital accrual method was **Willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working**. Of the 19 respondents, 12 indicated that this was another effective way of building career capital. Using existing literature, this was further clustered under the overarching theme of **Mind-set focused on progressing outputs and delivering innovative, creative and commercially orientated**

solutions (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010). This theme includes elements of developing an almost entrepreneurial approach to problem solving where an individual is constantly looking for cheaper, better and more efficient ways of achieving results.

Challenging the status quo was another popular method used for career capital accrual which was ranked fifth overall. Of the 19 respondents, 11 indicated that this was an effective means to acquire career capital. This career capital accrual method was further clustered under the overarching theme of **Challenging complacency through stretched vision, goals and developing a high performance culture** which included the sixth ranked **Having a vision with specific goals and a supporting development plan to enable the achievement of the said vision** career capital accrual method. Through challenging the status quo, one gets an opportunity to develop a detailed understanding of the specific systems and processes associated with that which is being challenged. This then enables the development of the know-how elements of career capital (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994).

From Table 18 and the mapping thereof according to the literature, the following was observed regarding the overall responses of the total sample:

- Four of the top 10 career capital accrual methods used by both Executives and Senior Managers are related to networking and visibility at all levels. Career capital accrual methods within this cluster included networking within the company, frequent stakeholder engagement, honouring your commitments and identifying opportunities to create visibility at higher levels, specifically for key decision makers. The respondents commented that the rationale behind these methods being considered an effective way to accrue career capital was the fact that with visibility, trustworthiness, engagement and networking, there are opportunities to be exposed to differing views, opportunities to gather new insights and better understand the requirements of stakeholders and opportunities to be known by key decision makers as trustworthy and dependable. With the aforementioned, the knowledge worker is better able to tailor their development to address the skills and competency requirements of the position they are currently in or aspire to move into.

- Three of the top 10 career capital accrual methods used by both Executives and Senior Managers are related to the desire for ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment. This includes further training and development, temporary job-rotations, secondments, exposure to multidisciplinary teams and changing jobs within the organisation. Ongoing self-improvement directly increases the knowledge worker's portfolio of skills and competencies, otherwise referred to as career capital, and his/her ability to apply the said career capital he/she has accrued throughout their career in the pursuit of organisational goals.
- Two of the top 10 career capital accrual methods used by both Executives and Senior Managers are related to constantly challenging complacency through having a stretched vision and goals, and developing a high performance culture. Achieving the said stretched vision and goals requires knowledge workers to have the pre-requisite skills and competencies specific to that context which forces them to actively pursue acquiring those skills and competencies.
- The remaining method in the top 10 career capital accrual methods of Executives and Senior Managers is openness to change which is related to possessing the willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working. This requires that the knowledge worker acquires new skills and competencies or increases those currently in their possession in order to achieve this improved efficiency through new ways of working.

Tables 19 and 20 below present the top five career capital accrual methods used by the individual sample groups of Executives and Senior Managers respectively.



TABLE 19: TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHODS USED BY EXECUTIVES RANK ORDERED BY RESPONSE FREQUENCY AND MAPPED TO THE LITERATURE

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHOD	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	Willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working	6	Openness to change
2	Willingness to learn	5	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment
2	Temporary job-rotations, Secondments- Multidisciplinary exposure	5	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment
4	Networking within the company	4	Networking and visibility at all levels
4	Having a vision with specific goals and a supporting development plan to enable the achievement of the said vision	4	Challenging complacency through stretched vision, goals and developing a high performance culture
4	Staying abreast with current affairs and advancements within your industry and role	4	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment
4	Being mentored or coached	4	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment
4	Identify opportunities to create visibility at higher levels, specifically to key decision-makers within the organisation	4	Networking and visibility at all levels
4	Changing jobs within the organisation	4	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment

TABLE 20: TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHODS USED BY SENIOR MANAGERS RANK ORDERED BY RESPONSE FREQUENCY AND MAPPED TO THE LITERATURE

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL ACCRUAL METHOD	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	Willingness to learn	10	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment
2	Networking within the company	9	Networking and visibility at all levels
3	Challenging the status quo	8	Challenging complacency through stretched vision, goals and developing a high performance culture
4	Temporary job-rotations, Secondments- Multidisciplinary exposure	7	Ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment
4	Frequent stakeholder engagement and networking	7	Networking and visibility at all levels

From the responses presented in Tables 19 and 20 and the mapping thereof according to the literature, the following was observed regarding the methods used for career capital accrual by the Executive and Senior Manager samples:

From the responses of the Executives sample, mapped against existing literature, nine career capital accrual methods were tied for a spot in the top five methods used by Executives in their accrual of career capital. These career capital accrual methods were further clustered into four overarching themes which were openness to change, ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment, challenging complacency through stretched vision, goals and developing a high performance culture and networking and visibility at all levels. Of these, openness to change was the highest ranked career capital accrual method with six of the nine Executives highlighting it as an effective way to build career capital. It was also unique to the Executive sample. The ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment theme was the most frequently occurring of the four overarching themes when clustering the methods used by Executives for career

capital accrual. Networking and visibility at all levels was the least frequently occurring theme from the responses of Executives.

From the responses of the Senior Manager sample, mapped against existing literature, the five career capital accrual methods identified were willingness to learn, networking within the company, challenging the status quo, temporary job-rotations, secondments-multidisciplinary exposure and frequent stakeholder engagement and networking. Of these, willingness to learn was the highest ranked with all 10 Senior Manager respondents indicating that this was an effective way to accrue career capital. These methods were further clustered into three overarching themes namely; ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment, networking and visibility at all levels and challenging complacency through stretched vision, goals and developing a high performance culture. Of these, ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment and networking and visibility at all levels both represented two of the top five career capital accrual methods and hence were the most frequently occurring.

The key take-away from the results discussed above, specifically for Executives, is that ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment features very strongly in the methods they use to acquire career capital, which is in line with the work of Bourdieu (1986). Bourdieu suggested that in this modern knowledge economy, a knowledge worker's primary offering to the organisation is not merely physical labour, as in the traditional sense of the blue-collar employee, but rather their ability to acquire and apply knowledge in the pursuit of profit and sustainable business operation. The accrual of career capital therefore becomes critical in increasing the perceived value of a knowledge worker, thereby increasing his marketability, potential mobility and career progression.

A unique career capital accrual method for Executives, which interestingly was also ranked the highest in their top five career capital accrual methods, was openness to change. This method specifically represented a willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working. This is in line with an Executives role as they are expected to provide leadership and innovative solutions to complex organisational challenges during these highly volatile socio-economic times.

Networking and visibility at all levels and challenging complacency through stretched vision, goals and developing a high performance culture, also feature in an Executives arsenal of career capital accrual methods but they are more generic and also applicable in the Senior Manager level.

Results observed from the Senior Manager sample on the other hand indicated that ongoing self-improvement and networking and visibility at all levels were the two most frequently occurring career capital accrual methods. Although these two methods are common for both sample groups, networking and visibility at all levels was ranked higher in the Senior Manager sample.

When comparing the results from the two sample groups, it is observed that there is largely agreement between the two groups on effective ways to acquire career capital. The main difference lies in the perceived importance/effectiveness of each method employed, indicated by its ranking and frequency of occurrence.

6.5 RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What are the top three career capital components that set Senior Managers and Executives apart from their peers and enable their career progression?

The aim of the final research question was to identify the career capital components that add the most marginal value to a knowledge worker with respect to career progression. The answer to this serves two purposes, i.e. to assist human resource practitioners within organisations to create environments that enable career progression through the development of specific career capital components; and, provide guidelines for the aspirant career capitalist, on which components to pay specific attention to in their pursuit of career advancement. As highlighted by Reitman and Schneer (2008) in their work around the subject of the evolution of the concept of a career, employees in the modern knowledge economy are adopting a more transactional view to employment where their loyalty is driven by prospective rewards, therefore understanding how to achieve those rewards will contribute to the attraction and retention and attracting of top talent.

Tables 21 to 23 below present the top five career capital components of the three sample groups previously mentioned, extracted through analysis of the 19 face-to-face interviews, which have added the highest marginal value with respect to career progression. These methods have been further clustered into ways of knowing as described in the work of Lamb and Sutherland (2010).

TABLE 21: TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT- TOTAL SAMPLE

RANK	CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship: The big picture	9	Know-how
2	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	7	Know-why
3	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment - related to situational awareness	6	Context management
3	Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes	6	Know-how
5	Ability to lead a team	5	Know-whom
5	Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal	5	Know-whom

From the above table, it can be seen that for the combined Senior Manager and Executive sample, the most prominent career capital component clusters related to career progression are the know-whom and know-how clusters. Of all the various components within these clusters the top three are **Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship: The big picture, Personal motivation and solid work ethic in first and second respectively; with, The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment -**

related to situational awareness and Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes tied for the third position.

Within the manufacturing sector, an understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship enables the knowledge worker to make effective decisions which take into consideration the overall mutual dependencies of the individual units and maximise the overall hub profitability. Such decision making and behaviour associated with awareness of key business drivers is typically recognised and rewarded.

Personal motivation and solid work ethic are generic requirements for all industries. These career capital components typical influences quality of work, effectiveness of task execution and overall ability to inspire high performance within the team one leads and manages.

Mastery of the ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment - related to situational awareness, increases a knowledge worker's overall effectiveness in their role. This competence is related to adaptability, flexibility and innovative approaches to business challenges which is a valuable competence in the current volatile and dynamic markets.

A comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes is a fundamental requirement for effectiveness at any level within an organisation. This is especially true for the manufacturing sector as it is highly technically orientated.

Tables 22 and 23 present the data gathered specifically for the Senior Manager and Executive samples. This is presented to determine whether there are marked differences between career capital components which enable career advancement for Executives and Senior Manager.



TABLE 22: TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENT RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT- EXECUTIVES

RANK	TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT - EXECUTIVES	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; The big picture	5	Know-how
2	The ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment - related to situational awareness	4	Context management
2	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	4	Know-why
2	Ability to lead a team	4	Know-whom
5	Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes	3	Know-how

TABLE 23: TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENT RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT- SENIOR MANAGERS

RANK	TOP 5 CAREER CAPITAL COMPONENTS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT - SENIOR MANAGERS	FREQUENCY	CLASSIFICATION AS PER LITERATURE
1	Good relational skills; intrapersonal and interpersonal	4	Know-whom
1	Understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; The big picture	4	Know-how
3	Personal motivation and solid work ethic	3	Know-why
3	High sense of self-awareness	3	Emotional Intelligence
3	Comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes	3	Know-how

From Tables 22 and 23 the following is observed:

- At the Executive level, the two most important career capital components which are related to career advancement are **understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; the big picture and the ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand/ environment - related to situational awareness**, which were ranked first and second respectively.
- At the Senior Manager level, understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; and the big picture and good relational skills-intrapersonal and interpersonal are the top two career capital components related to career progression.
- The career capital components of personal motivation and drive and having a comprehensive technical understanding of systems and processes are common for both sample groups, and are considered enablers to career progression and differentiation.
- What is seemingly contrary to expectations is the fact that of the top five career capital components that enable career advancement for the combined sample and the individual Executive and Senior Manager samples, 80% are must-have, lower order capitals. This is somewhat different to the work of Lamb and Sutherland, (2010), which suggested that the higher order nice-to-have capitals are largely responsible for differentiating a knowledge worker and facilitating their marketability, mobility and ultimately career advancement.

6.6 CONCLUSION

The analysis of the findings from the results presented in Chapter 5 yielded the following observations:

- The composition of the entire sample population was representative within the context of the South African manufacturing industry, although it must be noted that female representation was low.
- With regards to career capital, the results suggest that in general, in order to be effective at either Senior Manager or Executive levels, the knowledge worker needs to develop or possess a combination of higher order, nice-to-have, differentiating career capital components and must-have, functional career capital components. EQ, the ability to identify opportunities, context

management, internal locus of control and action orientation are some examples of the relevant higher order capitals with personal motivation, perseverance and determination, networking, mentoring and frequent engagement with stakeholders and key decision makers being examples of critical must-have career capitals which make up the other half of the essential portfolio of capitals.

- The career capital components which are relevant specifically at the executive level encompass adaptability, responsiveness and a high level of emotional maturity and intelligence, which are mainly nice-to-have differentiating capitals. One of the key career capital components that distinguish Executives from Senior Managers is the Executive's ability, throughout their career, to make well-timed career choices and moves which enable them to be exposed to and exploit opportunities to succeed and grow within their industry and career. This informs the choices an Executive makes regarding the roles and projects they take on
- The career capital components results, gathered from the Senior Manager sample, highlight the fact that the portfolio of capitals relevant at Senior Manager level consist largely of must-have capitals. These critical capitals include perseverance and drive, a solid work ethic, determination and strong interpersonal skills.
- The key take-aways with respect to methods used in career capital, specifically for Executives is that ongoing self-improvement and self-enlightenment features very strongly in the methods they use to acquire career capital
- One of the key methods used by Executives in the accrual of career capital that distinguishes them from Senior Managers is that they have strong openness to change. This method specifically represents a willingness to adopt new and more efficient ways of working.
- Ongoing self-improvement and networking and visibility at all levels are also popular methods of career capital accrual at Senior Manager level

With respect to marginal benefit to knowledge workers at both Executive and Senior Manager levels, the three most important career capital components were found to be: understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship; the ability to adapt and align your behaviour, approach or outlook to the situation at hand; and good relational skills- intrapersonal and interpersonal.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to highlight the key findings of this study, specifically around identifying the career capital components that are relevant at Senior Manager and Executive levels; identifying the most effective methods used in their accrual and determining which career capital components add the most marginal value with regards to the career progression of Senior Managers and Executives. This chapter further aims to bring together various insights from seminal work on the subject of career capital and its components, as well as the findings of this study, with the intent of creating a new body of knowledge to add to the existing. Based on the outcomes of the aforementioned aims and resulting actions, the chapter closes off by providing recommendations to business, aspirant career capitalists and academics.

7.2 SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLE FINDINGS

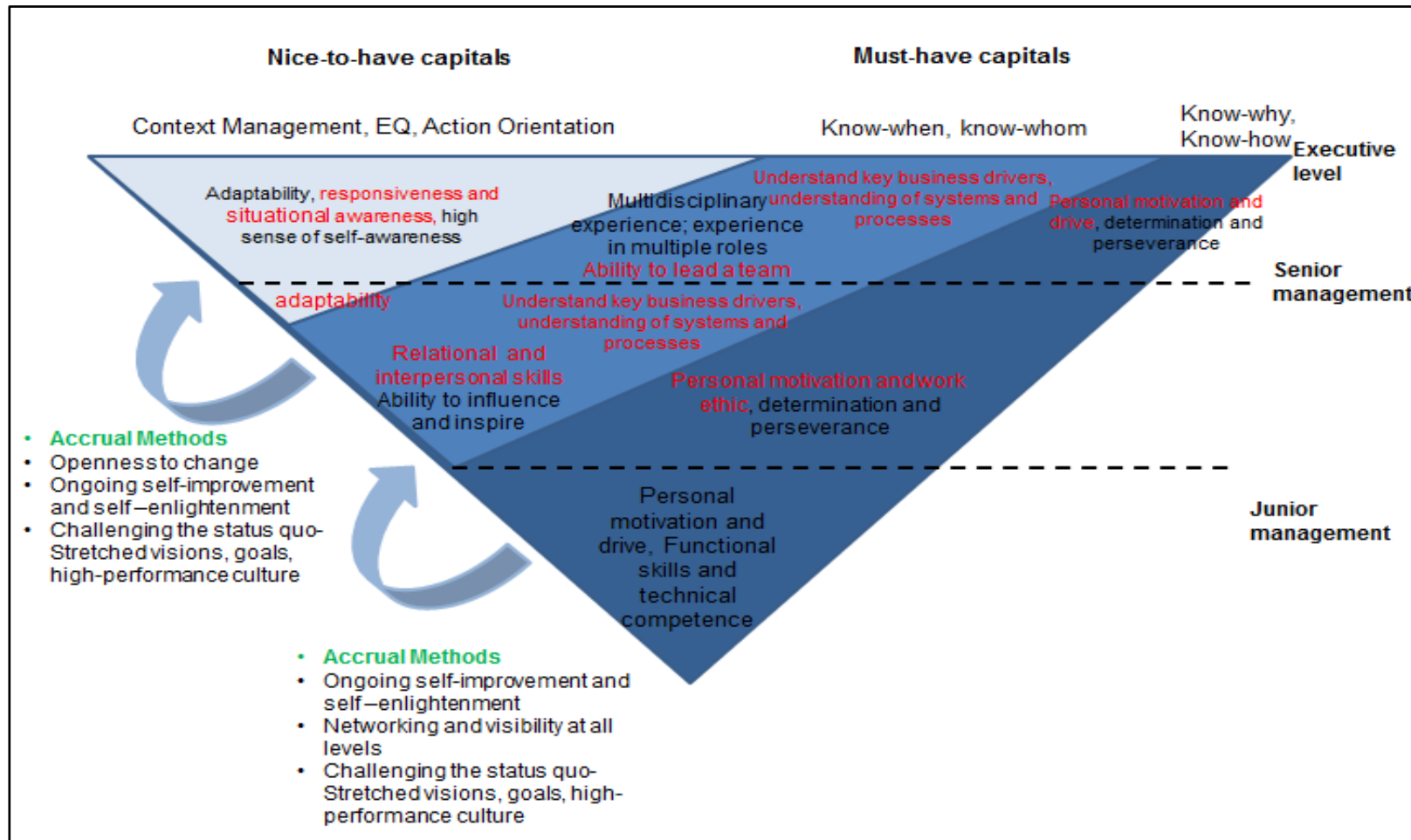
Figure 2 below, presents the Career Capital vs Career Pipeline model which incorporates the findings for the three research questions described in Chapter 3.

7.2.1 DESCRIPTION OF MODEL

The model is presented in the form of an upside down pyramid, separated horizontally into three organisational levels: Junior Management, Senior Management and Executive level. The pyramid is further separated into three diagonal zones of three shades of blue, with each zone representing a combination of career capital components. The dark blue diagonal represents the career capital components which fall under the know-why and know-how elements of career capital as defined in Chapter 5 of this document. The lighter blue diagonal in the centre of the pyramid represents the career capital components which fall under the know-when and know-whom elements of career capital. The lightest blue represents nice-to-have capitals which fall under the context management, EQ and action orientation. It must be noted that the width of each diagonal area is proportional to the representation of its components at the various organisational levels. The career capital components highlighted in red, are those that were identified as key enablers of career advancement.



FIGURE 2 : CAREER CAPITAL VS CAREER PIPELINE – THE CCCP MODEL



7.2.2 KEY FINDINGS FOR SENIOR MANAGERS

The study found that at Senior Manager level, the most important career capital components, which enabled Senior Managers to be effective in their roles, were personal motivation and having a solid work ethic, strong interpersonal skills, determination and perseverance and lastly adaptability. These results are illustrated in the CCCP model above. The results from the study also indicated that, the most effective means of acquiring the aforementioned career capital components employed by Senior Managers were on-going self-improvement and self-enlightenment, networking and visibility at all levels and challenging the status quo through stretched visions and goals. The top two career capital components the Senior Managers believed were instrumental in their career advancement were good relational and interpersonal skills and understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationship. These were highlighted in red in model.

7.2.3 KEY FINDINGS FOR EXECUTIVES

The study found that at Executive level, the most important career capital components, that enabled Executives to be effective in their roles were adaptability, responsiveness and situational awareness, possessing a high sense of self-awareness, multidisciplinary experience, personal motivation and drive and determination and perseverance. The study also found that the most effective means of acquiring the aforementioned career capital components employed by Executives were openness to change, on-going self-improvement and self-enlightenment, and challenging the status quo through stretched visions and goals. These results are illustrated in the CCCP model above. The top two career capital components the Executives believed were instrumental in their career advancement were, understanding of key business drivers and their interrelationships, responsiveness and situational awareness, personal motivation and solid work ethic and the ability to lead a team. The last three components were tied for second place as per the frequency of participant responses. The aforementioned components are highlighted in red at the Executive organisational level in the CCCP model.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUSINESS

Zikic (2015) highlighted the fact that the creation of sustained competitive advantage by organisations has become a key business driver of late. Key enabling factors of this sustained competitive advantage are the skills, competencies and overall career capital, of an organisation's knowledge workers, as they contribute to the organisation's core competencies. Through their knowing-how, knowing-why and nice-to-have career capital, knowledge workers are able to introduce new, more efficient and innovative ways to address organisational constraints and drive the high performance within the organisation (Fleisher, Svetlana, Khapova & Jansen, 2014). It is therefore in the organisation's interest to invest in developing its employees' career capital and create an environment that enables the accrual of career capital. Human Resource practitioners can use the CCCP model to design structured personnel development interventions to address the highlighted need of investment in employee development and the creation of the said environment. In doing so, this action will also serve the purpose of attracting and retaining top talent. This is as a result of the modern view of the traditional career by knowledge workers, whose mobility is generally driven by their need to grow and be developed (Rietman & Schmeer, 2008).

The following is also recommended:

- Business needs to develop tailored development programs at Senior Manager and Executive levels which specifically target the accrual of the relevant career capital components identified in this study.
- Business needs to ensure that it has strong mentorship and coaching programmes within its various organisations. This will assist in the transfer of both tacit and explicit knowledge, and create opportunities for aspirant career capitalists to network with key decision makers, one of the methods identified as effective in the accrual of career capital.
- For middle management upwards, businesses should consider setting a maximum duration to be spent in one position after which employees are rotated to another position within the organisation. This will be done with the aim of building the multidisciplinary experience and the understanding of key business drivers and their interrelatedness, both of which were identified as key career capital components for effectiveness by the top management team.

- Key decision makers at all management levels should adopt a longer term view on business sustainability and the requirements thereof. This longer term view should inform resource allocation, specifically staffing, training and development budgets and key performance indicators. Inputs from the CCCP model can be used in staffing, training and development and key performance indicators.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ASPIRANT CAREER CAPITALIST

Key enablers of career advancement are the skills, traits and competencies, collectively termed career capital, possessed by employees (Harris, Pattie & McMahan, 2014). It is therefore critical for all knowledge workers to assess the amount of relevant career capital they possess using the baseline provided by this model and actively pursue opportunities to further grow their career capital and address any gaps identified during their introspection. The following suggestions are recommended:

- Aspirant career capitalists need to understand that they are the drivers of their own career development and progression, and therefore they need to play an active role in acquiring the skills and competencies that will enable them to be competent and competitive in their current and future roles. The CCCP model provides a guideline regarding which specific skills have been identified as relevant and essential competence at specific organisational career pipeline levels.
- Aspirant career capitalists should be constantly improving their skills and competencies by staying abreast of the latest developments within their industry. This can be achieved through reading, attending seminars, technical exchanges and various knowledge sharing platforms internal to the organisation. This is illustrated in the CCCP model for both Senior Manager and Executive levels, as career capital accrual methods.
- Aspirant career capitalists should be constantly seeking opportunities where they can add value to the organisation, by doing things differently and developing innovative solutions to existing and new organisational constraints
- Openness to change is one of the most effective career capital accrual methods as illustrated in the CCCP model at the transition from Senior Manager to Executive. Aspirant career capitalists need to embrace this and volunteer to become change agents whenever the opportunity arises.

7.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Given the growing popularity of the subject of career capital, fuelled by the ever increasing demand from knowledge workers and organisations alike, to understand its most effective components at various organisational levels and the methods used to acquire it, there is still a need to further explore some fundamental aspects around this subject. It is recommended that the following areas be considered for future study;

- The influence of gender on the composition of a knowledge workers portfolio of career capital and the effectiveness of methods used in its accrual. Society and organisations have of late become gender-conscious, which is in line with the observed change in the demographic of the modern workforce. In understanding the impact of gender on career capital, organisations and employees can align their development efforts to optimise the accrual thereof.
- The career capital components relevant at manage Enterprise/CEO level and methods used in their accrual. This study hasn't been done before and would complete the body of knowledge around the relationship between career capital and the traditional career pipeline.
- The relationship between career capital accrual and remuneration.
- The effectiveness of leadership development programs in enabling the accrual of career capital by knowledge workers. Organisations spend a sizeable portion of their employee related costs on employee development. This is done with the aim of improving the overall skills level of employees and thereby increasing the overall core competence of the organisation. In measuring the effectiveness of leadership development programs with respect to enabling the building of career capital, organisations can streamline their funding to the initiatives that yield tangible returns.

7.6 STUDY LIMITATIONS

The following study limitations were observed:

- The current study was qualitative in nature and as with most qualitative studies, their subjective nature based on the perceptions and interpretation of the researcher, introduces numerous potential biases (Creswell, 2013). These include interviewer/response bias and social desirability bias.
- Purposive sampling, a non-probabilistic sampling technique, was used. This inherently introduces bias as the sample is selected based on the subjective views of the researcher (Yin, 2011).
- Although topical, the subject of career capital and its components has not been extensively researched with very few empirical studies having been carried out since the seminal work of Bourdieu (1986).
- The study was carried out in a single South African manufacturing entity which may not fully represent the entire South African manufacturing industry. There was potential that the responses were influenced by the organisational culture of the specific entity wherein the research was carried out.

7.7 CONCLUSION

This research study has achieved the research objectives as outlined in Chapter 1 of this document. The career capital components that are relevant at Executive level and Senior Manager level, as well as the most effective methods used in their accrual were identified. The study further identified the top career capital components that were instrumental in the career advancement of both Senior Managers and Executives. The study also supported and expanded on previous literature around the subject of career capital, its components, and the methods of accrual the applicability thereof at various organisational contexts. It is hoped this research contributes to the growing literature on how best to capitalise on the investments one makes into ones career.

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APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANT RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Research Consent Form (Participant)

Career Capital is defined as a portfolio of skills and competencies, which enable a knowledge worker to effectively carry out his/her workplace duties and to progress in their career.

The purpose of the research to be carried out is to identify the components of career capital that are relevant at the Senior Management and Executive levels. The research also aims to identify the methods used in the accrual of the aforementioned career capital components throughout the senior manager or executive's career.

The contents of the interviews may appear in an MBA thesis. The participant's name and job title may appear in an appendix to the MBA thesis, however, there will be no direct link to the participant's name and comments stated. All data will be kept confidential and will only be presented in aggregated form. Participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the interview at any time

If you have any concerns, please contact me or my supervisor. Our details are provided below:

	Researcher	Research Supervisor
Name	Nkululeko Mzila	Professor Margie Sutherland
Telephone	0832734617	011 771 4000
Email	nkululekomzila@gmail.com	sutherlandm@gibs.co.za

Name of Participant:

Title:

Signature:

Signature of Researcher:

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

At the beginning of the Interview:

- The interviewer will introduce himself to the participant and thank them for making time available for the interview
- The interviewer will request to record the interview to allow for effective interviewer-participant engagement
- The interviewer will highlight the confidentiality of the data, the fact that the results from the interviews will be presented in aggregated format and confirm having received permission from group HR Vice President to carry out the interviews.
- The interviewer will produce a consent form to be signed by each participant
- The interviewer provides the research title
 - I am currently carrying out research titled career capital components and their accrual, a senior management and executive perspective.
- The interviewer will introduce the concept of career capital
 - The concept of career capital has been around for some time. Simply put, career capital revolves around career-specific skills, competencies and capabilities acquired throughout an individual's career that enable an employee's career progression and effectiveness in their roles.

Interview Questions

Question 1

- Please provide me with an overview of your career thus far, outlining positions held and their general scope, duration in the said positions and key career milestones

- i. The interviewer will propose using a timeline to better illustrate the aforementioned career trajectory.

Question 2

- I would like to suggest that if we look at your career trajectory, it has been distinctively different to that of the ordinary employee with similar base qualifications and years of service as you. What I would like to understand are the specific causes of or reasons around these differences using the questions which follow:
 - i. Was there specific knowledge, either explicit, tacit or both that you acquired, which you feel was fundamental in enabling your career progression?
 - ii. Were there specific skills and competencies that you acquire over the years, which you feel also enabled your rise through the organisation?
 - iii. With regards to networks and contacts, both within the work environment and external, where there any which played a role in your career progression and the reaching of key career milestones?
 - iv. Describe your outlook and attitude towards your job through the different stages of your career and what impact do you think they had on your career progression?

Question 3

- How would you say the components of knowledge, skills, outlook and attitudes you mentioned previously, have changed over time at the different levels within your career trajectory?

So we've covered "the What", namely identifying these skills, traits and competencies, which have propelled you through your career. People like me, aspiring business leaders or future captains of industry (hopefully), are always interested in also understanding "the How". How individuals like you have managed to acquire/develop specific skills, competencies and capabilities that allowed them to have successful careers.

Question 4

- Can you explain to us how you acquired the specific knowledge components, both tacit and explicit, of your career capital throughout your career?
 - i. Interviewer may use the timeline developed at the beginning of the interview if required, to prompt the participant to sufficient information
- With regards to the practical skills and management competencies you've acquired over time, what did you find were the most effective methods, which you used to acquire them?
- Relevant networks and contacts, were these readily accessible in your organisation throughout your career at its various levels? Or did you have to actively pursue these on your own? How did you go about acquiring them?
 - i. The interviewer will ask for further explanation of the how if insufficient detail is provided.

Question 5

- What were the top three career capital components that you feel you were exceptionally competent at which set you apart from your peers?

Interviewer will hand the participant a page with the top 20 career capital components and top 20 methods of career capital accrual(Sutherland et al., 2015).

- Interviewer will request that the participant selects a maximum of 10 career capital components and 10 methods of career capital component accrual which best describes their components and methods used in their accrual.
- The participant will also be allowed to indicate if there are any other components or methods of accrual he/she would like to add

Question 6

- Would you have any advice for employees who are lower in the organisational structure with regards to their development of career capital and the methods of accrual?

- **Closing off**

- Interviewer explains the decoding process to follow and communicates that he will submit the final thesis report to Sasol and GIBS reassuring them no comment will be attributed to them in the thesis.
- Interviewer thanks the participant.

APPENDIX 3: CONSISTENCY MATRIX

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	LITERATURE REVIEW	DATA COLLECTION METHOD-INDEPTH INTERVIEW	ANALYSIS
<p>Research Question 1: What are the career capital components at senior management and executive level in the manufacturing sector?</p>	Section 2.3.1: Career Capital components	Question 2: Looking at your career trajectory, what would you say are the skills, competencies and abilities which enabled you to achieve this career success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Content analysis technique to be used (Koekemoer, 2014) -Coding frame developed -Career capital components identified in (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010b) used
<p>Research Question 2: What are the methods of career capital accrual by senior management and executives within the manufacturing sector?</p>	Section 2.3.2: Career Capital Accrual	Question 4: How would you say you managed to develop the required skills and competencies, which you mention in the previous question?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Content analysis technique used (Koekemoer, 2014) -Coding frame developed -Career capital components accrual methods identified in (Lamb & Sutherland, 2010b) used
<p>Research Question 3: What are the top three career capital components that you feel set you apart from your peers and</p>	Section 2.3.1: Career Capital components	Question 5: Where there any specific career capital components which totally set you apart from your peers and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Content analysis technique used (Koekemoer, 2014) -Coding frame developed -Career capital components identified in (Lamb &



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enabled your career progression?		allowed you to progress faster than them?	Sutherland, 2010b) used
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