Open Research Online

**The Open University's repository of research publications
and other research outputs**

Mapping organizational members' sense of fit

Conference or Workshop Item

oro.open.ac.uk

Mapping Organizational Members' Sense of Fit

Jon Billsberry, The Open University[1]
Philip Marsh, The Open University
John Moss-Jones, The Open University[2]

Abstract

Despite its importance in the organizational behavior literature, person–organization (P–O) fit remains an elusive construct. One reason for this is the lack of research about organizational members' own sense of their P–O fit. In this paper we report an empirical study that explored organizational members' own sense of fit using storytelling and causal mapping techniques. The results suggest that organizational members categorize their perceptions of their fit into five discrete domains (job, people, employment, values, and extrawork) comprising thirteen subdomains: nature of work, profession or vocation, skills and knowledge, emotions, relationships with colleagues, relationship with line manager, physical environment, conditions of employment, opportunities for growth and development, organizational values, mission, family and personal life. Reviews of respondents' causal maps and interview transcripts gave some insight into the consequences of organizational members' perceptions of fit and provided further insights into the nature of fit. These insights included the fragility of fit, how the degree of seniority changed the emphasis in organizational members' fit, and the role and nature of trigger events that change people's sense of fit from good fit to misfit.

A considerable amount of research and theory has examined the determinants of people's behaviour (e.g. Bowers, 1973; Chatman, 1989, 1991; Mischel 1968; Pervin, 1978). After years of debate there is general agreement that individual characteristics, aspects of the situation, and, crucially, the interaction of person and situational variables combine to explain behaviour (Krahé, 1992). In the domain of work, the power of interactions to shape behaviour has been shown in many ways. Holland's work, for example, has demonstrated that people choose vocations based on the fit of their personality to their perceptions of the profession (Holland, 1985). Chatman's work demonstrated that new recruits become socialized to their new employer based on the congruence of individual and organizational values. And Caldwell and O'Reilly (1990) have shown that job performance and satisfaction are strongly related to the congruence

of people to the required job competencies.

In her integrative review of the person–organization fit literature, Kristof (1996) identified several different forms of interaction between people and their work environments. In addition to the focus of her study on person–organization fit, she noted the research that has explored person–vocation (P–V) fit, person–group (P–G) fit, and person–job (P–J) fit. These four different types of person–work environment fit have been supplemented more recently by Van Vianen's (2000) exploration of person–people (P–P) fit. In all of these domains, researchers have found person–environment interactions influencing some form of behaviour at work. However, what we do not know is how all these 'fits' fit together (Judge & Ferris, 1992; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 1997, 2000). Given the interdependency of the various aspects of the work environment – e.g. the design of jobs is a reflection of organisational culture – several important questions are raised: Are these different types of fit aspects of the same overall sense of fit? Or, are they separate forms of fit that are independent of each other?

Moreover, regardless of whether or not these forms of fit are separate or not, we do not know whether our list of 'fits' is complete. This situation has arisen because of the way researchers have explored the domain. So far, researchers have considered fit from three angles. First, fears of anthropomorphism led some researchers to conceptualize fit between people and organizations according to the language and currency of organizations. For example, the most commonly used tool to capture P–O fit, the Organizational Culture Profile (O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991), was developed following a review of the organizational culture literature. Those values that also had relevance to individuals were retained to form the instrument. Second, some researchers have explored a narrow segment of fit in accordance with their interests. Turban and Keon (1993), for example, were interested in the congruence between individual's motivational preferences and organizational structures. The third way that researchers have approached the study of fit was to explore homogeneity between individuals using extant individual-level constructs. Schneider, Smith, Taylor and Fleenor (1998), for example, consider the congruence of personalities in organizations.

Studies in all of these domains have contributed to our understanding of fit. However, it is our contention that if we are to bring clarity to the literature in terms of its definition and boundaries, we need to invest some time understanding the factors influencing people's sense of fit. How do they define fit? How do they separate the different types of fit, if they do? The answers to questions such as these should resolve many of our uncertainties with the construct and thereby make it less elusive.

The purpose of the current study is to explore organizational member's perceptions of fit at work. In particular, it looks at whether our current list of person–work environment fit domains is complete by constructing a taxonomy of people's fit at work. In addition, we hope to gain some insight into the relationship between different types of fit at work, hopefully including some insight into whether or not fit is a generalised construct. We start by reviewing the extant knowledge concerning individuals' sense of fit before moving on to describe a suitable methodology for capturing organizational members' sense of fit. In a results section, we present a composite map of organizational members' sense of fit. This map captures the commonly mentioned factors influencing the perceptions of 63 employees of a British university. Also in this section, we discuss some of the main themes and insights that the maps and in-depth interviews gave us about organizational members' sense of fit.

Factors influencing individuals' sense of fit

Fit scholars have offered a range of factors that might influence people's sense of fit. Kristof (1996) suggests that people require organizations to supply financial, physical and psychological resources and task-related and interpersonal opportunities. These dimensions stem from other literatures, such as those on motivation, job satisfaction and psychological contracts. However, there are an enormous number of factors that might influence fit given the diversity in people. As we do not have any form of map of these factors, researchers cannot yet assess the importance or universality of factors that might be expected to influence fit. Hence, an exploratory design, free from all external prompts, is required to survey the domain.

    A similar argument has been made by Bretz, Rynes & Gerhart (1993), who were the first fit researchers to advocate the use of non-directive research methods to investigate fit. They noted that the domain of fit was largely uncharted and the use of researcher-generated scales and similar methods risks slanting responses. Bretz et al. (1993) asked respondents to articulate their own conceptualization of fit, specifically requesting that they identify good- and poor-fitting candidates and critical incidents that produced these impressions through the medium of a structured interview. Their method forced respondents to describe the abstract construct of fit in explicit terms and in terms relevant to their own sense of fit. This type of study is powerful insofar as people are asked about their perceptions of fit, researchers' intervention is limited, and the focus is directly on the factors influencing perceptions of fit (Kristof-Brown, 1997). However, there is a difficulty with this approach. By mediating the assessment of fit through a third party, there is an assumption that what someone identifies in others is the same as that which is found within them. The use of a third party in this manner might not always be appropriate.

    A similar issue has been addressed in the personality literature. In a study by Passini and Norman (1966) students were asked to rate the personality of other students to whom they were unacquainted. They were asked to rate the personality of these strangers by imagining what they were like. Factor analysis of the responses yielded a near identical structure to studies that had asked people to focus on people they know. This finding raised the question of whether this personality structure resides in the personality structure or in the mind of the observer. Does the finding tell us more about cognitive processes than personality? The major concern is that people may apply an uncritical set of assumptions and relationships when they assess someone's personality (Schneider, 1973). Given this fear about the interpretation of the behaviors of others, in an initial exploration of organizational members' sense of fit it may be prudent to use methods that focus on the respondent's own sense of fit, rather than the observations of a third party.

    The P–O fit literature has not yet directly discussed how conscious people are of their level of fit. However, it has been argued that people's sense of fit is held at accessible, sub-threshold levels of consciousness (Wachtel, 1987). If peoples' sense of fit is held in their consciousness, it would imply that they were thinking of little else, which is clearly not the case, except, maybe, for people experiencing a strong misfit. If, on the other hand, people hold their sense of fit at an unconscious level, it could not be captured by the methods currently employed by researchers.

    In summary, a method will be able to capture organizational members' sense of fit if it exhibits all of the following characteristics:
1.   It allows respondents to articulate their own conceptualizations of fit (i.e. they should

not lead the respondent other than to describe factors within the P–O fit domain).

2.   It focuses the attention of respondents on their own sense of fit, rather than a perception of the fit of others.

3.   It has the power to explore sub-threshold domains without too much conscious filtering or censoring.

Researchers (e.g. Eden & Ackermann, 1998; Laukannen, 1994; Weick & Bougon, 1986) interested in intangible phenomena have developed research techniques, such as cognitive and causal mapping, that allow respondents to surface previously tacitly held thought processes in an explicit manner. We believe that methods such as these will be important when exploring organizational members' own sense of fit.

Cognitive mapping

Fiol and Huff (1992) suggest that people make sense of their experiences by developing map like structures within their own mind. A technique that can reveal these mental maps is cognitive mapping. A cognitive map is a representation of someone's knowledge and experience produced in a visual form; usually on paper or on a computer screen. There are different types of cognitive map, each with its own purpose (see Huff, 1990). Our interest in this paper is to reveal how people understand the term 'fit' and the various influences upon it. Hence, we require a technique that shows dimensions and cognitive taxonomies. Hodgkinson and Johnson (1987) used a form of taxonomic mapping to facilitate the description of the competitive environment by senior managers in the grocery industry. Similar taxonomic mapping was performed among US retailers by Porac, Thomas and Emme (1987) and in the Scottish knitwear industry by Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller (1989).

Causal mapping is a technique that elaborates cognitive mapping by showing causal links between the various dimensions that are surfaced. Weick and Bougon (1986) describe a causal map as "a form of cognitive map that incorporates concepts tied together by causality relations" (p. 106). A causal map is a graphic representation which consists of nodes and arrows linking them (Laukannen, 1994). The nodes that the individual describes are the individual's salient constructs and the arrows show the relationships between the constructs. Causal mapping has been shown to be powerful in revealing sub-threshold factors (e.g. Langfield-Smith, 1992). It works through the process of spreading activation (Daniels, De Chernatony & Johnson, 1995). Respondents are asked to reflect on the factors that influence their fit. In doing so, and as items emerge, they jog their memories and surface events, stories, and feelings that they would have been previously unable to recall. During the mapping, they are pressed to explain these factors and in that process they reveal to themselves some aspects of their fit that up to this point were held at the sub-threshold level.

The process relies on the individual being able to think of at least one construct that is relevant to the issue being mapped. The person puts the construct on the map and links it to the issue. As the person thinks about this relationship, causes and constructs can come to mind. These are recorded on the map and these in turn trigger further thoughts (Ambrosini & Bowman, 2001). The process is analogous to some well-described psychological processes. One example of which is a violation of a psychological contract. When one incident causes a psychological contract to be violated in a way that is particularly salient, it triggers the individual to think of lots of other issues that had, up until then, been resident in the unconscious. Imagine that a

person's boss reneges on a promise to recommend him or her for promotion. This upsets the individual, who then finds him or herself thinking about all the other smaller things that annoy him or her about the organization; the way a colleague was treated, the location of his or her desk, two years ago the decision that he or she couldn't take vacation on preferred dates and so forth. Causal mapping attempts to replicate this process. This example demonstrates that the initial cue may create a positive or negative bias. For this reason, it is important that the researcher remains uninvolved, merely explaining the mapping process, so that the researcher's biases and preconceptions do not influence the mapper.

There are other reasons why causal mapping is appropriate for mapping someone's sense of fit. First, as our interest is in revealing the underlying factors that influence people's sense of fit, a causal structure is being uncovered. Second, when an individual produces a causal map they are encouraged to think about the factors influencing every construct that they mention. As they generate more and more items and develop a causal map of the many influences, the respondent is producing a richer picture of their own fit. Third, the task of producing a causal map is relatively simple and non-threatening. This creates a relaxed atmosphere whilst, at the same time, the respondents are being challenged by being asked to think about things that they had previously not thought about before. Fourth, Walsh (1988) has argued that causal maps are particularly useful when the researcher wants to reveal factors that are context dependent. In these situations, people store their understanding of a situation in the form of causal maps (Bougon, Weick & Binkhorst, 1977). By definition, person–environment (P–E) fit is context dependent, with people assessing, consciously and subconsciously, the stimuli they receive from the organizational environment. Fifth, Weick and Bougon (1986) say that one of the main advantages of using causal maps is that they "place concepts in relation to one another, [...] they impose structure on vague situations" (p. 107). As such, causal maps can help the respondent reveal things that were previously unknown, felt, believed, or valued subconsciously. They can also help the respondent, and therefore the researcher, order, analyze and make sense of something that is 'fuzzy' and complex. It is a technique that can help people reflect (Eden, Ackermann & Cropper, 1992). All of these factors are likely to be relevant in the exploration of organizational members' sense of fit.

Storytelling

There is one process missing in causal mapping that might limit its use in mapping fit. This missing process is help with the initial trigger; if an individual has no idea about what fitting with the organization might mean, the map cannot start. This is a problem that the research technique of storytelling might be able to help with. The research technique of storytelling has a very long tradition across many academic fields and it has many forms and manifestations. The variation of interest here is the elicitation of stories from individuals in face-to-face meetings to trigger the effective use of causal mapping.

Storytelling is an interesting technique to consider for the exploration of organizational members' fit because many people have an inventory of stories about work that they can recount (Gabriel, 2000). When these stories concern the storyteller's own experience in the organization, they are clearly relevant to the subject under investigation. Often, the stories capture pivotal moments in the relationship between the individual and the organization (Gabriel, 2000). Naturally, therefore, such stories have a lot of personal meaning for the storyteller (Boje &

Dennehy, 1993). Interestingly, the storyteller does not need to know about the construct of fit to impart stories that are relevant to it. They can be elicited by asking the respondent to recount stories about how they feel about their employer. As such, this initial triggering event is largely free from the influence of the researcher and is couched in the storyteller's own language.

Storytelling can do more than act as a trigger for spreading activation though. It is also a technique that can help people understand their circumstance. Fineman and Gabriel (1996) say, "Exchanging gossip, jokes, anecdotes is often central to the way we make sense of our experiences. This process goes on incessantly in workplace corridors, offices and coffee-rooms, and continues at home in accounts of 'what happened at work today'" (p. 1). These stories have meaning to the storyteller (Feldman, 1991). They are expressions of how people naturally code their experience (Fineman & Gabriel, 1996). When telling stories, people say more that they would normally; "stories permit researchers to examine perceptions that are often filtered, denied, or not in the subjects' consciousness during traditional interviews" (Hansen & Kahnweiler, 1993, p. 1394). Importantly for this study, the benefit of asking people to tell their stories may not lie in the accuracy of what is told, but in the feelings and emotions that are elicited. These can give the researcher some insight into factors that lie beneath the threshold of consciousness. Another reason why storytelling appears a natural ally to causal mapping is that when people tell their stories, they tend to describe a cause map of their experience (Brown & Dugruid, 1991).

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of a (mostly) randomized broad cross-section of staff (75 were approached and 84% agreed to participate, therefore $N = 63$) in the Open University. This university is situated in Milton Keynes, a new city about 50 miles north of London in Great Britain. It specializes in undergraduate and postgraduate courses that are delivered through supported distance learning. This means that it is unlike most other universities in that it only has a very few students (about 150 research students) on its campus. Instead, its students (the largest cohort of students in the UK) study at a distance and the face-to-face contact is conducted by associate faculty at facilities local to the students. It is the joint largest employer in the city (alongside the Council) and employs 3,500 people in a broad range of jobs.

The people included the some of the most senior people in the university (e.g. the Vice Chancellor and the University Secretary) through all levels and types of jobs. Only 19% of the interviewees occupied (or had occupied) academic jobs, which mirrored the overall percentage of academics as a percentage of the workforce. Names of interviewees were randomly selected from the university's internal telephone directory. An initial selection of fifty names was made. Of these, 9 people declined the offer to participate. To illustrate the range of posts, the interviewees included academics, department managers, editors, secretarial staff, computer programmers, warehouse staff, and gardeners. To the sample of forty-one people were added three members of senior staff (i.e. the Vice-Chancellor, a Pro-Vice Chancellor and the University Secretary) so that the highest level of employment was captured in the study. Once these forty-four people were interviewed, the researchers agreed that new ideas and insights were emerging in the interviews

and a further twenty-two people were randomly selected from the phone book to be interviewed. Of these, nineteen people agreed to be interviewed. At this point, the researchers agreed that few new insights were emerging and decided that enough data had been gathered. The interviewees were aged between 24 and 64 ($\bar{x}$ = 49.7, *sd* = 9.1).

Analysis of maps

The maps were analyzed using an adapted form of Eden's composite technique (Eden, 1989; Eden, Ackermann & Cropper, 1992; Eden, Jones & Sims, 1979, 1983). This method of combining individual maps involves asking the people who generated the maps to meet to agree upon a group or composite map. In the current study, such a group meeting was not possible for reasons of privacy. The respondents had been promised complete anonymity so that they would feel free to speak openly. Instead, three experienced organizational researchers constructed a composite map in the following way. First, each researcher individually studied the 63 maps and compiled a list of concepts. Second, the three researchers met to agree on the content of each map. When there was disagreement or uncertainty, the transcript was consulted. Third, the number of occasions each domain of fit appeared on someone's map was counted. Given the largely unconscious nature of fit perceptions (Wachtel, 1987), it was decided that any concept or domain that appeared on more than 20% of maps would be included on the composite map. Once the composite map was constructed, it was individually shown to the participants to assess its validity. The participants did not surface any new domains or disagree with the categories, although some said that some of the domains were not particularly relevant to them.

A taxonomy of fit

By using the causal mapping technique described earlier, we had expected people to produce maps that captured stories, episodes, triggers and so forth that were causal to their sense of fit. However, in the majority of cases (92%), the interviewees (completely unprompted) produced a 'domain map' that sectioned their sense of fit into some of the known types of fit. This categorization occurred even though most respondents stated that the notion of 'fit' was something that they had not previously thought much about before. Based on this finding, we found ourselves forced to conclude that whilst people are able to say whether or not they fit well (i.e. possess a general sense of fit), there are domains of fit that the interviewees regard as discrete. Although not every interviewee mentioned every domain and some people used slightly different words, five domains typically emerged as primary concepts linked directly to the central construct of 'fit'. These five domains are interviewee's perceptions of their fit with (1) the people they work with, (2) the requirements of the job, (3) organizational level matters, (4) the conditions of employment, and (5) extrawork. Whereas the first three of these categories are recognized by the literature as P–P, P–J and P–O fits, the last two have received relatively little attention in the fit literature, although they are central subjects in other literatures.

The causal mapping technique encouraged the interviewees to develop each of these domains and to surface the various factors influencing the domain. From the maps and the associated transcripts, these five domains were broken down into thirteen sub-domains. Within the people domain are interviewee's perceptions of their fit to their colleagues (or teammates) and their line manager. The job domain was influenced by their perceptions of the nature of the

work itself, their own skills and knowledge, emotions, and their fit to their vocation or profession. The organizational domain broke down into values and mission components. The employment domain includes people's perceptions of their fit to the physical environment, the conditions of employment, and the opportunities for growth and development. The final category of extrawork is about how people perceive the fit between their work and their family and personal lives.

Towards the end of the paper, we present a composite map showing how all the domains and subdomains relate to each other. As this is quite a complex diagram to interpret, we have presented the map domain by domain to make our discussion easier to follow.

Job domain

The domain that the highest percentage of interviewees mentioned first was the job domain. This was also the most commonly mentioned domain with approximately three-quarters of the interviewees including the domain on their maps. As mentioned earlier, the notion of P–J fit is not new to the person–work environment literature. Whilst there have been many studies of the domain in the P–J fit literature, there is disagreement over the definition of the 'J'. Holland's (1985) work focused on the fit between people's personalities and their choice of occupations. Caldwell and O'Reilly (1990) focused on the fit between job requirements and individual competencies. Edwards (1991) suggests that P–J fit be defined as the fit between the abilities of people and the demands of the job. Noting this variation in definition, Kristof (1996) advocates that P–J fit should be judged relative to the tasks that people perform. She argues that it is important to distinguish P–J fit from other types of work-related fit because P–J fit is conceptually distinct. Interviewees' separation of the job domain from other domains of fit in the current study supports this conceptual distinctiveness. Moreover, these interviewees were able to cluster together a range of different subdomains comprising the more general domain of P–J fit. The interviewees in the current study enlarged upon Kristof's task-driven definition of P–J fit by including their fit with the required skills and knowledge, which echoes Caldwell and O'Reilly's (1990) competency approach to P–J fit, how their 'experience' enabled them to fit the requirements of their employer, which, as will be discussed below, appears to be a form of emotion and behavior fit, and people's fit to their profession or vocation, as regularly occurring subdomains linked to the domain of the job.

One point that should be made here is that when the interviewees described their fit to their jobs, they slipped between supplementary and complementary forms of fit without any apparent concern or awkwardness. These two forms of fit were categorized by Muchinsky and Monahan (1987) and have represented separate approaches to the study of fit. Supplementary fit refers to fit based on similarity, whereas complementary fit refers to fit where one thing fits into another. For example, when talking about their fit on skills and knowledge, the interviewees would say things like "I have the skills that the University requires me to have to perform well", which demonstrates a complementary approach and then switch to supplementary language and say things like "I possess similar skills to my colleagues" without any apparent recognition (e.g. via breaks in flow, disjuncture, or re-evaluations of previous statements) that, theoretically, they were referring to two different types of fit. From this insight, we concluded that perceptions of fit comprise both complementary and supplementary elements, sometimes within the same domain or subdomain.
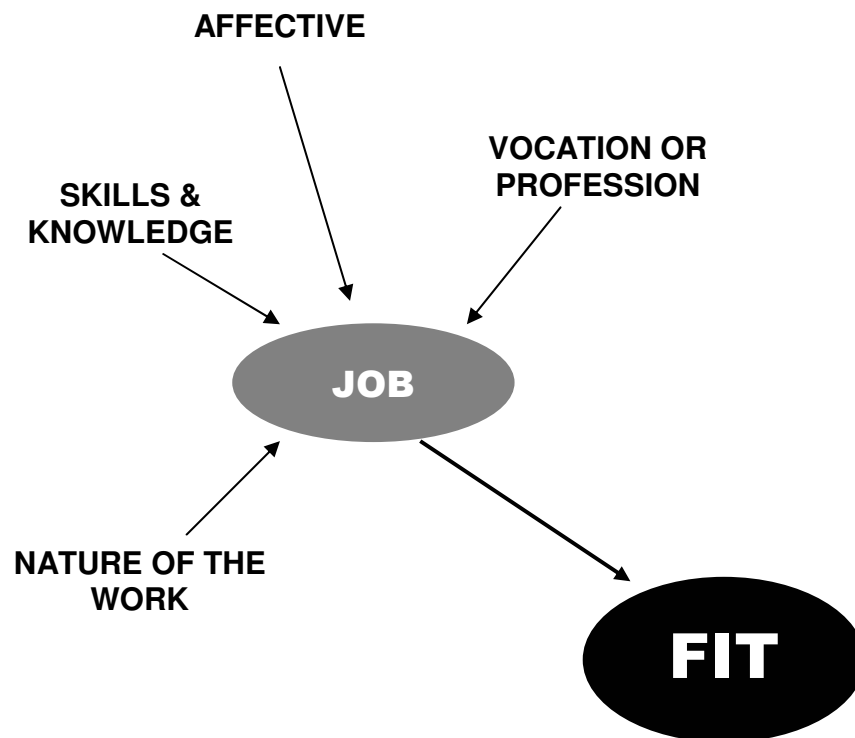
Figure 1   *A map of the job domain of fit*

Skills and knowledge fit.   The most commonly mentioned subdomain mentioned by interviewees on this part of the composite map is skills and knowledge fit, with 41% of interviewees including it on their maps. Moreover, this form of P–J fit was usually the first mentioned subdomain with over 80% of people who mentioned it and others, mentioning it first. The language used to capture this subdomain varied greatly. Amongst the terms often used were 'skills', 'knowledge', 'competence', 'ability', 'cognitive powers', 'qualified', 'conversant with', and 'expertise'. These terms were often prefaced with qualifiers to produce phrases like 'people skills', or 'finance knowledge', which results in a large and almost inexhaustible list of skills and knowledge that our interviewees said influenced their fit. What unites this great variety of expressions in this subdomain is that they all focus on the skills and knowledge the interviewees believe are important for them to have in order for them to perform the duties of their jobs.

Work fit.   The second most commonly mentioned subdomain in this part of the composite map is fit to the nature of the work. This includes fit to tasks, duties, and responsibilities. Work fit was mentioned by 36% of interviewees. Whereas in the job fit subdomain people referred to their own skills and knowledge, in this subdomain people talked about the characteristics of the job and the tasks they are required to perform. In particular, they stressed their fondness for the type of work that they are asked to perform; it is about their assessment of their satisfaction with work tasks and duties. Although the association with skills and knowledge fit is very strong – a common problem in this domain of fit (Kristof, 1996) – it refers to a different side of Caldwell and O'Reilly's (1990) competency alignment definition of P–J fit. Whereas skills and knowledge

fit aligns with the competency side of their fit equation, work fit aligns with the job requirements side of the same interaction. Interestingly, the interviewees teased out the two sides of the equation and expanded both from Caldwell and O'Reilly's (1990) original definition.

Affective fit.   14 of the 57 (24%) who produced interpretable cognitive maps included 'experience' as a separate subdomain linked to their jobs on their maps. Given that this appeared a new form of fit for the literature, when interviewees mentioned the term, the research interviewer probed into what was meant by the term. These in-depth questions revealed that 'experience' was a term used to capture emotional maturity, judgment, common-sense, savvy and a cluster of affective behaviors: "I know when to throw the toys out of the pram and when not to", "I've been here so long, that I know the sorts of things you should and shouldn't do to get things done", and "Dr. [name concealed] has got this deadening manner. Everything he says and does sounds so sensible and calm". These comments link this 'experience' subdomain to some of the environmental subdomains and, indeed, four of the interviewees made dotted links to the profession or vocation subdomain or to the culture subdomain. These cross-links highlight Kristof's (1996) concern that whilst jobs and organizational values are of separate interest to researchers, there is a circular relationship between the two: the way that jobs are designed reflects the organization's culture and the nature of the organization influences the type of jobs it contains (Schneider, 1987). In trying to interpret the interviewees' maps and comments in this subdomain, we found ourselves immersed in the circular discussion. We concluded that where this 'experience' subdomain is different to the other job-focused, vocation-focused, and organizational environment-focused domains is that it reflects the fit between the individuals' affect that has been shaped from past learning in work environments (which are not necessarily those that the individuals' currently work within) and the emotional responses deemed appropriate in the environment. Therefore, although our interviewees term this subdomain 'experience', it is probably more informatively termed 'affective'.

Vocation fit.   Although ties to people's vocation or profession (the two words are herein used interchangeably to indicate the family of jobs that people belong to) were frequently mentioned in interviewees and the stories they told, only three of the interviewees placed the words vocation or profession on their maps as a domain influencing their fit. In each case, it appeared as a subdomain within the job domain. These three people all worked as academics and it was the academic profession that they mentioned. For these three people, vocation fit was reported as a more powerful driver of their sense of fit than their fit to their current employer. They talked about the importance of academic freedom, of developing others, and the interchange of ideas. They talked little of their current employer and one person described it as a "necessary evil". The thirteen interviewees who mentioned their vocations but did not place it on their maps were from a cross-section of professions including academy, accountancy, warehouse management, cleaning, and library work. These people described how their professions had shaped them (such as the detail conscious accountant or the 'down-to-Earth' warehouse manager) and gave them a non-organization specific outlook on their relationship with their employer.

People domain

The second most commonly occurring domain on the interviewees' maps is their fit to the people that they encounter on a day-to-day basis at work; 72% of interviewees mentioned their colleagues or managers as an important factor influencing their sense of fit. People external to

the organization such as customers, suppliers, students or end users were strikingly absent from these people's explanations of the factors influencing their fit. Students were mentioned when academics spoke about the mission of the university, but then the language referred to the university's impact on society, rather than individual students. Perhaps the missing people subdomain of external people reflects a peculiarity of the particular university; perhaps it is a more widespread phenomenon. Whichever, further research is necessary to explore the omission from the taxonomy.

Interestingly, relationships with subordinates were not mentioned as a separate subdomain and were rarely mentioned in the stories. This omission might reflect the hierarchical structures commonplace in the organization, which creates its own language of power and relationships, but we gained the sense that when thinking about their own fit, these omissions indicated that these interviewees' fit was not influenced by their interactions with their subordinates. Some people mentioned that they had risen from the level that their subordinates were at. Others said that subordinates were to be managed or tolerated. There were very few references to people at lower levels of the organization being friends, workmates or colleagues. It appears to us that subordinates did not form part of these people's reference group and they did not influence their perceptions of their own fit.
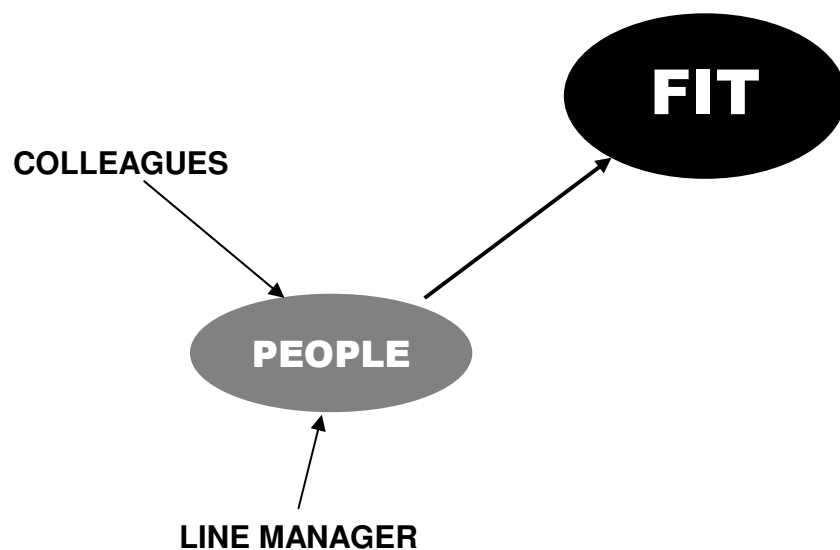

Figure 2   *A map of the people domain of fit*

Colleague fit. This subdomain was the only one that more than half of the interviewees mentioned as being crucial to their sense of fit. When talking about their fit to the job, the interviewees spoke with little passion or involvement. Instead the language suggested a mechanistic form of fit; "Do I have the skills the University requires me to have?" or "I've got the right sort of experience to do my job well". However, when the interviewees described how

their fit with their colleagues influenced them, their language became vivid and passionate. They recounted stories of being betrayed, of wild parties, of bonding, of joint achievement, of moments of shared humor, and of moments of support in times of trouble. It is not an objective assessment of fit to particular skills and abilities, but a subjective fit that embodies their sense of interacting with people on a day-to-day basis. Towards the end of the interview, we asked people how well they thought they fitted the organization. In almost every case, the tenor of their responses to colleague fit (if they mentioned this type of fit) predicted their overall sense of fit. From this, we concluded that colleague fit is an influential factor influencing these people's sense of fit.

Manager fit. Whilst colleague fit appeared to be the most influential factor influencing these people's sense of fit, the most intense was manager fit. This specific type of people fit was recorded as a separate domain on 39% of maps and was mentioned by the majority of people during their interviews. When manager fit was mentioned, the language became increasingly colorful and the interviewee became more animated. These people cared greatly about how their managers perceived their fit and the actions and behaviors of their managers towards them had a tremendous impact upon the interviewee's fit. Many stories were recounted of the impact that managers had on their fit. Importantly, a poor fit with a line manager was, by far, the most common reason cited for poor fit, as the following interview extract illustrates.

> *"Under my first boss, my fit was fine. I felt part of the place and was highly motivated. You could talk to him, if you had to. And he left you alone to get on with things. You ended up being self-motivated. But when this new bloke took over everything changed. He gives you the impression that he has no respect for you, that he's pre-judged you, that you are scum. I just get all the crap jobs. And he's always standing over you. I hate it here now and can't wait to get out. It's a different place with a different feel. For me, this is just a place of work now. I don't fit in at all. It's so sad; I used to love it here so much. It's amazing that one man's behavior can make such a big difference."*

Manager fit, therefore, seems to become an intensified form of fit when things turn sour. One way in which manager fit is different to other forms of fit is that it is the only one where another individual's perceptions of the organizational member's sense of fit matters to the organizational member. In all other forms of fit, the organizational member is only influenced by their own sense of fit. As a result, the line manager is singled out as the only person with special influence over organizational members' sense of fit.

In playing a central role in perceptions of poor fit, manager fit can act as a trigger. The previous example illustrated how a change of line manager can completely overturn people's sense of fit. Another five people in the sample expressed similar views on how a change of line manager altered their fit. The line manager, therefore, appears to be an important trigger in changes of fit. If one change in the work environment can so radically change someone's sense of fit, this suggests that perceptions of fit are fragile. We have become accustomed to thinking of fit as enduring and fundamental (e.g. Chatman, 1989; Schneider, 1987) and that it develops slowly over time as people become socialized to their work environment (Chatman, 1991; Kristof, 1996; O'Reilly et al, 1991). That years of socialization can be undone with one change in the environment makes us consider the fragility of fit, the complexity of people's fit perceptions, and the central role of the line manager in shaping fit.

Employment domain

Most empirical studies of fit, especially P–O and P–J fits, have been conducted on managerial (or graduate entry to managerial posts) samples. There have been relatively few studies on non-managerial samples. Hence, much of what we know about fit relates to managerial posts. The sample for the current study included people from all levels of the university and it included a wide range of jobs and professions. Widening the sample proved a useful decision as differences in perceptions of fit were observed at different levels of the organization. The most marked of these differences between levels occurred in the employment domain. This domain relates to the subdomains of the physical working environment, the conditions of work, and opportunities for growth and development. The first two of these subdomains were only mentioned by four people in managerial or professional jobs, whereas almost every interviewee in non-managerial, clerical or ancillary jobs included these subdomains on their maps. Moreover, in the interviews, non-managerial members of the sample tended to discuss these two subdomains at length suggesting that these subdomains have considerable influence on their sense of fit. Inclusions of the subdomain opportunities for growth and development on the interviewees' maps were more evenly spread across the sample.
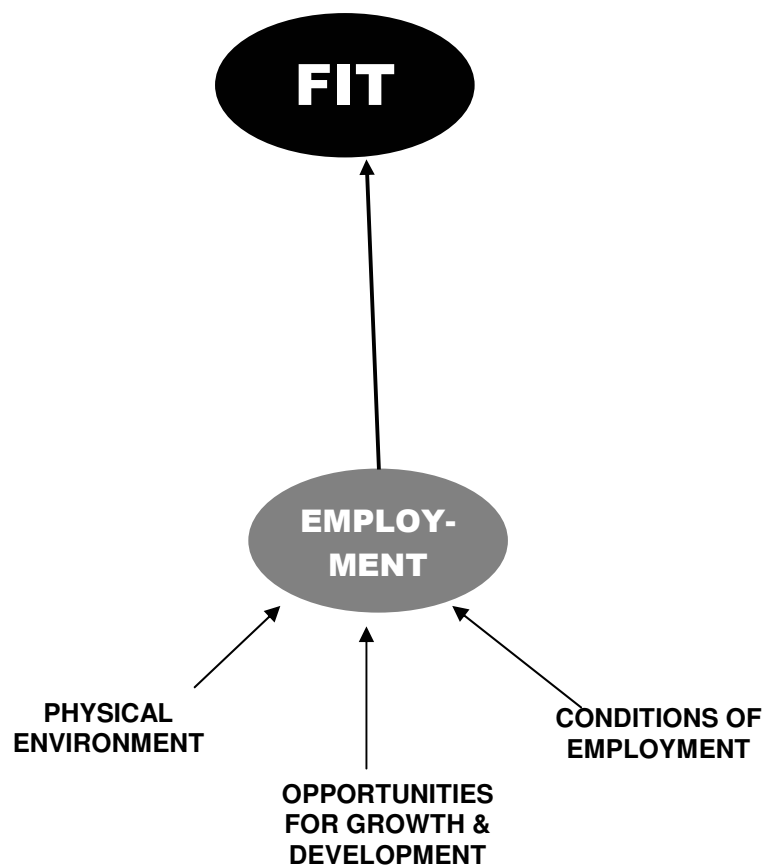

Figure 3   *A map of the employment domain of fit*

Physical environment fit.   Dividing the interviewees into two halves according to seniority (assessed by salary), produces a finding that only 21% of the more senior people included their physical work environment on their maps (often accompanied by positive words except for a few negative comments about moving to open plan work spaces which was occurring across the university at the time of the study), whereas 69% of the less senior people included the same subdomain. For these more junior people, the nature of the physical working environment was central to their sense of fit and usually in a negative way. For example,

> *"We didn't have a view out of a window; we looked out to a roof of another building. It was always dark and gloomy in the office, and it was very depressing. We were isolated from the rest of the faculty as well. Whereas before we'd been in the middle of the floor, we were stuck in this office, right in the corner and not many people came in. We used to have a radio on, not loud. I used to have it on my desk and I could barely hear it. But the new manager stopped that."*

This person also talked about experiencing very high temperatures during the summer months and her manager doing nothing to alleviate the problem. Eventually, with some colleagues, she was able to exert pressure higher up the organization and a cool water dispenser was supplied much to the chagrin of her manager. Indeed, in many stories the interconnection of line manager and working environment was strong, as the following extract from the same interviewee demonstrates.

> *"She had a bigger desk than anyone else, and she had to be by the door to see people coming in. It was like a power thing, and we weren't allowed to pick our own piece of work; she would have to pick it out for you. I used to fit well, say 8 out of 10. But now, after the office move and the new manager, probably about 2."*

Conditions of work fit.   In this subdomain, the interviewees clustered together factors linked to their terms and conditions of employment such as the hours, pay, pension, holidays, and location. Much of the time, the interviewees would make links to other subdomains, especially the extrawork subdomains and the culture subdomain, when describing this subdomain (i.e. their terms and conditions of employment would enable them to achieve fit elsewhere in the map), but because 23% of the sample included this subdomain on their maps, it has been retained as a separate subdomain.

Opportunities for growth and development fit.   The third subdomain in the employment portion of the map, opportunities for growth and development, was included on 21% of the maps and was mentioned by all types of respondents. This subdomain differed to many of the others in that it was almost exclusively mentioned by people who perceived their fit to be strong. These were people who appeared to be confident and ambitious and for whom their current job was a rung on a ladder. Whilst they were learning and developing in their roles, they could stay. But the impression that some four of them gave was that once they stopped developing in their roles, they would be looking to leave for more challenging roles.

14

Organization domain

This domain aligns with the P–O fit literature and the idea that people's sense of fit is greatly influenced by factors at an organizational level. Despite efforts to integrate and define the term P–O fit (e.g. Kristof, 1996), it is a literature that is dogged by definitional problems. Whereas the P–J fit literature tends towards a complementary definition of the construct, the P–O fit literature allows both complementary and supplementary forms of fit (Kristof, 1996; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). In addition, there is considerable debate in the P–O fit literature about the currency of fit: Values, goals, personality, preferences, impressions, and many other things have been advocated as a suitable currency with which to measure and capture P–O fit. Our interviewees exhibited similar disagreement with their perceptions of their interactions with the organization. Nevertheless, our analysis of the maps and the interviews suggests to us that two separate clusters of interaction capture our interviewees' perceptions of their fit to their employer. These two subdomains are values and mission. The following two definitions allow us to categorize the interviewees' comments. Values are defined as beliefs about how people should or ought to behave (Ravlin, 1995). Mission is defined as the overall purpose of the organization (Johnson & Scholes, 2002).
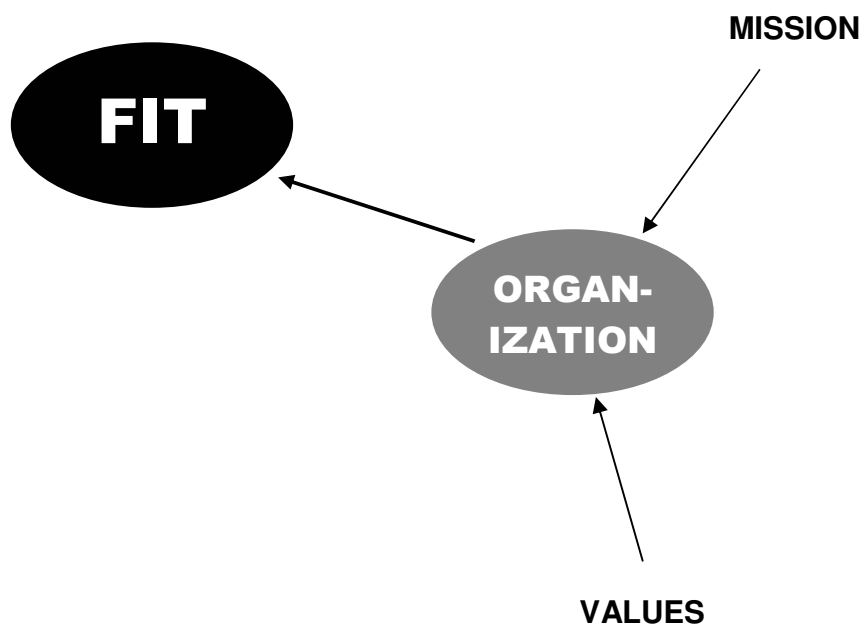

Figure 4   *A map of the organization domain of fit*

Values fit. 32% of the interviewees included values on their maps. As such, it was one of the more commonly mentioned subdomains. Given the centrality of values to the P–O fit literature (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996) and their conceptual nature (Schwartz, 1994; Stackman, Pinder & Connor, 2000), the interviewer probed into how people defined the term if they mentioned it by asking the interviewees if they could relate any stories that helped explain what they meant when they used the term. These stories revealed that the interviewees define

values as acceptable and unacceptable behaviors that relate to way that people (most notably themselves) are treated. In addition, some people described some positive behaviors that the university seeks to stimulate such as creativity, teamwork, open communication, and respect for others. This subdomain tended to polarize the interviewees to two extremes: those that feel positive and those that feel negative towards their employer. Such is the strength of the polarization that it qualitatively divides the people who mentioned values into 'fits' and 'misfits'.

By defining values in terms of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, the interviewees commonly linked this subdomain with other subdomains. In particular, their discussion of how the organization's values influenced their fit linked the subdomain to the job subdomains of emotion and the nature of work and other domains of people and employment. When reflecting on the nature of work and employment in the university, the interviewees interwove values into their descriptions. For example, one academic was frustrated that the university's values of openness (towards students) meant that he had to listen to all opinions in internal meetings regardless of how trivial or ill-informed they were; everyone had a right to have their say. However, the linkage between values and the nature of work subdomain and the employment domain were largely acknowledgements of the realities of organizational life. They did not appear to influence people's sense of fit very strongly. It was a different matter when the interviewee's interwove values with the subdomain of emotion and the people domain. When other people's behaviors contradicted an interviewee's sense of the organization's values, very strong feelings were revealed. For example, a middle manager caught up in a reorganization of a call centre reflected on the process of change thus,

> *"It's been a glaring example of management ineptitude, of mega proportions. How to alienate the workforce, destroy morale, and lose your vital skill base by the totally undisciplined use of consultants who come in and eat their way through like a forest fire with dress codes, clear desks, yuppie language. They are not allowed to have a glass of water on their desks, even though they are doing a lot of talking. People were told to clear their desks of family photographs. These people never met visitors; they're call centre workers deep in the bowels of the university. People hate it in the call centre now and people get out as soon as they can."*

This manager helped the workers in the call centre to organize protests. What made staff angry was the use of management styles that were alien to the university's values. Later in the interview, he explained how the call centre employee's inability to give students a good service, due to the poor redesign of their jobs and conditions of work, resulted in further frustration:

> *"They were trying to up the answering rate. So all calls were limited to seven minutes. When someone rang up and wanted details about a course, if it goes beyond seven minutes one of these characters with red braces comes round and goes [slash across the throat indicated] across the neck 'end'. "If they want more information, let them make another call." So quality has gone down."*

Later in the interview, the interviewee described how all of these events culminated in poor fit (in him and others around him), and that this led to continual protests, anger, departure, and difficulties recruiting staff for the department. This story is interesting because it illustrates how

challenges to people's perceptions of the organization's values (e.g. high quality, good support of students, open communications etc.) can led to strong emotional feelings (i.e. protests and loss of staff) and poor fit.

Mission fit. This subdomain has particular relevance to the university that acted as the site of the study as it is a university that was very publicly set-up by the socialist Wilson Government in the 1960s with a political mission to help people who had missed out on education. It was originally proposed as the 'University of the Air' and supported many of its courses with radio and television programs broadcast on the BBC. Hence, it has a strong public image and is well-known for its reforming mission of making education available to the masses. As a result, it has attracted and selected staff that share this mission and, therefore, was included on 24% of maps. Interestingly, inclusions of the subdomain on maps was not confined to senior staff or academics, as interviewees from all levels and types of jobs included the university's mission on their maps. However, there was a lot of anxiety related to people's descriptions of the university's mission. The interviews were conducted at a time when the Vice Chancellor's period of office was ending; a new person was being sought and there was increasing unease about the way the university was drifting away from its founding mission. There is no surprise, therefore, that mission fit appeared so prominently in the maps. Whether it would do so in an organization with a less prominent mission is a matter for further research.

Extrawork domain

24% of the interviewees mentioned the way that their fit was influenced by matters outside of work. Two subdomains were included on the interviewee's maps: family life and personal life. Most of the references to these subdomains referred to the way that the job or the organization gave them 'space' to pursue family or personal interests. Issues of hours of work, flexi-time, holidays, pay, and other rewards are commonly linked to this domain. As a result, this domain is closely associated with the conditions of work subdomain. This domain shares another trait with the employment domain in that the interviewees could be split by level in their references to family and personal life. Only two (7%) of the most senior interviewees mentioned that the issues in this domain were relevant to their fit, whereas, twelve (44%) of the more junior interviewees included it on their maps. This split does not mean that more senior (in terms of salary and status) people in this organization have less regard to their family and other interests (actually, the transcripts revealed that these people had very active extrawork lives), just that it does not appear to be an important factor influencing their sense of fit.

Family life fit. As the name suggests, this subdomain is concerned with how someone's sense of fit is influenced by their capacity to live as full a family life as could be reasonably expected. People accept that work means there are some constraints on family life and so they appear to seek a balance that is fair to both parties. In particular, the people who mentioned family life fit said that work should not impinge unduly upon their family lives. They liked flexi-time, compassionate leave, managers being sensitive to family problems and many other such 'family-friendly' policies. Generally speaking, almost everyone who mentioned issues to do with family viewed their fit positively (the university appears to have good family-related conditions of employment). There were no comments of poor fit resulting from problems linked with this subdomain.
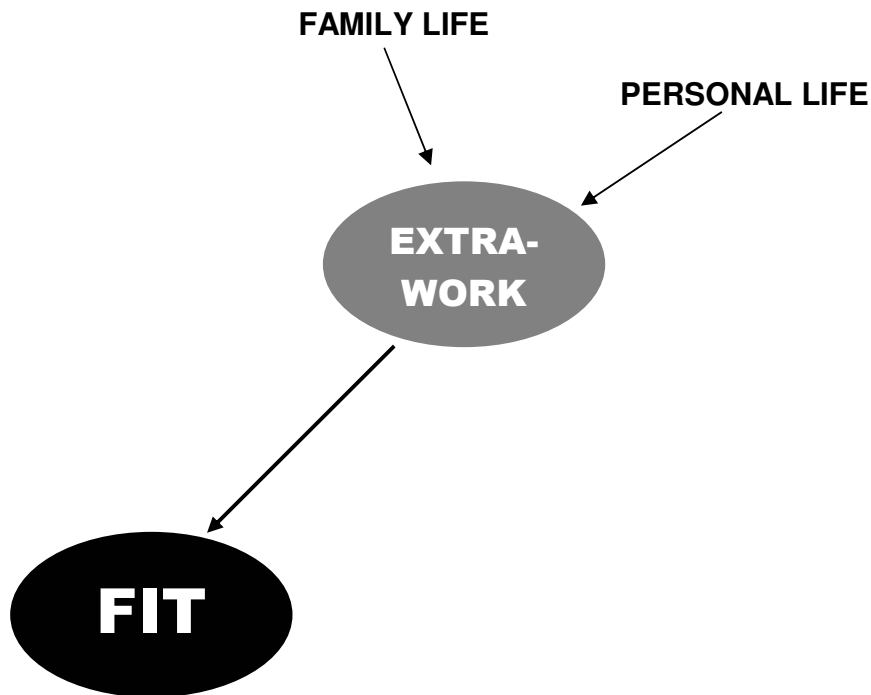
Figure 5   *A map of the extrawork domain of fit*

Personal life fit. This subdomain is very similar to the previous one with the obvious difference that rather than fit to family life, the interviewees were concerned with fit to their personal life. This included sports and recreational activities, hobbies, private consultancy work, voluntary and charity work, and spiritual interests. As with the subdomain, the interviewee's comments on this subdomain suggest a thankfulness that the organization allows them time and space to indulge these passions. No reports of poor fit were attributed to this subdomain.

A composite map

The five domains can be placed together on a composite map. It is displayed in Figure 6 below. It shows how these participants categorized their fit into the five domains and the thirteen subdomains. In addition, dotted lines have been included that show closely related domains and sub-domains. The number of interviewees who included each domain on their map is indicated in Table 1.

AFFECTIVE

FAMILY LIFE

PERSONAL LIFE

**VOCATION OR
PROFESSION**

**SKILLS &
KNOWLEDGE**

**EXTRA-
WORK**

JOB

MISSION

**NATURE OF THE
WORK**

FIT

COLLEAGUES

**ORGAN-
IZATION**

PEOPLE

LINE MANAGER

**EMPLOY-
MENT**

VALUES

**PHYSICAL
ENVIRONMENT**

**CONDITIONS OF
EMPLOYMENT**

**OPPORTUNITIES
FOR GROWTH &
DEVELOPMENT**
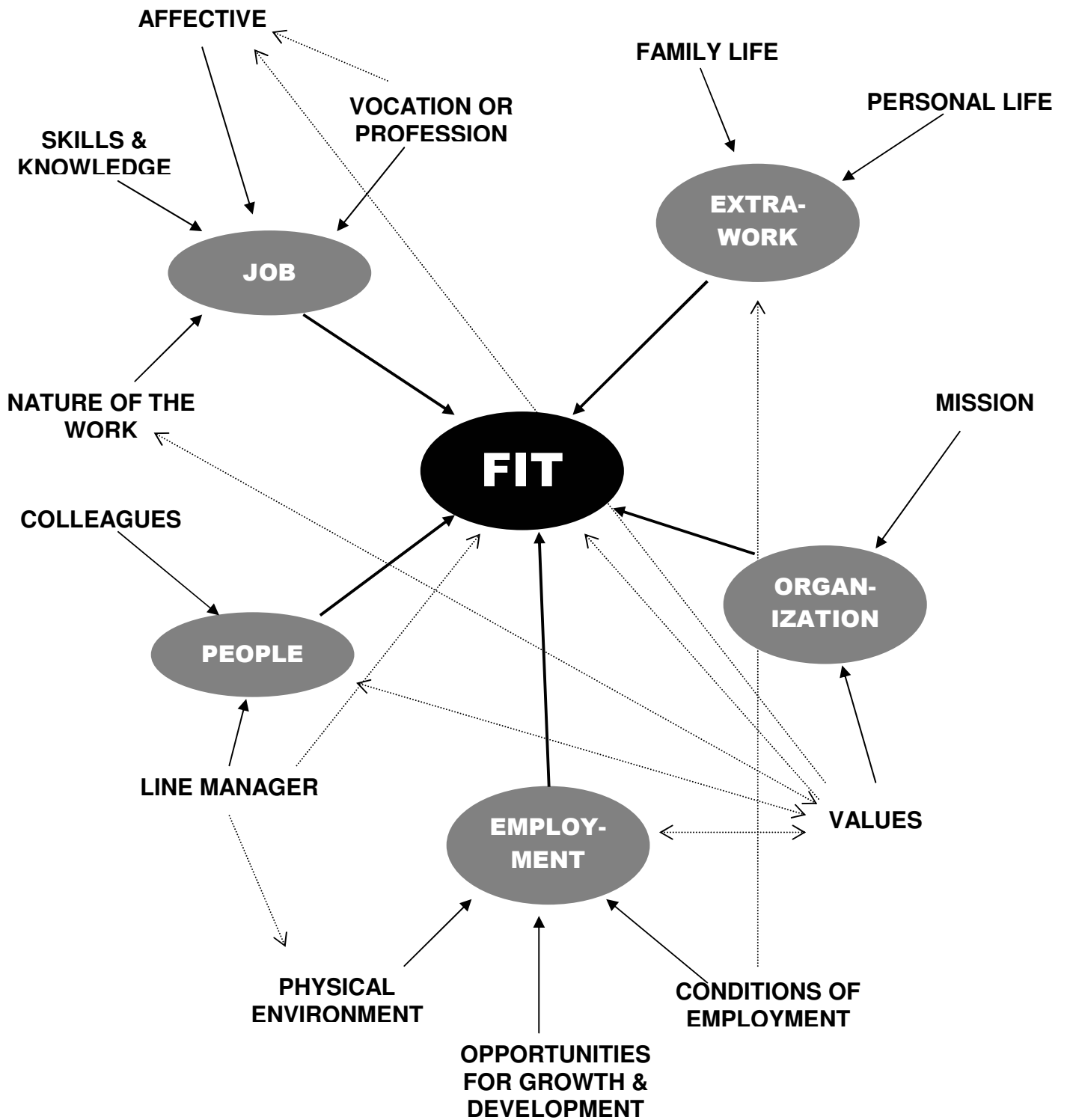
Figure 6   *A composite map of organizational members' sense of fit*

| | Included on maps | |
Domain	Number	Percentage
Job	43	75%
People	41	72%
Employment	24	42%
Organization	22	39%
Extra-work	14	25%

N = 57

Table 1   *Inclusions of domains on maps*

Orphans

As explained earlier, any items on maps that were not mentioned by at least 20% of interviewees were treated as orphans and not included on the composite map. Most of these other items appeared to be particular to the individual or of a conceptually different nature (such as a consequence of fit or a synonym for fit) and were therefore excluded from the composite map of factors influencing people's sense of fit. One of these orphans stood out as it was included on maps by nine different interviewees. This orphan was the word 'challenge'. For these nine people, challenge is an essential component of their fit; without challenge, there is no fit. The interviewee's comments suggest that it is linked to the nature of the job, the line manager, and the organization's values, and it appears to be at a causal factor influencing people's perceptions of their fit in these subdomains.

Consequences of fit

Most of the interviewees, at some point during the in-depth interview, described the consequences of fit. People who reported good fit were much less animated than those people who reported poor or misfit. The positive qualities associated with good fit included confidence, happiness, comfort, greater motivation, enjoyment, responsibility, creativity, less stress, but we noticed that most of the 'good fits' appeared to have thought little about their fit prior to their interviews and we gained the impression of people for whom fit was largely irrelevant. The misfits were completely different. These people needed no introduction to the concept of fit and they were able to relate story after story that described why they did not believe they were a fit in the organization. Moreover, they directly attributed negative outcomes to their poor fit.

> *"Not fitting had a serious effect on me. It got to the point I felt I was having a nervous breakdown. I totally lost my nerve. I remember being in a supermarket, queuing up and I had this paranoia attack. I just wanted to get out of there and for weeks I just felt I couldn't cope with anything. I just went to pieces. Some days I couldn't be bothered and I wouldn't make an effort to speak to people."*

The qualitatively different responses of 'good fits' and 'poor fits' place emphasis on the trigger events that switch people from good fit to poor fit (there were no accounts of the reverse occurring). Once the trigger event is experienced, it appears that a process is set in train that is similar to the breach of psychological contracts mentioned earlier (Rousseau, 1995); the individual recalls many related negative experiences and these reinforce the sense of misfit. In reviewing the trigger events, we noted three commonalities. First, they appear very trivial to the outsider (e.g. not being allowed to listen to music whilst working, a move to open plan offices, a change of manager, or a new person joins an established team). Second, the trigger events concern changes in behaviors that interviewee's believe are contrary to the organization's values. Third, the interviewee's line manager was mentioned as playing a key role in every trigger event.

Conclusion

This paper differs from previous studies in the fit literature in that it focuses on organizational member's sense of fit free from preconceptions about the nature of fit. Our goal was to find out how organizational members perceive their own fit and to gain some understanding of the causal factors. In particular, we wanted to develop a taxonomy of factors influencing fit and we were interested in the interconnections between different types of fit. The results of the study indicate that organizational members' sense of fit is influenced by five domains of fit that are qualitatively different to each other. These five domains are job, people, organization, employment, and extrawork. The nature of each of these domains was explored in the paper and thirteen subdomains were described.

Although all of these domains and subdomains appear relevant to people's sense of fit, two stand out as being particularly important to people's sense of fit. These two subdomains are the line manager and organizational values. Both of these subdomains were mentioned whenever someone described the events causing them to become a misfit. Interestingly, no one described traveling in the opposite direction and we gained the sense that when people join organizations they do so not being a misfit; they are either a 'fit' or appear neutral when appointed (cf. Schneider, 1987). A misfit is something one becomes. One way to explore the influence of the line manager further would be to employ social network analysis techniques to the study of fit of employees (e.g. Krackhardt & Brass, 1994; Scott, 1991). Such an approach could tease out the influence of fit to the line manager from the fit to colleagues.

In addition to producing a taxonomy of fit from the organizational member's perspective and reflections on fit and misfit, this study also demonstrated that although fit is a concept relevant to all types of employee, different factors appear to influence different types of employees. Employees who have greater seniority and status in the organization appear to perceive their fit through the domains of job, people and organization, whereas people with lower seniority and status are also influenced by the employment and extrawork domains. This is an interesting finding given that most of the studies reported in the fit literature have focused on

managers and those people who might become managers. As a result, these studies may have underplayed the roles of the employment and extrawork domains in shaping people's fit.

At the very early stages of this research project there was another research objective: we wanted to explore the effects of high levels of fit on employees and the organization. We were particularly interested to explore Schneider's (1987) provocative assertion that high levels of fit would lead to organizational dysfunction with the employees occupying an increasingly narrow ecological niche. Hence, we wanted to consider fit within an organization exhibiting high levels of fit. This was the reason that the Open University was chosen as the site of the study. It has a strong social and political mission, very high staff retention levels, and is popularly known in the UK for the type of people it employs; we could think of few organizations that appeared to exhibit such high levels of fit amongst its employees. However, as we analyzed the data from the interviews, it became apparent to us that high levels of fit were not the matter of concern. We found that every person's fit was idiosyncratically different. We found that people were not strongly aware of their fit when they fitted well. We found that people with high levels of fit commented similarly on the way their fit affected them to people with (apparently) lower levels of good fit. Good fit was something that contributed to a sense of satisfaction, commitment, comfort and stability and this in turn lead to efficient working and a willingness to contribute positively. Instead, the prime matter of concern was the misfits. In a university with good terms of employment, these people tended to stay with the organization, rather than leave (cf. Boxx, Dunn & Odom, 1991; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Chatman, 1991; O'Reilly et al, 1991; Ostroff & Rothausen, 1997; Posner, 1992; Van Vianen, 2000; Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991). They remained acting as centers of rebellion, disaffection, and malcontent. These were people who had fitted well, but who no longer do so. From a managerial perspective, it was these misfits that created the greatest concern, not those people who fitted well.

References

Ambrosini, V., & Bowman, C. 2001. Tacit knowledge: Some suggestions for operationalisation. *Journal of Management Studies, 38,* 811–829.

Boje, D. M., & Dennehy, R. F. 1993. *Managing in the postmodern world: America's Revolution against exploitation.* Dubuque, IO: Kendall-Hunt.

Bougon, M., Weick, K., & Binkhorst, D. 1977. Cognitions in organizations: An analysis of the Utrecht jazz orchestra. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 22,* 606–639.

Bowers, K. S. 1973. Situationism in psychology: An analysis and a critique. *Psychological Review, 80,* 307-336.

Boxx, W. R., Odom, R. Y., & Dunn, M. G. 1991. Organizational values and value congruency and their impact on satisfaction, commitment, and cohesion: An empirical examination within the public sector. *Public Personnel Management, 20,* 195-205.

Bretz, R. D., & Judge, T. A. 1994. Person–organization fit and the theory of work adjustment: Implications for satisfaction, tenure, and career success. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 44,* 32-54.

Bretz, R. D. Jr., Rynes, S. L., & Gerhart, B. 1993. Recruiter perceptions of applicant fit: Implications for individual career preparation and job search behavior. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 43,* 310–327.

Brown, J. S., & Dugruid, P. 1991. Organizational learning and communities-of-practice: Toward a unified view of working, learning and innovation. *Organization Science, 2,* 40–57.

Caldwell, D. F., & O'Reilly, C. A. 1990. Measuring person-job fit with a profile-comparison process. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 75,* 648-657.

Chatman, J. 1989. Improving interactional organizational research: A model of person-organization fit. *Academy of Management Review, 14,* 333-349.

Chatman, J. 1991. Matching people and organizations: Selection and socialization in public accounting firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 36,* 459–484.

Daniels, K., De Chernatony, L., & Johnson, G. 1995. Validating a method for mapping managers' mental models of competitive industry structures. *Human Relations, 48,* 975–991.

Eden, C. 1989. Strategic options development and analysis – SODA. In B. A. Maher (Ed.) *Progress in Experimental Personality Research,* Vol. 2. New York: Academic Press.

Eden, C., & Ackermann, F. 1998. *Making strategy.* Sage: London.

Eden, C., Ackermann, F., & Cropper, S. 1992. The analysis of cause maps. *Journal of Management Studies, 29,* 309–324.

Eden, C., Jones, S., & Sims, D. 1979. *Thinking in organizations.* London: Macmilan.

Eden, C., Jones, S., & Sims, D. 1983. *Messing about in problems.* Oxford: Pergammon.

Edwards, J. R. 1991. Person–job fit: A conceptual integration, literature review and methodological critique. *International Review of Industrial/Organizational Psychology, 6,* 283-357. London: Wiley.

Feldman, M. S. 1991. The meanings of ambiguity; learning from stories and metaphors. In P. J. Frost, L. F. Moore, M. R. Louis, C. C. Lundberg, & J. Martin (Eds.), *Reframing organizational culture.* London: Pitman.

Fineman, S., & Gabriel, Y. 1996. *Experiencing organizations.* London: Sage.

Fiol, C. M., & Huff, A. S. 1992. Maps for managers: Where are we? Where do we go from here? *Journal of Management Studies, 29,* 267–285.

Gabriel, Y. 2000. *Storytelling in organizations: Facts, fictions and fantasies.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hansen, C. D., & Kahnweiler, W. M. 1993. Storytelling: An instrument for understanding the dynamics of corporate relationships. *Human Relations, 46,* 1391–1409.

Hodgkinson, G. P., & Johnson, G. 1987, October. Exploring the mental models of competitive strategists: The case for a processual approach. Presented at the Managerial Thinking Business Environments Conference, Boston.

Holland, J. L. 1985. *Making Vocational Choices: A Theory of Careers.* Second edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Huff, A. S. 1990. Mapping strategic thought. In A. S. Huff (Ed.) *Mapping strategic thought:* 11–49. Chichester, UK: John Wiley.

Johnson, G., & Scholes, K. 2002. *Exploring corporate strategy.* Sixth edition. London: Prentice Hall.

Judge, T. A., & Ferris, G. R. 1992. The elusive criterion of fit in human resources staffing decisions. *Human Resources Planning, 15,* 47-67.

Krackhardt, D., & Brass, D. J. 1994. Intra-organizational networks: The micro side. In S. Wasserman, & J. Galaskiewicz (Eds.) *Advances in Social Network Analysis: Research in the Social and Behavioral Sciences:* 207-229. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Krahé, B. 1992. *Personality and social psychology.* London: Sage.

Kristof, A. L. 1996. Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology, 49,* 1–49.

Kristof-Brown, A. L. 1997, August. Repertory grid technique: An alternative method for assessing fit in organizational settings. Paper presented at the Academy of Management annual meeting, Boston.

Kristof-Brown, A. L. 2000. Perceived applicant fit: Distinguishing between recruiters' perceptions of person–job and person–organization fit. *Personnel Psychology, 53,* 643-671.

Langfield-Smith, K. 1992. Exploring the need for a shared cognitive map. *Journal of Management Studies, 29,* 340–368.

Laukkanen, M. 1994. Comparative cause mapping of organizational cognitions. *Organization Science, 5,* 322–343.

Mischel, W. 1973. Toward a cognitive social learning reconceptualization of personality. *Psychological Review, 80,* 252-283.

Muchinsky, P. M., & Monahan, C. J. 1987. What is person-environment congruence? Supplementary versus complementary models of fit. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 31,* 268–277.

O'Reilly, C. A., Chatman, J., & Caldwell, D. F. 1991. People and organizational culture: A profile comparison approach to assessing person-organization fit. *Academy of Management Journal, 34,* 487–516.

Ostroff, C., & Rothausen, T. J. 1997. The moderating effect of tenure in person–environment fit: A field study of educational organizations. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 70,* 173-188.

Passini, F. T., & Norman, W. T. 1966. A universal conception of personality structure? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 4,* 44–49.

Pervin, L. A. 1978. *Current Controversies in Personality.* New York: John Wiley.

Porac, J. F., Thomas, H., & Baden-Fuller, C. 1989. Competitive groups as cognitive communities: The case of the Scottish knitwear manufacturers. *Journal of Management Studies, 26,* 397–416.

Porac, J. F., Thomas, H., & Emme, B. 1987. Knowing the competition: The mental models of retailing strategists. In G. Johnson (Ed.) *Business Strategy and Retailing.* Chichester: Wiley.

Posner, B. Z. 1992. Person–organization values congruence: No support for individual differences as a moderating influence. *Human Relations, 45,* 351-361.

25

Ravlin, E. C. 1995. Values. In N. Nicholson, (Ed.) *The Blackwell Encyclopedic Dictionary of Organizational Behavior:* 598–599. Oxford, UK: Blackwells.

Rousseau, D. M. 1995. *Psychological contracts in organizations: Understanding written and unwritten agreements*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Schneider, B. 1987. The people make the place. *Personnel Psychology, 40,* 437–454.

Schneider, B., Smith, D. B., Taylor, S., & Fleenor, J. 1998. Personality and organizations: A test of the homogeneity of personality hypothesis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 83,* 462-470.

Schneider, D. J. 1973. Implicit personality theory: A review. *Psychological Bulletin, 73,* 294–309.

Schwartz, S. H. 1994. Are there universals in the structure and contents of human values? *Journal of Social Issues, 50,* 19-45.

Scott, J. 1991. *Social Network Analysis: A Handbook.* London: Sage.

Stackman, R. W., Pinder, C. C., & Connor, P. E. 2000. Values lost: Redirecting research on values in the workplace. In N. M. Ashkanasy, C. P. M. Wilderom, & M. F. Peterson (Eds.) *Handbook of Organizational Culture and Climate:* 37–54. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Turban, D. B., & Keon, T. L. 1993. Organization attractiveness: An interactionist perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78,* 184–193.

Van Vianen, A. E. M. 2000. Person–organization fit: The match between newcomers' and recruiters' preferences for organizational cultures. *Personnel Psychology, 53,* 1-32.

Vancouver, J. B., & Schmitt, N. W. 1991. An exploratory examination of person–organization fit: organizational goal congruence. *Personnel Psychology, 44,* 333-352.

Wachtel, P. L. 1977. Interaction cycles, unconscious processes, and the person–situation issue. In D. Magnusson, & N. S. Endler (Eds.) *Personality at the Crossroads: Current Issues in Interactional Psychology:* 317–331. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Walsh, J. P. 1988. Selectivity and selective perception: An investigation of managers' belief structures and information processing. *Academy of Management Journal, 31,* 873–896.

Weick, K. E., & Bougon, M. G. 1986. Organizations as cognitive maps. In H. P. Sims (Ed.) *The thinking organization:* 102–135. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.