

# **The realities of working life: maintaining dignity and hope in the face of compromise for a job and a career.**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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# Declaration

I certify that:

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- c) the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program;
- d) any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged;
- e) ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Michelle Pizer

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# Abstract

The thesis begins with Leavitt's (2007) premise that business schools do not forewarn their students of the realities of working life. Even for those with "successful" careers, it comprises both rewards and disappointments. It is argued that relationships at work are central to those rewards and disappointments and can help or hinder individuals in bringing their best selves to the tasks required of them. The intent of the thesis is to describe the intrapersonal experience of these realities of working life using a relational lens.

The thesis is based on a multi-paradigm inquiry and comprises three studies. Initially, a functionalist study using survey research methods was conducted to select research participants. An interpretive study followed. It involved the use of direct and indirect interview methods for accessing the personal, lived experience of ten participants.

The aim of this study was to assess the applicability of Josselson's (1992) multidimensional model of relatedness for the workplace. The model is concerned with identifying the range of relational needs people have of one another and the affective consequences of those needs being met or not. In the field of relationship science there is an absence of theory that integrates motivational and emotional factors, as well as the cognitive factors that are more commonly researched. The management theories that involve work relationships do not normally consider the psychological meaning and emotional consequences of those relationships. It is argued that Josselson's (1992) multidimensional model of relatedness potentially addresses these gaps in the literature.

The study found support for the application of Josselson's multidimensional model of relationships to the workplace, modified to include the task system. The model, as originally described by Josselson, comprises eight relational needs:

- *Holding* or feeling safe, secure and grounded.
- *Attachment* or the emotional bond between people.
- *Passionate experience* or the intense feeling experience most commonly found in love relationships.
- *Eye-to-eye validation* or feeling recognized by another for who you are and such mirroring helps you know who you are.
- *Idealization and identification* or feeling you have a role model that gives you something to strive for or shows you what is possible for your self.
- *Mutuality and resonance* or feeling experience shared.
- *Embeddedness* or feeling one belongs to a social group.
- *Tending (care)* or the feeling of caring for and looking after another.

The modified model extends five of the relational needs – *holding, passionate experience, eye-to-eye validation, idealization and identification, and mutuality and resonance* – to incorporate the findings that participants also had these needs in relation to the task itself, not simply other role-holders.

The third study was an interpretive study involving a re-analysis of the interview data as a series of case studies. The analytic approach incorporated clinical, psychoanalytic concepts and Josselson's model as organising frameworks. Consideration of the organisational context was included as part of this study. This involved a smaller functionalist study using survey research methods.

This third study illustrates that compromising for a job and a career is an ordinary and pervasive experience. It is argued that dignity and hope in the face of such compromise is important for managing the assaults on identity that inevitably result.

The research describes the multiple ways that dignity is denied and preserved at work for each participant. It shows that each participant attempts to trade-off his/her particular experience of indignity in an attempt to experience work as dignified overall. It highlights that positive leader-member relations are critical for this experience.

The nature of these positive leader-member relations is discussed drawing on intersubjective theory (e.g. Benjamin, 1988; Orange, 2007). It is argued that they involve mutual recognition rather than the complementary relations of the master-slave dialectic. This recognition is lopsided, with the leader not seeking recognition by his/her member. Rather, the leader is akin to a servant-leader (Greenleaf, 1970) whose role is to help his/her members meet their needs to grow, develop and prosper within the boundaries of each members' limitations and abilities, and organisational opportunities.

In this study, only those in a low quality relationship with their appointed leader experience the indignity of being denied the opportunity to pursue their own career aspirations. It is the one indignity that could not be traded-off. It is a form of misrecognition by the leader that denies the individual the possibility of becoming who he/she wants to be in the organisational context. In this study, it is the knowledge that the opportunity is there, not taking it up, that matters for dignity as it provides career-related hope.

Career-related hope is discussed in terms of Snyder's (1994) hope theory. It is defined as a combination of both "way power" (pathways/ how to get there) and "willpower" (agency/ will to get there) towards one's goals. The discussion focuses on the leader-member relationship and the ways in which the leader helps or hinders career-related hope in his/her members, with the influence of the organisational and wider context also considered. This includes the taken for granted assumption of the pursuit of a career in a meritocratic society where a successful career relative to others is an important goal to be achieved.

Those low in career-related hope are currently being denied access to the pathways that would enable them to build their career. Despite their indignity, not one of the five participants in this predicament is actively looking for employment elsewhere, nor considering starting to look. Self-regulation failure (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996) is considered as one possible explanation for this, as is the role of trust in hope.

According to hope theory, trust is not just in relation to the availability of others and that the world makes sense, it is primarily trust in one's own agency. As hope theory suggests, in this research those low in hope base their trust in their appointed leader to facilitate their career. They lack the trust of their high-hope counterparts, who trust in themselves and in their ability to manage the relationship with their leader for their career advancement.

# **PART A: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

# • 1 •

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis sets out to examine in depth, the personal, lived experience of employees working in a business enterprise. Leavitt (2007) argues that such organisations – especially big ones with their multi-tiered, pyramidal hierarchy and inequitable distribution of power and authority – are unhealthy environments for human beings. He argues that business schools should forewarn students of the realities of working life. That is, let them know that just as there are the well-advertised ‘treasure troves of wealth, status, and “success”’ (Leavitt, 2007, p260), there are also the ‘cruel and incompetent bosses, arbitrary and unjustified punishments, overly competitive peers, hurtful family/organization stresses, and wrenching decisions that seriously affect the lives of their “subordinates”’ (ibid.).

Leavitt (2007) highlights that working life, even for those with “successful” careers, comprises both rewards and disappointments. As Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee (1978) observe, at best work can provide an opportunity for the fulfilment of basic values and life goals. At worst, it can be oppressive and corrupting, and contribute to a sense of alienation from self, work and society. This thesis argues that relationships at work are central to the rewards and disappointments of work. Connections with others are the fabric of daily life in organisations (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). This has become more apparent as work systems become increasingly interdependent and uncertain (Griffin, Neal & Parker, 2007; Howard, 1995). These connections may consist of a single momentary encounter or develop and change over time through repeated encounters. They are emotional in that, as Dutton and Heaphy (2003) explain, the connection is felt and sensed.

The emotions experienced depend on what an individual wants and receives from others (Josselson, 1992). For example, an employee will have different needs met by a role model or by a work colleague he or she chats with at the photocopier. A role model provides hope for the possibility of a better self, without which the employee may feel disillusioned or purposeless. A work colleague with whom one chats provides the opportunity for mutuality and resonance through the sharing of experiences, without which an employee may feel lonely or dissonant.

There is a call in organisational studies for a greater understanding of relationships (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). A relational approach is fundamentally different from mainstream management theories (Weinberg, 1996). Mainstream management theories emphasize inputs and outputs, rather than the process of work. They 'think and talk about organizations as if they enjoy a concrete existence independent of the people who constitute them' (Weinberg, 1996, p178). This is in contrast with the notion that organisations emerge out of the process of human interaction, and are, fundamentally, relational entities (Pfeffer, 1998).

In the organisational literature there is no single literature on work relationships (Kahn, 1998). There are theoretical frameworks such as social network theory, role theory, leadership theory and communication theory that involve work relationships. These theories mainly employ relationships in terms of role relatedness: 'as vehicles by which people link with one another in the service of linked goals. Organizations have tasks; tasks require linkages; linkages require work relationships' (Kahn, 1998, p71). These theories where relationships are central address them in terms of exchanges or co-operation (Beyer, Hannah & Milton, 2000). They are grounded in the notion of task reciprocity rather than these relationships being psychologically meaningful with emotional consequences.

As Kahn (1998) argues, the available theories pertaining to work relationships only reveal part of who we are at work. 'They do not, for example, show people when they feel strongly about others at work – their desires to be with or away from others, their longing to be noticed and valued, or their despair at being ignored or isolated' (Kahn, 1998, p40). The assumption seems to be that work relationships are for organizational ends while the 'subtexts of emotional connections and disconnections running alongside our task-related conversations with one another' (Kahn, 1998, p71), and for the most part the personal relationships, are ignored.



## THE INHERENT DIFFICULTIES IN STUDYING RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK

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Kahn (1998) suggests that relational systems at work may have been missed rather than ignored by researchers because of the inherent difficulties of studying them. This is in spite of the fact that ‘relationship-interaction events tend to be better remembered than other kinds of events’ (Berscheid, 1999, p. 263). To illustrate, listed below are four inherent difficulties.

First, relational systems are emotional subtexts that are neither easily accessed nor their significance necessarily understood (Kahn, 1998). Berscheid (1999) points out that a relationship is invisible and ‘can be discerned only by observing its effects’ (p261). As relationships are central to our emotional life (Klein, [1952] 1975), one possible way to begin to access relational systems is to investigate emotional experience and expression at work.

Emotion in the workplace is an increasingly important area of intellectual inquiry. While emotion has long been recognized in psychodynamic explanations of the workplace (e.g. de Board, 1978; Hirschhorn, 1992), it is now part of the mainstream management literature. According to (Ashkanasy, Härtel, & Daus, 2002), it is ‘shaping up as one of the principal areas of development in management thought and practice of the next decade’ (p307). Barsade and Gibson (2007) refer to the ‘affective revolution’ (p36) in academia and practice in their recent review of affect in organisations. Their review begins with the various approaches to defining affect and related concepts such as emotional intelligence, emotion regulation, emotional labour, emotional contagion and collective affect. They then review the research and find pervasive and consistent effects of affect on a range of critical organisational outcomes. These include job performance, decision-making, creativity, turnover, prosocial behaviour, teamwork, negotiation, and leadership.

Furthermore, unconscious processes such as transference (Ferenczi, 1916), basic assumptions (Bion, 1968) and social systems (Menzies, 1970) influence emotions. Yet the explosion of recent emotions research outside the psychodynamic tradition has mainly focused on conscious experience (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Barsade and Gibson (2007) suggest that it is now possible to conduct rigorous empirical research into these long-ignored constructs that effect emotions and behaviour in organisations. As such, they anticipate that these

unconscious processes will be a future direction for mainstream management research on emotion.

Second, relationships are ‘relatively messy, making it difficult for researchers and organization members alike to delve into their meanings’ (Kahn, 1998, p44). Josselson (1992, p17) points out that ‘they are hard to study because they do not stay still. Relationships are recursive: people in relationships modify each other’. This means that gratifying or meaningful relationships reflect subtle and complex processes of mutual adaptation as people modify themselves so as to accommodate others (Josselson, 1992). It also highlights the temporal nature of relationships (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003) and how the pattern of mutual influence that arises in interactions between people in a relationship emerges over time (Berscheid, 1999).

Third is the lack of language to describe relational phenomena (Josselson, 1992). This has resulted in the term relationship itself becoming ‘a hackneyed word, made to carry so many meanings that it ceases to have much connotative force’ (Josselson, 1992, p2). For example, an individual can have a relationship with his/her mother, father, husband or wife, daughter, friend, car mechanic, and so on; each with its own special form yet usually described only in terms of good or bad and with the richness and difference between the connections lost.

It is therefore not surprising that our conceptual understanding of relationships has remained enshrouded even though ‘there are many ways in which we reach through the space that separates us to make connections’ (Josselson, 1992, p5). Josselson (1992) has developed a multi-dimensional model of relationships that aims to capture the complexity of relating with a language that enables the richness and differences between different relationships to be described. She identifies eight dimensions. Each captures a unique form of connection that she describes as meeting different relational needs with different affective consequences. (These will be discussed in more detail later in this thesis.)

Fourth is that work relationships are further complicated as ‘every individual who takes up a role in a work group, and by extension an enterprise, is called upon to manage himself in his role. This is done in two ways: by managing himself in relation to his work tasks and activities, and by managing his relationships with other role-holders’ (Lawrence, 1979, p244). Managing relationships with other role-holders involves both role relatedness and personal

relationships (Reed, 1988). This distinction is important for understanding relationships at work (Kahn, 1998, Lawrence, 1979; Newton, Long & Sievers, 2006; Reed, 1988), and the personal, lived experience of working life.

Role relatedness recognizes that ‘although I may not know someone... I already have a relatedness to them as co-members of this organisation or group. This relatedness is not based on the fact that as persons we happen to be in the same situation, but on our being persons-in-role’ (Reed, 1988, p13). We are persons-in-role within the same system, organisation or group, and the roles are related regardless of the role-holders. In contrast, the personal relationship refers to ‘how I as a person relate to and feel about you, disregarding context, position and background’ (Reed, 1988, p13).

## INTENT OF THE THESIS

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The intent of this thesis is to describe the realities of working life, the rewards and disappointments, using a relational lens. Its focus is on the intrapersonal experience of interpersonal relationships in the organisational context. It will highlight the central role of work-based relationships to the experience of work, and show how these relationships can help or hinder individuals in bringing their best selves to the tasks required of them.

The thesis will also explore the effects of compromise for a job and a career on the experience of work. Through the research it became apparent that compromise is an ordinary and pervasive experience, even for those with “successful” careers. It is a common source of disappointment at work. The thesis will show that the experience of dignity and hope in the face of such compromise is important for managing the assaults on identity that inevitably result.

The research conducted for this thesis was a multi-paradigm inquiry and comprised three studies. Initially, a functionalist study using survey research methods was conducted to select research participants. An interpretive study followed. It involved the use of direct and indirect interview methods for accessing the personal, lived experience of participants. Given the inherent difficulties in studying relationships as outlined above, the aim of this second study

was to determine whether the relational needs as explicated by Josselson (1992) in her multi-dimensional model are apparent at work.

The third study was an interpretive study involving a re-analysis of the data as a series of case studies. The analytic approach incorporated clinical, psychoanalytic concepts and Josselson's model as organising frameworks. Consideration of the organisational context was included as part of this study. This involved a smaller functionalist study using survey research methods. This third study is the essence of the thesis. It describes the realities of working life, the rewards and disappointments, using a relational lens.

### A PARALLEL PROCESS

The thesis is presented with a clear intent and method, as if it were a linear process that all went smoothly. In reality, as with many careers or jobs, and indeed, relationships, it was a messy process with both rewards and disappointments. Just as it has been argued that an employee's relationship with his/her leader provides 'a lens through which the entire work experience is viewed' (Gerstner & Day, 1997, p840), I similarly experienced the supervisory relationship as central to the candidature experience. The nature and quality of that relationship directly influenced my capacity to bring my best self to the tasks required of a doctoral candidate. I, too, needed dignity and hope in the face of compromise to help manage the assaults on identity I experienced through the process of completing this thesis.

Rather than trying to remove myself from the research, I endeavour to take account of my own subjective experience and its parallels with the research and use it to my advantage (Sullivan, 2002). In this instance, the advantage is empathy for the individual participants and insight into the data and its implications for the experience of work through the parallel experiences in my own work. Such a process requires self-scrutiny and a willingness to embrace interpretations contrary to my own experience or instincts (Berg & Smith, 1985).

It was very difficult for me to find the right context for successfully completing a thesis. During the period of my candidature, I was enrolled at four different universities and had four different supervisors. It is through these relationships, the successful and the unsuccessful, that the centrality of this relationship to the candidature experience became so apparent. It was no longer an abstract idea that I read about and observed through the lives of others.

I began the candidature with a broad interest in the experience of work. This interest in what work *feels like* became a focus on defining and developing what I coined the emotional dimension of organisational culture, using Josselson's (1992) multi-dimensional model of relationship as an organising framework. I reasoned that identifying "the way people relate around here" (see Deal & Kennedy, 1988) would provide insight into this emotional dimension. I conducted the first two studies as outlined above.

The third study was to be a functionalist study, developing and validating a measure for assessing this cultural dimension. I found myself increasingly unable to complete this third study, even though I had developed items and conducted a pilot. While this approach would capture some of the participants' experience of work, it certainly would not do justice to it. To do so would require an approach with a different voice (Gilligan, 1977); one with a human face (Josselson, 1992) attuned to the personal, lived experience of the individual.

It was clear that I needed to find a context where I could find the thesis in my own time and in my own way. I had been struggling to find a focus. Earlier I had succumbed to the ideas of focusing on organisational culture and the development of a measure. These were not my own. I think I took them on so that I did not have to continue to experience not knowing what I was doing. I could feel and look like I was working on the thesis. I was very busy. This is what Bion (1962a) refers to as anti-developmental, a failure to learn from experience. According to Bion, this is linked to a fear of thinking and an inability to contain feelings. It was only later that I came to know how compromised this left me.

It is with great relief that, in the end, I was able to find an appropriate context. I found a supervisor who could contain my not knowing until I could myself. I became able to think, to find the thesis, and to complete it in a way that felt right for me.

## STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

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**Part A, *Introduction and Background*** of the thesis presents the aim of the research and how it is to be achieved.

**Chapter 2, *Conceptualising Relationships*** – addresses how one might begin to understand the ‘vast and complex topic’ (Bradbury, 2002, p594) of relationships. Sarason, Sarason and Pierce (1995) point out that ‘while comments about human relationships have been made over many millennia, the empirical study of relationships is something new’ (p619). Relationship science, as a field in its own right, is green (Berscheid, 1999), and researchers continue to debate how it best be ripened (Reis, 2007). This chapter first presents what prominent scholars in the field consider to be critical issues in how relationships should be studied. The approach to the study of relationships adopted in this thesis is then outlined.

One critical issue for relationship research is the development of ‘theory that deals with what moves people to do what they do and at the same time considers how they feel and think about it’ (Aron & Aron, 1995, p560). As in many areas of the social sciences, cognitive approaches have had an enormous impact on the study of personal relationships (Sarason, Sarason & Pierce, 1995). Berscheid (1995) suggests that while important, a cognitive approach is unlikely to be sufficient. Aron and Aron (1995) argue for theory that integrates motivational and emotional factors into relationship research along with cognitive processes.

**Chapter 3** presents and critiques *Josselson’s Multi-dimensional Model of Relatedness*. Josselson’s (1992) model considers motivational and emotional aspects of a relationship. It considers motivational aspects in that it focuses on what we want and need from others. The assumption is that the eight relational needs that Josselson (1992) identifies as characterising adult life are basic and drive the need to connect (see also: Aron & Aron, 1995; Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

The model considers emotional aspects in that it includes the different affective consequences of each relational need being met or not. These affective consequences are, in essence, the emotional rewards and disappointments of a relationship based on Josselson’s (1992) model. In this way the model provides both a framework and a language for conceptualising the experience of a relationship.

Most research on personal relationships, either implicitly or explicitly, ‘is directed at one of three levels of analysis: individual, dyadic and systemic’ (Sarason, Sarason & Pierce, 1995, p615). At the individual level, the focus is on a participant’s perception of his/her relationship with another. At the dyadic level, the focus is on the social bond shared by both participants.

At the systemic level, the broader social network and community is considered. Sarason, Sarason and Pierce (1995) advocate that research on personal relationships should be sensitive to all three levels of analysis.

In this thesis the focus is on the individual level – the intrapersonal experience of interpersonal relationships in the organisational context. At the same time, by using Josselson’s model it is sensitive to the interpersonal level. Her model is expressly concerned with the nature of the social bonds in a relationship, albeit from an individual perspective. The thesis is sensitive to the systemic level of analysis by considering all the work-based relationships that are important to an individual as well as the organisational context within which these relationships occur.

**Chapter 4, *Relationships in the Organisational Context*** discusses the two dominant and traditional approaches in the organisational literature to understanding the internal context of an organisation – organisational climate and culture (Denison, 1996). These approaches are mainly concerned with group and organisational level systems. At the individual and interpersonal level, are issues concerning relations between people or the social aspects of the organisation that Josselson addresses, and the relations between technical aspects of the organisation such as roles and tasks. That is, the relational context is part of the sociotechnical system of an organisation (Trist & Bamforth, 1951; Zobrist & Enggist, 1984). At this level, a key issue that influences the experience of relationships (and the capacity for competent task performance) is management of the boundaries between self and role and other role-holders. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the two primary types of relationships an individual has in the organisational context – leader-member relations and relations with co-workers.

**Chapter 5, *Research Methodology***, discusses the nature of the research and the approach taken to studying subjective experience, the organisational context, and subjective experience in the organisational context. It is a multi-paradigm enquiry comprising three studies:

- Study 1: Selecting research participants;
- Study 2: Examining whether the relational needs as explicated by Josselson (1992) are apparent at work; and

- Study 3: Exploring the relational experience of work using the relational needs as an organising framework and, at the same time, taking the influence of the organisational context into account.

**Part B, *The Studies*** describes each of the studies in detail. **Chapter 6, *Study 1*** describes the process of selecting ten participants for the subsequent studies and presents the results.

In Josselson's (1992) study, work relationships were only investigated when a participant included someone from work into their broader relational world. It was not known whether the model would be useful in its current form in the workplace. This is addressed through a series of in-depth interviews described in **Chapter 7, *Study 2***. The study found support for the application of Josselson's multi-dimensional model of relationships to the workplace, modified to include the task system.

**Chapter 8, *Study 3*** involves re-analysing the data obtained from the in-depth interviews described in Study 2 as a series of case studies. This illustrates the individual, dynamic and complex nature of how each relationship at work is perceived and experienced.

In addition to the uniqueness of each case study, there are commonalities. Overall, the results highlight that the most important relationship at work for these participants is with their respective appointed leaders and that issues relating to career progress are the most common and most keenly felt. Furthermore, being in a high quality relationship with one's appointed leader, does not guarantee that the relational needs one is seeking from the relationship will be met. That is, even high quality relationships are characterised by both rewards and disappointments. Compromise for a job and a career is an ordinary and pervasive experience.

Hodson (2001) suggests that it is through agency, 'the active and creative performance of assigned roles in ways that give meaning and content to those roles beyond what is institutionally scripted' (Hodson, 2001, p16), that workers are able to find dignity, even under difficult and challenging circumstances. According to Hodson (2001), there are serious implications for organisations not giving worker agency its due. Following Drucker (1993) and Pfeffer (1998), he argues that 'unrealized human potential is the greatest impediment to organizational advancement' (p238). Hence, enabling employees to accomplish their own



goals is essential if organisations are to reach their highest possible productivity (Hodson, 2001).

**Chapter 9, *Dignity at Work*** discusses each case study and whether the individuals described are able to find dignity, despite their circumstances. This discussion illustrates that the one indignity the participants are unable to “trade-off” relates to being denied the opportunity to pursue their personal career aspirations from their current role and in their current workplace. The pathways that would enable them to build their career, whether they want to do this or not, are unavailable to them.

Only those in a low quality relationship with their appointed leader experience this indignity. These participants struggle for recognition with their appointed leaders. It is a matter of justice and a matter of identity (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). It is Hegel’s master-slave dialectic rather than mutual relations. These participants experience a reduced sense of agency, reduced well-being and have reduced personal resources available for task performance.

In contrast, the participants in a high quality relationship with their appointed leader do have the opportunity to pursue their career aspirations. This enables them to experience work as dignified overall, despite the other indignities they may endure. It also means they have the opportunity to thrive in their career at work (Spreitzer & Sutcliffe, 2007), but only do so if they are seeking to build one in their current organisation. Hence, while experiencing dignity through having the opportunity to pursue one’s career aspirations does not necessarily mean currently thriving in one’s career, experiencing dignity in this way does offer career-related hope.

**Chapter 10, *Career-related Hope*** adopts Snyder’s (1994) approach to hope where it is defined as ‘the perceived capability to derive pathways to desired goals, and motivate oneself via agency thinking to use those pathways’ (Snyder, 2002, p249). It discusses how those participants without the opportunity to pursue their personal career aspirations at work are also low in career-related hope. Despite their indignity, not one of the five participants in this predicament is actively looking for employment elsewhere, nor considering starting to look. While emphasis is placed on the leader-member relationship, the role of the wider context and its influence on career-related hope is considered. This includes the taken for granted

assumption of the pursuit of a career in a meritocratic society where a successful career relative to others is an important goal to be achieved.

In **Chapter 11**, *Conclusion*, the results of the research and their contribution to understanding the relational experience of work are discussed. The thesis concludes by considering the limitations of the research and potential areas for further study.

# . 2 .

## CONCEPTUALISING RELATIONSHIPS

*'There is nothing people consider more meaningful and essential to their mental and physical well-being than their close relationships with other people'*

(Berscheid, 1999, p260).

The study of personal relationships has recently emerged as a distinct field even though 'Fincham reminds us that important contributions to our understanding of personal relationships were made by scholars many decades ago' (Rook, 1995, p601; see also Fincham, 1995). Nevertheless, relationship science is 'no longer ghettoised to the pages of specialty journals' (Reis, 2007, p2).

There has been a burgeoning of the field, a so-called 'greening of relationship science' (Berscheid, 1999, p260). At different times, leading authors have addressed how relationships should be studied with a view to ripening the field (see for example: Berscheid, 1999; Bradbury, 2002; Reis, 2007; Sarason, Sarason & Pierce, 1995). A number of key issues in the study of relationships have been identified. These are discussed. The approach to the study of relationships adopted in this thesis is then presented.

## KEY ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF RELATIONSHIPS

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According to Metts (1995), ‘the perennial question that plagues the field and underlies much of the fragmentation noted by several authors’ (p608) is how relationships should be conceptualised. Duck (1995) argues that what a relationship *is* has never been fully explained and that this is the most important theoretical problem facing the field. He suggests that the study of relationships is:

‘partly a psychological enterprise aimed at the discovery of the means by which individuals construct their relationships in their own minds. It is also partly a sociological enterprise that draws on and elucidates the ways in which social order constructs and is constructed by personal orders. Finally, it is partly a communicative enterprise aimed at grasping the expressive means by which social and personal orders are enacted on a particular occasion using both personal and conventional symbols to improvise and yet recreate the relationship’ (Duck, 1995, pp539-540).

Beyond issues of definition, Reis (2007) suggests that progress in the field ‘has been impeded by the absence of clear consensus about the core phenomena of a relationship’ (pp6-7). This has likely resulted, in part, because of the complexity of relationships, and also because of the different disciplines in which relationship researchers are trained – primarily psychology, sociology and communication studies. Despite repeated calls for integration, the field is still more multidisciplinary than it is interdisciplinary (Reis, 2007).

While some authors advocate for a grand theory of relationships (e.g. Aron & Aron, 1995; Berscheid, 1999), and others for increasingly complex and specialised theories that reflect the complexity of the phenomena (e.g. Hinde, 1997), most authors adopt a more moderate view. Metts (1995) notes that a number of authors ‘advocate continued empirical work aimed at describing phenomena, but acknowledge that an organizing framework, if not grand theory, must sooner or later be advanced’ (p610).

Metts (1995) advances interaction as a possible candidate given its consistent centrality to relationship qualities, outcomes and processes. It is the basis of Blumstein and Kollock’s (1988) definition of a relationship: ‘a series of related interactions, each affected by past episodes, and in turn affecting future interactions’ (p468). Indeed, intense emotional

experiences may come about, not from current interactions but from soaring or sinking hopes for future interactions (Rook, 1995; Sternberg, 1995).

The patterning of interactions over time helps define a relationship. As Hinde (1979) points out: the ‘couple who always kiss after they quarrel will be very different from the couple who always quarrel after they kiss, though the total amounts of kissing and quarrelling are the same in both cases’ (p20).

Once interaction patterns are established and there is a “story” about someone and our relationship with them, there is a tendency to seek to confirm the story and ignore inconsistent information (Sternberg, 1995). Relationships are very hard to change. Using Piagetian terms (Piaget, 1972), Sternberg (1995) suggests that this is partly because it requires massive accommodation rather than assimilation of a tremendous amount of information about the relationship.

Reis (2007) introduces a perceived partner responsiveness as another possible central organizing principle. He also suggests as possibilities ‘the degree and nature of interdependence and influence inherent in the concept of closeness [cf. Kelley et al., 1983] and the hospitality-hostility dimension of sentiment’ (p9).

Reis (2007) focuses on perceived partner responsiveness based on the findings of a study designed to investigate the sorts of social interactions that facilitate the experience of relatedness (see Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000). The study found that ‘although several types of socializing were associated with daily increases in relatedness (e.g., meaningful talk, doing pleasant or fun things, hanging out with others, avoiding self-consciousness), by far the most influential predictor was feeling understood and appreciated by one’s partner during social interaction’ (p14). Reis (2007) points out that, as a central organising principle, perceived partner responsiveness is related to 21 specific constructs, including trust, attachment security, self-verification and intimacy.

Fincham (1995) suggests that the diversity in the field is more an indication of its vitality than a criticism. He and others (e.g. Aron & Aron; 1995; Kenny; 1995), advocate for more descriptive work to help ground and inform the theory that is developed. Bradbury (2002) advocates for research with a focus on action, specifically with the goal of changing

relationships for the better given that ‘personal relationships... do not have a natural tendency to be conducted successfully’ (p572).

Aron and Aron (1995) point out that ‘much of what appears in the close relationship literature is almost completely atheoretical’ (p560). Further, the theory that does exist is primarily taxonomy. For example, in the research on love there is ‘a plethora of styles, components and types’ (Aron & Aron, 1995, p560). They suggest that sorting such complex phenomena into categories makes a real contribution.

In terms of theory development, the field has been dominated by cognitive approaches (Sarason, Sarason & Pierce, 1995). Berscheid (1995, 1999) suggests that while important, a cognitive approach is unlikely to be sufficient. Aron and Aron (1995) argue for theory that integrates motivational and emotional factors into relationship research along with cognition. Hence, there is a need for ‘theory that deals with what moves people to do what they do and at the same time considers how they feel and think about it’ (Aron & Aron, 1995, p560).

The call for more integration in the field is also found in issues relating to levels of analysis. Mett’s (1995) asks whether we assume relationships are considered to primarily reside within the individual, in the linkages between individuals, and whether they can be meaningfully abstracted from their social and historical context. Similarly, Sarason, Sarason and Pierce (1995) suggest that most research on personal relationships, either implicitly or explicitly, ‘is directed at one of three levels of analysis: individual, dyadic and systemic’ (p615). They advocate for research on personal relationships to be sensitive to all three levels of analysis.

Given the complexity of relationships, methodological challenges are apparent (e.g. Hartup, 1995). Bradbury (2002) advocates for methods that enable the richness of relationships to be explored. He argues that relationships are usually researched ‘in some quantitative fashion with a relatively large set of participants and a relatively small number of variables’ (Bradbury, 2002, p575). He points out that ‘case studies are relatively rare in the basic relationships literature, as is the use of interviews for data collection’ (2002, p575).

Bradbury and Lichtenstein (2000) review the growing number of methods for capturing relational phenomena in organisations such as network analysis, participatory research, case

studies, psychometrics and action inquiry. For example, they recommend case studies for research that is interpersonal in nature and concerned with tacit phenomena.

There are also issues in relation to the samples used. As Metts (1995) points out, 'we are building and testing theory based on small samples conveniently located in the college classroom and generally well educated, liberal and middle class' (p607). Wood (1995) therefore calls for more diversity in sampling. In terms of the sampling of relationship types, Kenny (1995) argues that there is a risk of becoming increasingly irrelevant if future trends such as longevity after retirement are not brought in to the field. At this stage, there is 'a near-exclusive focus on dating and mating in young adults' (Rook, 1995, p604). In a different vein and consistent with the notion of a grand theory or central organising principles, Berscheid (1995, 1999) calls for research across relationship types.

As indicated in the preceding paragraphs, the field of personal relationships is vibrant, albeit disparate and green. I attempt to take the key issues identified above into consideration in how I conceptualise and approach the study of relationships for this thesis.

## CONCEPTUALISING A RELATIONSHIP FOR THIS THESIS

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Given the centrality of interaction to relationships (Metts, 1995), this thesis adopts Blumstein and Kollock's (1998) definition of a relationship: 'a series of related interactions, each affected by past episodes, and in turn affecting future interactions' (p468).

The main focus is on the intrapersonal experience of interpersonal relationships in the organisational context. That is, following Sarason, Sarason and Pierce (1995), this thesis aims to be sensitive to the individual, dyadic and systemic levels of analysis in the study of relationships. While the focus is on the individual level, this is understood by exploring the individuals' perception and experience of the nature of the social bonds that develop in relationships at the interpersonal level. These relationships are considered in their context. For the purposes of this thesis, the context is conceptualised relationally in that all the work-based relationships that are important to an individual are considered, as well as organisationally by considering the organisational context within which these relationships occur. How this is achieved is described in Part B of the thesis.

Following Aron and Aron (1995), the thesis aims to integrate motivational and emotional factors along with cognitive processes. Howard (2000), in reviewing the social psychology of identities, argues that ‘cognitive and interactional processes are intimately intertwined’ (p371). Cognitive processes are involved in the development, maintenance and change of identities (Howard, 2000).

In relation to identity, the thesis adopts a symbolic interactionist view (Mead, 1934) whereby the meaning that a relationship holds for an individual, and therefore how it is experienced, is developed and transmitted through interactions. From this perspective, ‘a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind’ (James, 1890, cited in Wozniak, 1999, p1). The self is viewed as a structure of roles (Turner, 1978), identities (Stryker, 1980) or role identities (McCall & Simmons, [1966] 1978).

The construction of an identity involves negotiation (Howard, 2000). The negotiations ‘about who people are, are fundamental to developing mutual definitions of situations; these negotiations entail self-presentation or impression management (Goffman, 1959; McCall & Simmons, [1966] 1978). Identities are thus strategic social constructions created through interaction, with social and material consequences’ (p371). From this perspective, motivation is conceived as seeking to realise role-identities in interaction (Weinstein, 1967).

McCall and Simmons ([1966] 1978) consider why people spend their interaction resources as they do. They develop a symbolic interactionist approach to identity that includes exchange theory concepts (Blau, 1964). In this model, the self is conceived as comprising multiple role identities that are ideal conceptions of the self organised into hierarchies according to prominence and salience. Role identities are ‘aspects of a multifaceted, complex self which is both determined by and which determine interaction. The model incorporates a view of interaction as both determined and freely chosen’ (Stryker, 1979, p469).

This thesis adopts McCall and Simmons ([1966] 1978) approach to the self. In particular, the way they conceptualise the forces that bring people together and makes them likely to interact in the future is used as a descriptive aid for conceptualising the nature of the social bonds that develop in a relationship. This is described below.



Another approach to conceptualising the forces that bring people together and the nature of the social bonds with an emphasis on emotional aspects is Josselson's (1992) multi-dimensional model of relatedness. Her model considers motivational aspects in that it focuses on what we want and need from others. The assumption is that the eight relational needs she identifies as characterising adult life are basic and drive the need to connect (see also: Aron & Aron, 1995; Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

The model considers emotional aspects in that it includes the different affective consequences of each relational need being met or not. These affective consequences are, in essence, the emotional rewards and disappointments of a relationship based on Josselson's (1992) model. In this way the model provides both a framework and a language for conceptualising the experience of a relationship in this thesis. Josselson's (1992) model is central to this thesis. It is therefore presented and discussed in detail in the next chapter.

## MCCALL'S CONCEPTUALISATION OF A RELATIONSHIP

McCall (1970a), following Weber (1947), defines a relationship as, at its most basic, the substantial probability of interaction between two persons. It requires two persons to 'view themselves as the sole members of a common collectivity—e.g., a marriage—constraining them both to interact in a more or less specific fashion' (McCall, 1970a, p4-5). According to McCall (1970a), at one extreme the common collectivity is based on formal relationships where a role relationship is the primary constraint:

'If a person wanders off the street into an ice cream parlor, he will not long ignore the woman behind the counter nor will he lick her nose; he will probably ask about or request some dairy product. Similarly, she will not long ignore him nor will she flick peanut shells in his hair; she will probably ask him if she can be of assistance to him with regard to dairy products. That is, each of them perceives himself and the other to be members of a particular role relationship (clerk-customer) and feels constrained to interact with the other in a manner befitting their common membership in this collectivity. The social relationship is between the two persons, however, *not* between the two roles; the role relationship only constrains the form the interaction takes. Where such a role relationship is the primary constraint on the form of interaction, we can speak of a *formal relationship* between two persons' (McCall, 1970a, p5).

At the other extreme are personal relationships. This is where knowledge of persons rather than role relationships is the primary constraint between two persons (McCall, 1970a). It may simply be ‘an acquaintanceship—the existence of mutual recognition. That is to say, two persons feel constrained to interact in at least some minimal fashion, as by waving or saying hello, simply because each recognizes the other as a distinctive individual and knows that the other recognizes him’ (McCall, 1970a, p5). A personal relationship is based on and therefore constrained by ‘what one knows of the other, and what one thinks or hopes the other knows of him’ (McCall, 1970a, p5).

Several authors in the organisational literature have similarly distinguished between formal and personal relationships at work (see for example: Bridge & Baxter, 1992; Lawrence, 1979; Newton, Long, & Sievers, 2006; Reed, 1988; Sias & Cahill, 1998). Reed (1988), like McCall (1970a) defines the formal or role relationship as the recognition that ‘although I may not know someone... I already have a relatedness to them as co-members of this organisation or group. This relatedness is not based on the fact that as persons we happen to be in the same situation, but on our being persons-in-role’ (Reed, 1988, p13) within the same organisation or group, and the roles are related regardless of the role-holders.

However Reed (1988) states that in an organisation the personal relationship refers to ‘how I as a person relate to and feel about you, disregarding context, position and background’ (Reed, 1988, p13). Yet it is never possible to totally disregard what you know of someone. Even outside of the work context, ‘personal relationships almost always involve knowledge and assumption of role relationships’ (McCall, 1970a, p5). We also know a lot about one another in formal role relations without any personal knowledge. Information such as age, sex, beauty and so on, which requires no personal knowledge, is taken into account in the way we behave towards each other (McCall, 1970a). Further, this knowledge usually grows through repeated interactions in a role relationship. In other words, almost all social relationships are blended, a combination of both the formal and the personal.

According to McCall (1970a), in order to understand the nature of a dyadic relationship it is important to identify its primary constraint – the role or personal knowledge. It is also important to consider the substance or social bonds that connect the persons involved.

## THE SOCIAL BONDS

McCall and Simmons ([1966] 1978) suggest that there are at least five types of social bonds.

The five bonds they identify and as outlined by McCall (1970a) are:

- *Ascription* – referring to personal relationships linked by the positions two people happen to occupy, independent of any individual characteristics. That is, a role relationship. In a work setting, for example, social exchange theorists have considered relationships based on ascription between a worker and his/her supervisor, co-workers, employing organisation, customers and suppliers (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).
- *Commitment* – referring to the varying extent to which one binds oneself or is bound to a restrictive covenant with another. It involves the semi-exclusive use of the other as a ‘source of certain specified behaviours, role supports, and other rewards. He has committed himself to the legitimation of certain aspects of certain *role-identities*<sup>1</sup> by endorsing the other party as a partner in enacting them and as an audience whose opinions about his performances of these identities are given primary weight’ (McCall, 1970a, p7).
- *Attachment* – referring to building specific others into the contents of our role-identities as they evolve and change thereby becoming crucial to their legitimation and enactment. These relationships are non-transferable, making ‘the individual vulnerable to the decisions, reactions and whims of these others’ (McCall, 1970a, p7). Note that this notion of attachment is different from attachment theory (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1969) that is discussed in subsequent chapters. In a work setting, for example, Tierney (2005) found evidence for a leader-member role identity as a result of involvement in that dyad.
- *Investment* – referring to the notion that having expended scarce resources on a relationship we cannot afford to just throw them away without significant returns. Further, the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) requires that we show consideration for the other and their investment in the relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> A role-identity is a person’s imaginative view of himself as he likes to think of himself being and acting as an occupant of a particular social position.

The notion of reciprocity is fundamental to social exchange theory. In particular, Blau (1964) distinguished between economic and social exchanges. For example, at work economic exchanges involve explicit agreements for specific obligations such as salary, status and seniority perks at work. In contrast, obligations in social exchanges are unspecified and involve ‘favors that create diffuse future obligations ... the nature of the return cannot be bargained’ (Blau, 1964, p93). In addition ‘only social exchange tends to engender feelings of personal obligations, gratitude, and trust; purely economic exchange as such does not’ (Blau, 1964, p94).

Recent organisational research has identified a new exchange relationship referred to as work exchange (Cardona, Lawrence, & Bentler, 2004). This exchange relationship refers to the implicit expectations and norms that develop relating to work-based activity such as hours worked or tasks performed that are not accounted for by either economic or social exchanges.

- *Reward dependability* – referring to seeking reliable sources to meet our ongoing needs for role-support and the other commodities of social exchange. For example, Foa and Foa (1980) identified six types of resources or commodities of social exchange: love, status, information, money, goods, and services. When we find reliable sources, we seek to establish more durable bonds with them – ascription, commitment, attachment and investment.

McCall (1970a) suggests that ‘these five bonds are, then, perhaps the most important forces serving to bind two persons together, making it likely that they will continue to interact on a personal basis in the future’ (p8). He discusses how each of these bonds, while distinct, ‘usually blend and run together in most continuing relationships’ (McCall, 1970a, p9).

Further, the bonds:

‘are present in different proportions in different relationships, and they often vary independently of one another. For example, we sometimes have commitments that differ from those ascribed to us; we frequently forgo the potential rewards of exchanges because of “prior commitments”; we fret over interpersonal investments that have not yet yielded dependable reward sources; we seek to secure our attachments through mutual commitments and formal ascriptions; and conversely, we

may resignedly fulfil commitments that no longer reflect our attachments' (McCall, 1970a, p9).

He goes on to suggest that 'the primary bond in formal relationships is ascription and that in personal relationships it is attachment. Reward dependability, investment, and commitment operate in both types equally, although as these bonds increase in strength, bringing about further interaction, the bond of attachment typically forms and moves the relationship toward the personal type' (McCall, 1970a, p12).

#### CRITIQUE OF MCCALL AND THE SOCIAL BONDS

McCall (1970a), in aiming to describe the nature of a relationship, considers a relationship as a form of social organisation, even though its members tend to only see the other person (Simmel, 1950). In addition to the primary constraint in a relationship and the social bonds that connect the persons involved described above, McCall (1970a) also outlines the structural features of a relationship: affect, status, power, authority, communication, leadership, and conformity; and considers the private culture of a relationship that emerges over time (see McCall, 1970a, for details).

As a general sociological approach to relationships, Blumstein and Kollock (1988) specifically criticize McCall (1970a) for failing to synthesize the disparate research literature. This is a common criticism of attempts at grander types of theory, namely those that attempt 'to identify the fundamental similarities and differences among several types of relationships' (Berscheid, 1995, p530). To this day relationship science still has 'few obvious candidates for a "grand theory of relationships"' (Reis, 2007, p8).

Despite this criticism, McCall's work with Simmons ([1966] 1978) has made important contributions to the development of theory in the field of symbolic interactionism (Stryker, 1979). Symbolic interactionism is an intellectual tradition of long standing (McCall, 2006). It is one of the dominant modes of theorizing in sociological social psychology and has spawned new theoretical traditions including affect control theory and identity theory (Burke, 2006). McCall and Simmons' ([1966], 1978) work, on which the social bonds are based, continues to be influential and cited in the academic literature (see for example: Fiol, Pratt, & O'Connor, 2009; Treviño, Weaver, & Brown, 2008).

McCall (1970a) states that he set out to provide a ‘framework for the analysis of social relationships as social organisations’ (p3). It is not a theory proper (Stryker, 1979). Still, the taxonomy of social bonds is a useful starting point as a descriptive aid for conceptualising a relationship. However, for the purposes of this thesis, the emotional aspects are under-developed. Josselson’s (1992) multi-dimensional model of relational needs fills this gap. It is presented and discussed in the next chapter.

# . 3 .

## **JOSSELSON'S MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MODEL OF RELATEDNESS**

Josselson (2003) is concerned with identifying the range of relational needs people have of one another so that they may 'create relationships that are both satisfying and growth-promoting' (Josselson, 2003, p205). Relational needs refer to those needs that 'parse human interaction into its elements of interconnection' (Josselson, 2003, p204). According to Josselson (2003), relational development occurs through growth along each relational need, usually with stronger relational capacities on some dimensions and weaker and more problematic behaviour on others. She notes that a number of psychoanalytic theorists have described different aspects of relating such as 'holding (Winnicott, 1965a), attachment (Bowlby, 1969), mirroring and idealization (Kohut, 1977), mutuality (Miller, 1986) or psychosocial identity (Erikson, 1968)' (Josselson, 2003, p205). However, as she states:

'Each of these theories lay the foundation for understanding particular aspects of the need for connection that may define the personal universe of each participant in the intersubjective dance, but none of the relational needs explicated by one of these theorists takes account of the others. Each theorist describes a different and separate line of relational development, and these lines interact and intersect in as yet unexplicated ways' (Josselson, 2003, p205).

In seeking to address the 'lack of a comprehensive model of the interactive relatedness that characterizes adult life' (Josselson, 2003, p204), Josselson (1992) develops, through a phenomenological study and drawing on existing theories of relationship, an 8-dimensional model of interpersonal relatedness. Briefly, the dimensions are:

- *Holding* or feeling safe, secure and grounded.
- *Attachment* or the emotional bond between people.
- *Passionate experience* or the intense feeling experience most commonly found in love relationships.
- *Eye-to-eye validation* or feeling recognized by another for who you are and such mirroring helps you know who you are.
- *Idealization and identification* or feeling you have a role model that gives you something to strive for or shows you what is possible for your self.
- *Mutuality and resonance* or feeling experience shared.
- *Embeddedness* or feeling one belongs to a social group.
- *Tending (care)* or the feeling of caring for and looking after another.

Josselson (1992) argues that the dimensions focus on the realm of personal experience, what we want and need from others. Accordingly, this means that other more observable issues such as power and aggression are less relevant (Josselson, 1992). Here she adopts the perspective of philosopher Rebecca Goldstein (1983) who argues that the reason we want power is because we want to matter to others. To illustrate her point, she argues that no one says “Ray mattered a lot to me because I could have power over him and control him”. People are, however, apt to say, “I was so afraid that Ray would leave me that I did everything I could to keep him close to home”. Rage, too, is certainly present in the interviews, but it is reactive to disappointment or betrayal’ (Josselson, 1992, p9).

She suggests that each of these dimensions of human connection are ‘probably present to at least some extent in everyone’s life’ (Josselson, 1992, p9), although ‘people often develop along particular relational pathways that highlight one or two relational themes in favor of others’ (Josselson, 1992, p9). Growth for Josselson (2003) involves ‘increasing one’s repertoire of connections and degree of comfort in these varied modes of overcoming interpersonal space’ (p207). Hence the model is developed as eclectic as she regards that there is no one theoretical position that is universally applicable.

Josselson’s (1992, 2003) multi-dimensional model of relatedness is used in this thesis as both a framework and a language for conceptualising the experience of a relationship. This chapter



initially presents each dimension in detail and concludes with a critical assessment of her approach.

## THE DIMENSIONS

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Josselson (1992) presents the dimensions according to when they are first experienced. She argues that four of the dimensions are ‘present from the beginning of life (in the case of needs to be held and needs for drive gratification) or shortly after (as in awareness of empathic response or attachment)’ (Josselson, 2003, p206). The first four dimensions are holding, attachment, passionate experience, and eye-to-eye validation.

In relation to the second four dimensions, they ‘require cognitive maturation and may not develop until late childhood (although some precursors may appear earlier). Idealization and identification (which is a single dimension) and embeddedness require a concept and experience of the self and the capacity to think about how one is positioned in regard to others. Mutuality and tending/care are also very much concerned with responsiveness to others and require development out of egocentrism and into a world of others’ (Josselson, 2003, p206).

Josselson (1992, 2003) describes the eight dimensions as primary ways to transcend the space between us and connect. There are similarities and differences between them. The dimensions are similar in that as they emerge ‘in the developmental history of the individual, each is concrete and basic. As development proceeds, each way of connecting becomes more symbolic, less physical and spatial, but no less crucial’ (Josselson, 2003, p206).

The dimensions are different as: ‘each dimension of relatedness has its own channel, its own origin and course, although they well may overlap and interpenetrate in a particular life history’ (Josselson, 2003, p206). They may develop simultaneously and independently, and ‘they may interpenetrate and incorporate the other’ (Josselson, 1992, p8), but they are not reducible to one another.

A key aspect of Josselson’s (1992) model is the notion of pathological poles. She argues that our relationships will be both satisfying and growth promoting when each of these needs is optimally met, and that there are problematic outcomes when they are either suppressed (absent) or over-used (excess). This is summarized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: The eight relational dimensions and their pathological poles.**

Absence	Dimension	Excess
Falling	Holding	Suffocation
Aloneness (loss)	Attachment	Fearful clinging
Inhibition/emotional deadening	Passionate experience	Obsessive love
Annihilation/rejection	Eye-to-eye validation	Transparency
Disillusionment/purposelessness	Idealization/identification	Slavish devotion
Loneliness/dissonance	Mutuality/resonance	Merging
Alienation	Embeddedness	Over-conformity
Indifference to others’ needs	Tending/care	Compulsive caregiving

Source: Josselson (2003, p206)

Each of the dimensions and their pathological poles as defined by Josselson (1992, 2003) is outlined in the following sections. As the model was developed partially out of Josselson’s (1992) phenomenological study, the descriptions focus on the phenomena of each dimension. That is, the emphasis is on what is observable and knowable at a conscious level rather than the underlying and unconscious aspects that may give rise to such phenomena.

### HOLDING DIMENSION

Josselson (1992) describes holding as ‘the most primary, the least evident, and the hardest to describe’ (p29) of the dimensions. This dimension is based on Winnicott’s notion of what a ‘good enough’ mother provides for her baby – an adequate ‘holding environment’.

A ‘good-enough mother... starts off with an almost complete adaptation to her infant’s needs, and as time proceeds she adapts less and less completely, gradually, according to the infant’s growing ability to deal with her failure’ (Winnicott, 1971, p10). According to Winnicott (1971), it is through this process that the infant, through adequate holding, is able to develop the capacity to conceive of and experience a relationship with external reality. Winnicott

(1975) describes satisfactory holding as ‘a basic ration of care’ (p18). It occurs when the “holding” mother intuitively manages the environment to allow her infant a full range of experience without allowing need, affect, or stimulation to be too overwhelming too often’ (Josselson, 1992, p30).

Josselson (1992) also draws on Bion’s notion of containment in describing the holding dimension. The mother provides a container for the infant by staying intact regardless of the infant’s impulses and destructiveness. Winnicott also refers to this in relation to, for example, weaning and adolescence. When the mother decides to wean the baby ‘she must be brave enough to stand the baby’s anger and the awful ideas that go with anger’ (Winnicott cited in Davis & Wallbridge, 1981, p154). With adolescents, it is the ability to meet the challenge of confrontation ‘that is non-retaliatory, without vindictiveness, but having its own strength’ (Winnicott cited in Davis & Wallbridge, 1981, p95).

However, Josselson (1992) suggests that Bion’s idea of the container adds to Winnicott’s formulation of holding because a container also transforms unpleasant and overwhelming sensations experienced by the infant so that his/her coping capacity is not strained. In other words, the container not only encloses and protects but also ‘makes safe what is inside’ (Josselson, 1992, p30). Ogden (2004) refers to this as Bion’s (1962a, 1962b) revision of Klein’s projective identification:

‘The infant projects into the mother (who, in health, is in a state of reverie) the emotional experience that he is unable to process on his own, given the rudimentary nature of his capacity for  $\alpha$ -function. The mother does the unconscious psychological work of dreaming the infant’s unbearable experience and makes it available to him in a form he is able to utilize in dreaming his own experience’ (Ogden, 2004, p1357).

Ogden (2004) suggests that the differences between Winnicott’s idea of ‘holding’ and Bion’s ‘container-contained’ are frequently misunderstood. He goes further than Josselson (1992) to explain the differences in the way the two concepts address the same human experience. For Ogden (2004), holding refers to the experience of being over time whereas container-contained refers to thinking about being.

‘Holding is seen as an ontological concept that is primarily concerned with being and its relationship to time. Initially the mother safeguards the infant’s continuity of being, in part by insulating him from the “not-me” aspect of time. Maturation entails the

infant's gradually internalizing the mother's holding of the continuity of his being over time and emotional flux. By contrast, Bion's container-contained is centrally concerned with the processing (dreaming) of thoughts derived from lived emotional experience. The idea of the container-contained addresses the dynamic interaction of predominantly unconscious thoughts (the contained) and the capacity for dreaming and thinking those thoughts (the container)' (Ogden, 2004, p1349).

In describing the holding dimension as the infant grows and becomes mobile, Josselson (1992) introduces the concept of *rapprochement* (Mahler, Pine & Bergman, 1975).

*Rapprochement* describes the process of the exploring baby returning to the mother at intervals for "refuelling" or "touching base" such as being picked up and hugged. In this way the world is experienced as finite rather than infinite, with safe limits and a sense of being bounded.

'With development, a person who has been adequately held feels confident of survival, expects that basic needs will be met and that the world will not let one fall' (Josselson, 2003, p207). As Josselson (1992, 2003) highlights, this internalized sense of support from the world is Erikson's (1968) notion of basic trust. It is a fundamental experience of being safe (Flum, 2001).

Josselson (1992) argues that the experience of being held is necessary throughout life forming 'the basis for adult experience; it is the rock on which life is built' (p38). She suggests that it 'becomes abstracted into a meaning system and as such becomes the container that orders and makes sense out of all other relationships' (p39). Josselson (1992) cites examples including belief in the institution of marriage or religious beliefs providing something to hold on to. This means that we do not need to be physically held to feel bounded and grounded as an adult, and can also feel held by institutions and ideas (Josselson, 1992).

Holding provides care, meaning, a feeling of being safe, and hope – with adequate holding we can orient ourselves to the future. When holding is optimal it is silent and in the background (Josselson, 1992). In contrast, faulty or absent holding produces extreme distress such as 'the sense of going to pieces, the sense of falling forever, the feeling that external reality cannot be used for reassurance' (Winnicott, 1975, p18). Holding in excess, where there is too much

protection, is experienced as suffocating (Josselson, 1992, 2003). The paradox is that ‘we are doomed to hold on to something that is itself ungrounded’ (Josselson, 1992, p53).

## ATTACHMENT DIMENSION

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980), from which Josselson (1992) derives this dimension, describes and explains how infants become emotionally attached to their primary caregivers and emotionally distressed when separated from them. The theory’s basic proposition is that attachment needs are primary, and that when an infant is confident that his/her primary caregiver will be available and responsive whenever desired, he/she will be more confident and interested in exploring and mastering the environment. This is referred to as using the primary caregiver as a secure base (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Wall, 1978).

Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall (1978) identify three styles of attachment: secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant; and observe that exploratory behaviour differs accordingly. Mothers of secure infants are consistently sensitive and responsive, their infants are confident and interested in exploring their environment; mothers of anxious/ambivalent infants are sometimes unavailable or unresponsive and at other times intrusive, their infants explore less and become preoccupied with their mothers’ availability; mothers of avoidant infants appear to reject, rebuff or deflect their infant’s desire for proximity and so, their infants avoid seeking contact and explore the neutral world of things but without the true interest of secure infants.

These early working models of attachment (Bowlby, 1989) become a template for our adult relationships, shaping our expectations of how others will treat us. Yet in adulthood, secure attachment is more often evidenced by a sense of emotional belonging and ‘an inner sense of a peopled world’ (Josselson, 1992 p51), rather than demonstrated through observable behaviours as in childhood. She suggests that ‘after infancy grows beyond its initial, biological basis; it moves from seeking proximity for protection toward psychological proximity for emotional survival’ (Josselson, 1992, p57).

Josselson (1992, 2003) adopts Bowlby’s (1989) position that attachment needs are primary and necessary throughout life, in contrast with early psychoanalytic notions. She argues that ‘the expression of need for closeness, security, comfort, and care is an *adult* expression of

attachment need rather than a regression to infantile modes of behavior' (Josselson, 1992, p45). She then moves away from Bowlby, who links attachment with the reduction of anxiety and the development of self-reliance, to Weiss (1982), who defines attachment as the absence of loneliness (Josselson, 1992).

According to Josselson (1992) attachment is related to holding as they both function to increase our sense of felt security but are also distinctively different. She argues that while these two dimensions are closely linked throughout childhood they become more distinct in adulthood. She illustrates the difference by the experience of their absence – an absence of holding results in a sense of falling whereas an absence of attachment results in a sense of aloneness or loss. She also notes other differences between these dimensions. For instance, 'attachment, unlike holding, requires an external object to respond to us' (Josselson, 2003, p208). Additionally, we can be attached to people who do not hold us, just as people to whom we are not attached can hold us; and while someone who is strong must hold us, we can be attached to someone who is weak.

'The paradox of attachment is that we must be attached to people who we will ultimately lose' (Josselson, 1992, p53). In contrast, fearful clinging evidences excess attachment (Josselson, 1992).

#### PASSIONATE EXPERIENCE DIMENSION

The fundamental and universal human need for passionate experience incorporates 'the human propensities for union and intensity, for the merging that is possible only in sexuality, for particularity and specialness' (Josselson, 1992, p90). 'Unlike the quiet togetherness of attachment or the invisible solidity of holding, the passions take center stage: they are noisy and insistent' (Josselson, 1992, p70). Josselson (1992) argues that from a psychoanalytic perspective all human connection is 'passionate' at its core. 'We are *aroused* to interest in others because of biological needs' (Josselson, 1992, p70).

According to Josselson (1992), most of Freud's theory explains how we change and channel these pleasure-seeking or libidinal needs through life, with early sexual desire presumed to be oedipal. This field of psychoanalytic inquiry constitutes 'understanding the rechanneling of frustrated passionate wishes – repressed and rechanneled by social necessity into symptoms,

sexual perversion, character pathology, or other forms of emotional disturbance' (Josselson, 1992, p71). Psychoanalysts, suggests Josselson (1992) without clarifying which school she is referring to, regard 'sexual excitation in its various forms (oral, anal, and genital) as the currency of exchange in interpersonal relatedness' (p71). She argues that this theory helps us better understand the passionate experiences of men but it confuses things for women. 'Arousal, the core of passion, is more physically based for men and more emotionally dominated for women' (Josselson, 1992, p72). Therefore, 'the story of passion that begins with drive is therefore much more a male story than a female one' (Josselson, 1992, p72).

Josselson (1992) also finds limitations with classical psychoanalytic perspectives for understanding relational phenomenology and mature adult relatedness. She argues that passionate experience is not necessarily sexual. Even sublimation of libidinal desires into creative or artistic endeavours has libidinal expression at its core. Rather Josselson (1992) follows Fairbairn (1954), a psychoanalyst from the British Middle School, and adopts the view that the libido is object rather than pleasure-seeking. This means that we can feel passionately connected to someone through pleasure but also through pain such as hurt, anxiety or hate. She points out that some of our most intense relationships are characterized by strong ambivalence or an alternation of these intense feeling states (Josselson, 1992).

Sexuality nevertheless plays a central role 'because the mutual exchange of intense physical pleasure and responsiveness is the most powerful medium for the interplay of connection, apartness, and reconnection. The space between you and me can disappear' (Josselson, 1992, p74). Here Josselson (1992) emphasises the desire for union and undifferentiated experience rather than sexual gratification. She notes that there are various psychoanalytic views on this, from 'a pathological regressive need' (Josselson, 1992, p76) to 'a healthy capacity to achieve union without fear of merger' (Josselson, 1992, p76). To support her position she draws on American psychoanalyst, Kernberg (1980), who also suggests that the urge to union and transcendence is of greater priority than sexual gratification in sexual passion.

Josselson (1992) is critical of the psychoanalytic view that falling in love is 'a form of temporary psychosis or ... an addictive state' (p79). Obsessive love is the excess pathological pole of passion for Josselson (1992). In contrast, she supports the notion postulated by the American psychoanalyst Person (1988) that falling in love is an aspect of healthy development, energizing life and providing a catalyst for self-development. She also draws on

Bion's (1961) basic assumption pairing observed in groups. Here Josselson (1992) is referring to the creating of a sexual pair being more about the messianic hope of redemption for the group from its conflicts and inevitable death rather than sexuality. In other words, Josselson (1992) sees falling in love as representing hope. Hope that there will be 'reunion with that which has been lost, the repair of that which has been wounded, the entry into a state of ecstatic fusion with the force of life itself' (p80).

Another aspect of passionate experience is feeling particular and special. Josselson (1992) suggests that such a need to be desired has traditionally been assigned to women, and that for some women, 'being intensely desired *is* the experience of passion' (p85). While 'there is no greater form of narcissistic gratification' (Josselson, 1992, p83), based on her research, Josselson (1992) finds this to be a rare experience among the women she interviewed.

Josselson (1992) points out that passionate experience is not enough and, alone, does not sustain a relationship. Other relational dimensions such as attachment, mutuality and validation, must be present for relationships to last. In its absence, however, is emotional deadening (Josselson, 1992).

#### EYE-TO-EYE VALIDATION DIMENSION

Eye-to-eye validation concerns the process by which we experience ourselves, in the eyes of another, as being valued, understood and mirrored. As Josselson (1992) says, we know that we matter when someone's eyes light up when they see us. It is through being known and having our experience 'articulated and recognized by someone else' (Josselson, 1992, p104) that we come to know ourselves.

Josselson considers that 'within psychoanalytic discourse, this dimension has been explicated most fully by Kohut (1977)' (2003, p210). Mirroring is at the centre of Kohut's (1977) theory of what is needed for the development of a healthy self. As Josselson (1992, p105) states: 'in order to learn to know what we want and what is inside of us, someone has to be available to recognize it with us – but *not* to confuse us with what it is that they think we *ought* to want or what it is *they* want or feel'. Kohut (1977) suggests that such empathy is a psychological necessity, and when responded to empathically, we feel affirmed as that which we are.



According to Josselson (1992), the genuine sense of self that emerges through validation is not necessary for survival in the way that holding is, but it determines the quality of our selfhood throughout life. She cites Guntrip (1971) who argues that such empathy is ‘so crucial that survival is hardly worthwhile without it’ (Josselson, 1992, p102). She also cites Sullivan (1953) for whom not being understood is ‘tantamount to ceasing to exist, the destruction of the self’ (Josselson, 1992, p108). In her own research Josselson (1992) finds that ‘desires to be understood were expressed more poignantly than any others. Beyond sex, beyond fears of loss and abandonment, wishes simply to be known and accepted seemed to be closest to the core of what people wanted from each other’ (p107).

Josselson (1992) highlights that a validating other is able to provide a record of our past for us and may also help us find our future. As she states, ‘in other’s eyes, we may also find selves that are just a step *ahead* of where we are: a confirmation of the self that we are becoming but are not sure we are – yet’ (Josselson, 1992, p111).

At one level, validation involves simply becoming known to, and therefore real to others. At a deeper level it involves knowing that our ‘inner world is shareable and can be understood by others’ (Josselson, 2003, p210). The difficulty is that ‘we are never so vulnerable as when we risk an aspect of the core of ourselves to the glare of misunderstanding’ (Josselson, 1992, p108). For Josselson (1992), an absence of validation results in shame, ‘the result of putting forward some valued part of ourselves and seeing revulsion in another’s eyes’ (p117).

According to Kohut (1977), aspects of ourselves that are inadequately mirrored form the origins of narcissistic disorders. They are kept secret and private if not repressed and become sources of shame. But ‘the greatest danger is that of annihilation (feeling we don’t even exist) or rejection, and people will often wear all kinds of masks in order to avoid these experiences’ (Josselson, 2003, pp210-211).

Josselson (1992) introduces Winnicott’s idea of the false self here – ‘when children forego their own nature in order to please their parents. That false self is an effort to find favor, quite literally, in someone else’s eyes’ (Josselson, 1992, p112). According to Josselson (1992), we are vulnerable to the emergence of a false self when we look to others for validation. The mask is the adoption of an identity that is not our own. Underneath are unmirrored self-fragments that may leave us feeling annihilated and rejected, fragmented or blank, and distant from those who do not know us. Josselson (1992) suggests that ‘the “trueness” or “falseness”

of the self that develops is a function of the acceptance that the growing child finds in the world' (p112).

Josselson (1992) cites Laing (1965) to describe the experience of an excess of eye-to-eye validation. Laing (1965) points out that:

'at the far edge of being known are the dangers of too-fragile boundaries. If those boundaries are breached, the self is vulnerable to invasion or engulfment. As autonomous selves, we wish to choose how much of ourselves we will share with those who matter to us. Being seen when we do not want to be feels like invasion or control' (p125).

In defining eye-to-eye validation, Josselson (1992) does not discuss intersubjectivity. Intersubjectivity involves the processes of both recognition (eye-to-eye validation) and assertion. According to Benjamin (1988), 'recognition is that response from the other that makes meaningful the feelings, intentions and actions from the self. It allows the self to realize its agency' (Benjamin, 1988, p12). Intersubjectivity is the idea that mental life is an intersubjective experience, occurring between subjects rather than within the individual (Benjamin, 1995). It involves a 'necessary tension between self-assertion and mutual recognition that allows self and other to meet as sovereign equals' (Benjamin, 1988, p12). According to Benjamin (1998), domination and submission result from a breakdown of this necessary tension.

Josselson (1992) introduces the notion of recognition but not assertion in defining eye-to-eye validation. Yet she presents a research subject's experience in intersubjective terms. Josselson (1992) introduces us to Joan and says that 'Joan discusses all the other friends and people in her life in terms of how well they know her *and how much of herself she can express with them*' [italics added] (p123). This may be because Josselson (1992) primarily based her ideas for this dimension on Kohut for whom 'the self was always the recipient, not the giver, of empathy' (Benjamin, 1995, p3). Benjamin (1995) argues that most theories of the self, even self psychology which has focused on intersubjectivity 'has been tacitly one-sided in its understanding of intersubjective relatedness' (Benjamin, 1995, p3).

The paradox in eye-to-eye validation is that ‘we are never so whole as when we feel understood’ (Josselson, 1992, p108) and yet we can never be fully known... even to ourselves.

## IDEALIZATION AND IDENTIFICATION DIMENSION

This dimension occurs chronologically later than the previous dimensions, when children begin to notice the differences between themselves and others around them (Josselson, 1992). Idealization is a process that ‘draws us toward others in an effort to possess them or their qualities (Josselson, 1992, p132). It may involve an attempt to possess or control the idealized other or, as Josselson (1992) suggests, ‘we may be content to identify with them: to have them internally, as people we carry with us or try to become like’ (Josselson, 1992, p127). While this dimension concerns a development of the self internally, relationally it serves to create and maintain a sense of connection as ‘I connect to you through reaching up to you’ (Josselson, 2003, p212).

Idealization is necessary for growth (Josselson, 1992). She argues that through ‘viewing others in an idealized way motivates our own resources; it makes us able to learn’ (Josselson, 1992, p134). Josselson (1992) points out how Kohut (1977) brought a fresh approach to idealization suggesting that his patients’ idealizing transferences were not defenses against rage nor against castration fears. Rather, it was necessary for developing an adequate sense of self. These “idealizable selfobjects” embody our ideals and inform our ambitions. Growth involves orienting ourselves to idealizable others and integrating ourselves towards them. In effect, they act as role models and provide a template for our ambition (Flum, 2001). The paradox here is that ‘we grope toward what must remain out of our reach’ (Josselson, 1992, p128).

Unlike other forms of relatedness, idealizable others do not need to be physically close as idealization tends to be an internal process whereby we review and replay in fantasy our links to the idealized other (Josselson, 1992). As Josselson (1992) indicates, idealization, therefore, can be used as a way of relating to people at an emotional distance.

Josselson (1992) argues that idealization is at the core of romance. ‘In classical psychoanalytic thought, these desires have their roots in the oedipal desire for possession of

the idealized parent – a desire for *exclusive* possession, to own completely all of what is perfect’ (Josselson, 1992, p132). However, Josselson (1992) sees this dimension as going well beyond the Oedipus complex and as ‘a response to our own vulnerability and lack of knowledge: we need to believe that someone else has mastery that we ourselves lack’ (Josselson, 1992, p132). She highlights that the dimension is ‘fraught with danger as well as possibility. While it enlivens the self, it requires the ability to admire without too much envy and to be vulnerable without too much shame’ (Josselson, 1992, p133).

‘Another avenue to possession of idealized others is through identification’ (Josselson, 1992, p134). Josselson (1992) acknowledges the considerable psychoanalytic literature on identification, developed out of Freud’s interest in ‘the importance of this mechanism both as a form of defense and as an aspect of normal development. His interest was primarily in the role of identification in the growth of the superego as a resolution of the Oedipus complex’ (Josselson, 1992, p134). However she argues that as a form of relatedness, ‘identification is not defensive but expansive’ (Josselson, 1992, p134) and, at a conscious level, it begins with feelings of admiration.

In her focus on the individual and his/her needs, Josselson (1992) does not address how Freud conceives of the process of identification as the basis for relatedness between group members. Freud argues that what brought and held group members together as a group was their common identification with the leader, rather than relatedness between individual group members.

Josselson (1992) emphasises that identification may serve other aspects of relatedness ‘such as preservation of an inner sense of connection to feel held or validated’ (Josselson, 1992, p135). But it is a dimension in its own right when ‘we seek to maintain connection with and to value someone whose qualities we seek to possess’ (Josselson, 1992, p135).

Counter-identification is an aspect of idealization and an intense form of connection (Josselson, 1992). It is the wish to not become like someone else and the unconscious identifications are consciously disowned e.g. ‘I’m never going to be like my mother’, or, ‘When I’m a manager I’ll never manage like that’.

Josselson (1992) points out that adolescents and young adults in particular are most likely to speak of this dimension. In contrast, older adults with a more developed sense of self, tend to reflect on those who they became like or influenced them, observing that they grew out of some relationships, because, Josselson (1992) suggests, the idealized capacities, through identification, became internalised.

Josselson (1992, p146) states, 'healthy living requires a balance between reality and idealization', suggesting that while we may feel empty, disillusioned and purposeless without role models, all role models are found to be real in the end. The risk of over-identification is slavish devotion such as found in cults where individuals subordinate 'their own initiative and desires in order to serve the leader, in the hope of creating a magical connection between them' (Josselson, 1992, p134).

#### MUTUALITY AND RESONANCE DIMENSION

This dimension concerns the 'needs for companionship, walking side by side with someone, playing together, "hanging out" or "talking to"' (Josselson, 1997, p17). In mutuality, the wish is for a shared focus (Stern, 1985), 'not "Look at me" but "Look at something else *with me*"' (Josselson, 1992, p149).

The process of mutuality, the sharing of experience that leads to a feeling of resonance between selves, is the least theoretically explored and understood dimension (Josselson, 1992). Yet, most human exchange comprises this mode of human connection. For example, when we chat about the weather with our manager, work together on a project, share a joke with a colleague at the photocopier. As Josselson (1992) points out, these types of events are unremarkable, but without them our life feels cold and empty.

According to Josselson (1997), this experience does not lead to individual growth nor does it shore up the self. Josselson (1992, p149) suggests that mutuality is for nothing 'but the simple pleasure of resonance itself', and is an expression of our fundamentally social nature rather than reducible to drives or instincts. In contrast, Miller and her colleagues at the Stone Center argue that it is essential for psychological growth (Jordan, 1986; Miller, 1988; Surrey, 1987). It is empowering, underlies the zest for living and mitigates against existential aloneness (Josselson, 1997).

In mutuality, there is authentic participation in one another's lives, through which we learn which aspects of our experiences are shareable (Josselson, 1992). Mutuality is not targeted at a specific individual like the previous dimensions, it occurs between selves, a product of both, and there is a trust that the 'we will be cherished and respected, not violated or discarded capriciously' (Josselson, 1992, p164).

Additionally, 'because of the pleasures of mutuality and the pain of dissonance, most people will usually work to take care of relationships. This taking care includes the effort to balance the experience of the self with the interests of mutual connection' (Josselson, 1992, p167). Hence, mutuality and resonance emerge in relationships characterised by trust, cooperation and loyalty.

The deeper the resonance the more relaxed the boundary between self and other becomes (Josselson, 1992). At the extreme there can be so much interconnection that the boundary of the self is lost, we merge and lose a sense of ownership of our own experience. Psychosis, suggests Josselson (1992), is the experience of complete existence in the space between. At the other extreme, without mutuality, we feel emotionally isolated and lonely.

#### EMBEDDEDNESS DIMENSION

'To be embedded is to be connected with others who share a set of meanings, to be part of a collective that shares a certain solidarity' (Flum, 2001, p10). According to Josselson (1992), belonging in a social group reflects connection through embeddedness and provides the social context in which we define ourselves. It provides us with a sense of place.

Josselson (1992) likens this dimension with Erikson's (1968) concept of identity and the individual joining society. Just as joining society involves both becoming a part of the social world and making it part of the self, 'we are embedded in our culture, which is embedded in us' (Josselson, 1992). Josselson (1992) also draws on Winnicott (1965b) and the inherent paradox of the self with others. That is, we can bear to be alone 'only when we have mastered the capacity to be alone *with* someone' (Josselson, 1992, p178).

Yet being embedded in a social group does not necessarily mean there will be affection or respect between members (Josselson, 1992). Josselson (1992, p179) cites Buber (1965) who explains:

‘To be bound up together means only that each individual existence is enclosed and contained in a group existence. It does not mean that between one member and another of the group there exists any kind of personal relation. They do feel that they belong together in a way that is, so to speak, fundamentally different from every possible belonging together with someone outside the group. And there do arise, especially in the life of smaller groups, contacts which frequently favour this birth of individual relations, but, on the other hand, frequently make it more difficult. In no case, however, does membership in a group necessarily involve an existential relation between one member and another’.

Josselson (1992) discusses the change in Western society in relation to embeddedness since the nineteenth century. Social position was once a more salient ground for relatedness and central to the self. In contrast, today we are free to connect to others based on emotional experience. The price of this liberation, says Josselson (1992), is social disruption and anomie. Embeddedness, then, provides the context for other forms of relatedness. For instance, ‘social mores affect the possibilities of mutuality by the attention and space society gives to friendship. Holding is also in part determined by the extent to which a society honors nurturance’ (Josselson, 1992, p185).

Josselson (1992) suggests that unlike the other dimensions, embeddedness is an impersonal, abstract experience. It is not eye-to-eye or side-by-side. It is an internal sense of belonging that becomes most apparent in its absence such as when we experience an identity change or loss of important attachments (Josselson, 1992).

Individuals without a sense of embeddedness feel alienated and experience an intense yearning to belong. At the other extreme, lies over-conformity and becoming so embedded that individuality is lost to the group (Josselson, 1992).

## TENDING (CARE) DIMENSION

‘Tending, or care, is a fundamentally different relational dimension that represents the experience of connection through emotional offering to another person. The perspective of the relationship shifts to a reaching out mode’ (Flum, 2001, p12). It requires empathic capacity: ‘both to know what another is feeling and to feel moved by it... Having admitted this emotional experience, we then allow our own emotional response – our compassion and care – to come to the fore: in whatever way seems most appropriate, we communicate our understanding and attempt to help or comfort’ (Josselson, 1992, p203). In return we experience joy.

Tending is difficult. For example, it requires holding without impinging, giving without smothering. Someone may require tending when there is a wish to be mutual. Hence, tending involves putting aside some of one’s own needs and demands in the interest of others. Additionally, the capacity to tend is limited by self-awareness. As Josselson (1992) says, ‘we can know of another only what we can bear in ourselves’ (p211).

Tending is also complex. ‘There are many ways to nurture, because tenderness is orientation and receptivity, not behavior’ (Josselson, 1992, p206). Josselson (1992) suggests that morality arises when care, in response to other people’s needs, comes from the heart. Tending, however, does not only comprise single emotions or positive emotions – we can give of ourselves tenderly or grudgingly and resentfully. Tending involves emotional sequences and Josselson (1992) cites research where European Christians who helped protect Jews from the Nazis described a range of feelings including pity, annoyance, resentment, responsibility, compassion and concern.

Josselson (1992) argues that psychology has focused on tending in relation to the care of infants, rather than the need for tending throughout life. She suggests that this is another example of the ‘propensity to demean and infantilize that which is relational’ (p197). Drawing on Balint (1959), Luepnitz (1988) and Miller (1986), Josselson (1992) provides another possible reason for this focus: that ‘the need for the mother is so primitive or dangerous that no language has words to describe it. Thus, defensively, we disown and depreciate, demean and devalue this dimension of experience’ (p199).



Josselson (1992) discusses the source of the need to tend and care. She cites Erikson (1964) who suggests that identity is equivalent to what one will tend, and then adds that it is not only *what* but *who* that is central. She also discusses Klein ([1946] 1975), that an individual offers what is felt to be good inside them as a result of experiencing tenderness. She also suggests that our need to tend stems from our need to feel needed. Yet Josselson (1992) also points out that the capacity to tend varies dramatically between people and that 'like other aspects of personality, it develops through complex sequences and processes that have been largely unexplored' (p200).

When cared for, individuals feel gratitude and warmth towards the caregiver and may also feel held and validated by them. If unable to tend, one can sink into self-absorption, left with a feeling of emptiness, feeling deadened and unmoved. At the other extreme of the tending dimension is compulsive care-giving.

## CRITICAL CONSIDERATION OF JOSSELSON'S MODEL

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Josselson's model is primarily developed out of psychoanalytic approaches to relatedness. The critique that follows discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the eclectic approach she adopts, the psychoanalytic origins of the relational needs, and the individual perspective of the model.

## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF AN ECLECTIC APPROACH

The advantage of an eclectic approach is that it is possible to advance knowledge by reconceptualising significant phenomena in another theoretical framework (Gauthier, 2003). Josselson's (1992) model is eclectic, not by combining significant phenomena in another theoretical framework, but by combining significant phenomena from a variety of psychoanalytic frameworks in a novel way.

As is usually found with eclectic approaches, Josselson's (1992) multi-dimensional model of relatedness is loose and informal (Reber, 1995). Nevertheless, an eclectic approach seems appropriate at this point in time. According to Reber (1995), eclecticism is healthy in fields such as relationship science where the field is still too immature for any one theory to apply

universally. Berscheid (1999) comments on the underdeveloped nature of the field of relationships in her paper concerning the 'development of a science of interpersonal relationships' (p260). Her focus is on the discipline of psychology and she argues for the need for 'transcendence' from an individualistic orientation. She advocates for more research addressing the impact of affect on cognition and on the context or system within which the relationship occurs. Josselson's (1992) work is still primarily individualistic in orientation and does not go as far as Berscheid (1999) recommends. Nevertheless, her work advances the field by highlighting the importance of an individuals' own relational context and by providing a language to describe it.

A risk of eclecticism is what Gauthier (2003) refers to as 'unenlightened technical eclecticism' (p245). This is when theories are combined that rest on incompatible assumptions. Josselson (1992) grounds her model in a psychoanalytic framework. Josselson (2003) specifically argues that all the theorists on whom she bases her model follow Fairbairn (1954) in that the need for relational connection itself is primary and that the libido is object directed. The model itself is consistent with relational psychoanalysis in that it attempts to define the fundamental dimensions of intersubjectivity (Josselson, 2003).

A potential difficulty is that, even though the theorists, including Josselson may all follow Fairbairn, there are differences between the psychoanalytic approaches from which the relational dimensions are based. This is because relational psychoanalysis itself is 'a synthesis of several important, relatively independent traditions which have evolved out of traditional psychoanalytic views' (Messer & Warren, 1995, p117). Central to the relational approach is the object relations idea of internalised representations of self and other (Messer & Warren, 1995).

Josselson's (1992) model incorporates ideas based on object relations such as holding as explored by Winnicott (1965a), as well as notions grounded in intersubjectivity such as mutuality (Miller, 1986). This means that the dimensions in her model are not necessarily based on compatible assumptions about the nature of relatedness. While the model itself is consistent with relational psychoanalysis in that it attempts to define the fundamental dimensions of intersubjectivity (Josselson, 2003), it also works with an object relations approach.

INTEGRATION OF IDEAS FROM OBJECT RELATIONS WITH INTERSUBJECTIVE THEMES

Klein ([1952] 1975), one of the pioneers of the object relations school, states ‘the analysis of very young children has taught me that there is no instinctual urge, no anxiety situation, no mental process which does not involve objects, external or internal; in other words object relations are at the *centre* of emotional life’ (p53).

The object relations approach introduced the notion that our primary motivations arise through the vicissitudes of human relating as opposed to the Freudian notion of drives and instinctual wishes (Messer & Warren, 1995). That is, there are ‘primary, original, and independent structures of mind that provide for the mental representation of self, others, and relating’ (Messer & Warren, 1995, p118).

Messer and Warren (1995, p118) cite Greenberg (1991) to explain the relational approach and the associated mental structures and motivations:

‘People form intentions on the basis of their dominant self representations (and their attendant feeling states), which serve as indicators not only of where we are but also of where we would like to go next. Guided by these indicators, we construct wishes, which are themselves represented mentally. *The wish has three components: the self, an object, and an interactional field within which the two establish a particular sort of relationship.* The self and object components of the wish are, like all representations, complex and multiply determined. They are drawn from an experience of the need at the moment, from recollected images of self and object under similar conditions of need, and from convictions about the capacities and limits of the self as embodied in its dominant shape’.

Recurrent behavioural patterns, whether adaptive or not, are the result of a desire to preserve the continuity and familiarity of our interpersonal world, our connections with others (Messer & Warren, 1995). Psychopathology is therefore always in relation to an ‘other’, and is in contrast to the psychoanalytic theories where drives, defenses, and intrapsychic conflict are central.

Josselson (2003) cites Laing (1965) who points out the absence in psychoanalytic metapsychology of constructs for a social system generated by more than one person at a

time. As Josselson (2003) states, ‘the ego is part of one mental apparatus that includes internal objects. Another ego is part of a different system or structure. How these two psychic systems can relate to each other remains unexamined. ‘Projection and introjection do not bridge the gap between persons (p50)’ (p204), rather, these processes shed light on how one individual distorts others into the figures of early experience (Josselson, 2003). However, as previously mentioned, Josselson (1992) does not acknowledge Freud’s ([1921] 1952) notion of identification that does bridge the gap between persons.

Identification is ‘the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person’ (Freud, [1921] 1952, p678). He says identification ‘may arise with every new perception of a common quality shared with some other person who is not an object of the sexual instinct. The more important this common quality is, the more successful may this partial identification become, and it may thus represent the beginning of a new tie’ (p680). Freud ([1921] 1952) suggests that the mutual tie between members of a group is based on an important emotional common quality, namely the identification of each group member with the leader.

Some authors (e.g. Ogden, 1979, Sandler, 1987 and Kernberg, 1987) also view projective identification as an interpersonal bridging concept that links intrapsychic phenomena with the interpersonal (Goldstein, 1991). Projection, as Josselson (1992, 2003) uses the term, relates to the first step of Sandler’s (1987) three-step conceptualisation of projective identification. As described by Goldstein (1991), the first step is intrapsychic. The second step involves an ‘other’ sufficiently identifying with the projection so that it affects the ‘other’s’ countertransference. The third step is an interaction where the ‘other’ is pressured to act in accordance with the projection with the opportunity for re-internalization by the projector.

Josselson (1992) does not attempt to articulate, let alone coordinate and reconcile, the differences between the competing theoretical positions between object relations and intersubjectivity in the search for harmony in her model. As Gauthier (2003) states, ‘significant advances require theoretically integrated efforts that extend the explanatory and operative power of theories of demonstrated value’ (p245). This potentially limits the utility of her model. However, relational psychoanalysis can be considered an extension of object relations theory by taking into consideration the subjective other, not only the internal object

as is the case in object relations theory. In this way, the competing theoretical positions are related and therefore sufficiently compatible to be integrated into this one model.

#### THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE DIMENSIONS

Josselson (2003) states 'each dimension of relatedness has its own channel, its own origin and course, although they well may overlap and interpenetrate in a particular life history' (p206). To support her case she cites preliminary research that has shown the dimensions are statistically independent and discriminable based on a questionnaire derived from the model (Baram-Yanai, 2002; Katz, 2002). This leaves unanswered the important issue of overlap and interpenetration given that the 'different threads of connection are often closely interwoven' (Flum, 2001, p14).

Flum (2001) suggests that some dimensions have more in common with each other than others. He specifically raises the similarities between holding and attachment as they 'both function to enhance an individual's sense of security' (p14). Flum (2001) cites the example of Kahn (1996) who advances the concept of organisational care-giving, using attachment theory as a point of departure. However Flum (2001) advocates that Kahn's (1996) description is more about holding than attachment. Hence, the risk of not sufficiently understanding how the dimensions overlap and interpenetrate is, potentially, confusion and a difficulty in differentiating between them.

That some of the dimensions of the model operate in different ways to others has been criticized (Katz, 2002). As an example, Katz (2002) argues that tending (care) 'is not another element along the same continuum, but rather a whole new axis that includes some of the other elements, but from a different point of view - this time it's not the other taking care of us, but the other way round' (p22). Josselson (1992) herself acknowledges this and suggests that through tending (care) we may provide, for instance, a sense of being held, securely attached or eye-to-eye validation, for another. She also notes that holding, like attachment and embeddness, is 'silent rather than active and eventful' (Josselson, 1992, p178) whereas the other dimensions are more active and eventful. She does not discuss the implications of these differences. This may be because the aim of the model is to capture the different ways that we reach through space and connect with each other. That this occurs in different ways can be viewed as a strength of the model as it is able to capture some of the complexities of the different ways people connect.

## RELATIONAL NEEDS AND THEIR PSYCHOANALYTIC ORIGINS

Josselson's (1992) model is grounded in psychoanalytic thinking and the relational needs are explained in terms of their psychoanalytic origins and related ideas. In explaining the needs, Josselson (1992) presents the relevant psychoanalytic thinking without always indicating the theorist or school of psychoanalytic thinking to which she is referring. This makes reading her work more difficult than it needs to be as the reader is left to infer what is intended.

The psychoanalysts who developed the ideas on which Josselson's (1992) model is based developed their thinking from their work with their patients. Josselson (1992) says 'no relationship has ever been understood in more detail' (p20). Yet she highlights the idea that limiting our understanding to such relationships blinds us. For example, the therapeutic setting replicates parent-child positions rather than normal adult relationships which are Josselson's concern. This may explain why she does not consider the psychoanalytic concepts of transference and countertransference as relevant to her model even though they describe a process of inter-connection. More specifically she believes that 'what we see so clearly focused in transference are those aspects of the early relationship with parents that centre on issues of dependency, control, competition, approval, and so on' (Josselson, 1992, p22).

Josselson (1992) frequently contrasts her ideas with Freud. She is consistently critical of his ideas and does not always do justice to his work. Freud was also concerned with relatedness. For example, Freud conceived of the process of identification as the earliest expression of an emotional tie and therefore the basis for all relatedness between people (as discussed in Freud, 1921, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*). Josselson (1992) neglects to discuss such ideas with her focus on the drive-based, psycho-sexual aspects of his work.

Josselson (2003) says that in developing her model she is attempting to define the fundamental dimensions of intersubjectivity. It is therefore surprising that she does not draw more directly on intersubjective theory (eg. Benjamin, 1988). Perhaps this is because, contrary to her stated intention, the model's main focus is on one person and the contribution relationships make to that person's life (Katz, 2002).

## THE DYAD OR SYSTEM AS AN ENTITY

Josselson (1992) acknowledges that 'relationships always occur in existing systems' (p27). In order to understand an individual, she highlights the importance of considering all relationships, not only a specific or particular type of relationship as has been more typically researched. There is no attempt by Josselson (1992) to consider the dyad, or indeed the group or wider system as entities in their own right.

This may be because in the field of interpersonal relationships the influence of the exterior environment of a relationship on its interior dynamics has only recently begun to be explored in psychology (Berscheid, 1999). It is nonetheless surprising given Josselson's (1992) psychoanalytic leanings. For example, one of the hallmarks of neo-Freudian theorists (e.g. Horney, 1950) is the emphasis on social factors. These, along with insecurity and interpersonal relations, are considered the major influences on the causes of neuroses.

Josselson (1992) assumes that the relational needs emanate from within the self. Yet it is possible that the needs may be created in the situation, such as the arousal of the need for embeddedness if there are no groups to join. By excluding interpersonal and systemic dynamics, issues of power differentials, group basic assumptions, differential emotional and other roles are excluded despite the powerful impact these have on person-to-person relationships (see for example: Bion, 1961; Menzies, 1970).

Like Josselson, in this thesis the focus is on the individual and all the relationships that matter to a person. At the same time, the organisational context within which these relationships occur is considered. This is the subject of the next chapter.

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## THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

This thesis is concerned with the intrapersonal experience of interpersonal relationships in the workplace. What is unique to these particular relationships is their context, the organisation. The influence of this context on these particular work-based relationships is the focus of this chapter.

It begins with a discussion of the two dominant and traditional approaches in the organisational literature to understanding the internal context of an organisation – organisational climate and culture (Denison, 1996). These approaches are mainly concerned with group and organisational level systems.

At the individual and interpersonal level, are issues concerning relations between people or the social aspects of the organisation that Josselson addresses, and the relations between technical aspects of the organisation such as roles and tasks. That is, the relational context is part of the sociotechnical system of an organisation (Trist & Bamforth, 1951; Zobrist & Enggist, 1984). At this level, a key issue that influences the experience of relationships (and the capacity for competent task performance) is management of the boundaries between self and role and other role-holders.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the two primary types of relationships an individual has in the organisational context – leader-member relations and relations with co-workers.



## THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

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The importance of the organisational context on behaviour at work has long been acknowledged in the organisational literature (for major reviews see Mowday & Sutton, 1993; O'Reilly, 1991). This literature has considered context as a cause, as a consequence, and as both 'a cause and a consequence of behavior in organisations' (Mowday & Sutton, 1993, p2).

There are two dominant and traditional approaches to assessing the internal context of organisations – organisational culture and organisational climate (Denison, 1996). These two constructs are used in this thesis to understand the influence of organisational context on the interior dynamics of relationships at work. This is because 'to understand what goes on in organisations and *why it happens in the way it does*, one needs *several* constructs (Schein, 2000, pxxiv). Schein (2000) elaborates on the empirical value of using both constructs:

'It seems obvious to me that organizations have climates that individuals feel immediately upon entering them. Climate is embedded in the physical look of the place, the emotionality exhibited by employees, the experiences of visitors or new employees upon entry, and myriad other artifacts that are seen, heard and felt. It is equally obvious that climate does not explain itself. We need other variables to explain why different organizations feel different' (pxxiv).

Schein (2000) then uses the organisational culture construct to explain why organisations are seen, heard and felt to be different. Ashkanasy and Jackson (2001), along with Schein, discuss how 'the terms "culture" and "climate" are frequently and erroneously used interchangeably in the organizational literature' (Ashkanasy & Jackson, 2001, p399). The constructs will therefore be 'carefully defined' (Schein, 2000, pxxiv) before discussing the ways in which they influence the relational context at work.

## DEFINING ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

In the organisational literature, the differentiation between organisational climate and culture is controversial (Ashkanasy & Nicholson, 2003). Denison (1996) suggests that while both organisational climate and organisational culture offer very different perspectives on organisational environments, it is not clear that they are measuring different phenomena.

Ashkanasy and Jackson (2001), in their review of the climate and culture literature, conclude that ‘the two constructs are overlapping and complementary’ (p399). Reichers and Schneider (1990), following Ashforth (1985), posit that the ‘separation of climate from culture research may be an artifact of time that will diminish in the future’ (p31). This is because the constructs come from different theoretical foundations and traditions with different methods and have only relatively recently overlapped in the field of organisational psychology.

#### ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

Organisational climate is defined as ‘a shared perception within discrete work groups’ (Ashkanasy & Nicholson, 2003, p25). It is ‘often considered as relatively temporary, subject to direct control, and largely limited to those aspects of the social environment that are consciously perceived by organizational members’ (Denison, 1996, p624).

Climate research developed out of Lewinian field theory (Lewin, 1951) whereby behaviour is a function of the person and the environment. Organisational climate as it is studied now had its major introduction in the late 1960’s when Litwin and Stringer operationalised the construct as comprising several dimensions – including structure, reward, and warmth and support – as perceived by organisation members (Reichers & Schneider, 1990). From the outset, climate researchers began gathering data and focused on researching the phenomenon using quantitative survey methodologies. Incorporating the use of Likert scales, these surveys enabled assessment of the extent to which employee’s shared experiences in organisations (Ashkanasy & Jackson, 2001; Schneider, 2000).

Climate researchers, unlike their culture counterparts, were less concerned with ‘haggling over definitions or elaborating all the possible nuances of climate’ (Reichers & Schneider, 1990, p14). Reichers and Schneider (1990) suggest this is because the climate construct is indigenous to organisation studies and early researchers such as Lewin, Lippitt and White (1939) were so comfortable with the construct that they ‘did not even bother to define or measure it at all’ (p19). These early researchers examined the effects of autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles on groups of boys and coined the term ‘climate’ to describe the different attitudes, feelings and social processes that developed within each of the groups (Ashkanasy & Jackson, 2001).

Ashkanasy and Jackson (2001) point out that while James and McIntyre (1996) argue for one general climate factor such as social or employee well-being, according to Schneider (1975) this has limited the construct's potential. Schneider (2000) is also critical of the approach of continually adding new dimensions. He argues that as the number of dimensions became increasingly large, the interest in the climate construct diminished. Schneider (2000) suggests that organisations have many climates and advocates for a strategic focus for the construct, such as a climate for service or safety. In this sense, 'climate is presented as shared subjective experiences of organisational members that have important consequences for organisational functioning and effectiveness' (Ashkanasy & Jackson, 2001, p399).

To achieve a desired climate requires congruence with the underlying cultural assumptions (Schein, 2000). As Schein (2000) illustrates:

'one cannot create, for example, a climate of teamwork and cooperation if the underlying assumptions in the culture are individual and competitive, because those assumptions will have created a reward and control system that encourages individual competitiveness. One cannot create a climate of participation and empowerment if the underlying assumptions in the culture are that subordinates should do what they are told and should expect their bosses to know what they are doing. One cannot create a climate of openness if the history of the company has been to punish the messenger for bad news' (xxix).

This thesis adopts Schein's (2000) resolution to the culture versus climate dilemma by treating climate as a cultural artefact arising out of espoused values and shared underlying assumptions.

#### ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Even though culture has been important in anthropology and folklore studies for over 100 years (Hatch, 1993), the idea of organisational culture is a more recent phenomenon than climate. While early studies of organisational culture coincided with climate studies (e.g. Jacques wrote about the culture of the factory in 1951), the renaissance of interest in the construct began in the 1970's (Ashkanasy & Jackson, 2001). The interest in culture came about as the construct of climate failed to address the 'deeper psychology of situations for the people in them, focusing more on their experiences of organizational policies, practices, and procedures' (Schneider, 2000, pxix). Organisational culture emphasised new ways of thinking

holistically about an organisation with its focus on systems of meaning, values and actions as found in anthropology (Ashkanasy & Jackson, 2001). It 'was the code word for the subjective side of organizational life' (Meyerson, 1991, p256). In contrast with the survey methodologies used in climate research, early organisational culture researchers drew on qualitative ethnographic methods (Ashkanasy & Jackson, 2001).

Initially the focus in the field was on conceptual issues (Reichers & Schneider, 1990). This is possibly because the construct is borrowed from anthropology and therefore requires 'more careful introduction and elaboration' (Reichers & Schneider, 1990, p19). This resulted in a struggle for intellectual dominance that has limited advances in knowledge in the field and threatened its potential (Martin & Frost, 1996; Pettigrew, 2000).

The three knowledge-constitutive classification interests identified by Habermas (1972) are one way to distinguish between the many approaches to organisational culture (Alvesson, 2002; Knights & Willmott, 1987; Stablein & Nord, 1985). The three interests are technical, practical-hermeneutic and emancipatory. As identified by Habermas (1972), the technical interest aims to enhance prediction and control within organisations by identifying and manipulating cultural variables to achieve certain (managerial) outcomes. The practical-hermeneutic interest aims to understand human existence and subjective experience. The focus is on the creation of meaning and the interpretation of symbolic communication to improve mutual understanding. The emancipatory interest aims to free organisational members from repressive organisational forces through exposing any exploitation or domination within the organisation.

Alvesson (2002) suggests that the relationship between the three approaches is antagonistic, especially between the technical and emancipatory approaches. Emancipatory approaches are concerned with ensuring that cultural projects are not subordinated to managerial interests.

Alvesson (2002) argues for reducing the gap between the approaches. As he states:

'contrary to the bold claims of much managerial writing, it is important to acknowledge that culture is not just something that can be actively mobilized to make people think, feel, value and behave in accordance with managerial wants, but that culture frequently works as a source of employees' resistance to managerial objectives and control' (Alvesson, 2002, p11).

In this thesis, the focus is on how the organisational context determines interaction. That is, how it shapes the meanings and actions of employees and sets the stage for certain behaviours, thoughts and feelings but not others (Ashkanasy, Wilderom, & Peterson, 2000). Hence, a technical interest (Habermas, 1972) is adopted whereby organisational culture is considered to be something an organisation has rather than something an organisation is (Smircich, 1983).

This approach is consistent with the structural functionalist paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). In this paradigm, organisational culture is mainly described in terms of the organisation's shared norms and values. Fundamentally, culture is the sharing of meanings, of underlying deep assumptions, and the implication is that these underlying assumptions can be managed from above, through influencing the norms and values, if their underlying structure is understood.

Parker (2000) comments on how authors in the functionalist paradigm construct multiple typologies in defining culture. Parker (2000) describes Harrison's (1972) fourfold classification as a case in point as it was later developed and widely disseminated by Handy (1985). It is described in some detail here as it is used as a framework for assessing the organisational context in this study.

### **Harrison's organisational ideologies**

Harrison (1972, 1995) identifies four organisational ideologies: power orientation, role orientation, task orientation and person orientation. Ideologies are central determinants of the character of an organisation's culture (Harrison, 1995). They refer to 'shared, emotionally charged belief systems' (Trice & Beyer, 1993, p2) that inform an organisation's members as to 'what is, how it got that way, and what ought to be' (Trice & Beyer, 1993, p2). While the four organisational ideologies seldom exist in their pure form, Harrison (1995) suggests that organisations tend to centre on one of them.

Harrison (1995) suggests that in any organisation its ideology 'affects the behavior of its people, its ability to effectively meet their needs and demands, and the way it copes with the external environment' (p150) in different ways. In describing each one, Harrison (1972) includes the types of people who do well in the organisation, the basis for assigning tasks, the basis for competition between organisational members, and the way decisions are made. In

other words, Harrison (1995) is concerned with how an organisation's ideology or culture influences its climate, including the way people interact and relate to each other at the individual level.

### **The power orientation**

'The "power" culture is found in smaller entrepreneurial organizations, and is highly competitive, oriented toward the individual and centred on a charismatic figure' (Parker, 2000, p163). Handy (1993) describes it as a web structure. The success of this type of culture 'rests on the acceptance of hierarchy and inequality as legitimate by all members of the organization' (Harrison, 1995, p190). This is because, as Harrison (1995) points out, the person with the higher power and authority makes decisions, and tasks and resources are controlled and assigned based on his/her personal needs and judgment. As such there are few rules and procedures and competition is for personal power and advantage. Harrison (1995) suggests that those who do well in this type of culture are shrewd and competitive with a strong drive for power. They are 'primarily motivated by external rewards and punishments and secondarily by the wish to be associated with a strong leader' (Harrison, 1995, p189).

This cultural type evokes dependency in the personal relationship between leaders and followers (Harrison, 1995). Followers 'depend on their leaders for direction and security, and the leaders depend on followers for loyal service' (Harrison, 1995, p190). A power culture is considered appropriate for smaller entrepreneurial types of organisation that is found in some property, finance and trading companies today (Handy, 1993).

### **The role orientation**

'The "role" culture most closely approximates to Weber's formulation of bureaucracy. It is usually found in larger organizations that have a measure of control over a fairly stable environment' (Parker, 2000, p163). Handy (1993) describes it as being structured like a Greek temple with strength in its pillars that represent its functions or specialties – the finance department, purchasing department, and so on. A small senior management group coordinate these pillars from above, from the pediment (Handy, 1993).

The emphasis in a role culture is 'on rationality and well-designed systems. Its distinctive quality is its *unilateral control* of people's behavior by systems, rules, and regulations. The system controls the people rather than responding to their needs as workers' (Harrison, 1995,

p192). Hence, 'the role, or job description, is often more important than the individual who fills it' (Handy, 1993, p185). People who do well in these organisations are conscientious and responsible with a strong sense of loyalty to the organisation.

In this type of culture, 'each level in the organization has a defined area of authority, and work can be controlled without direct supervision from the top' (Harrison, 1995, p191). Decisions are made by the person whose job description carries the responsibility. Tasks are assigned according to the formal divisions of functions and responsibilities and competition is for high status positions in the formal system. Nevertheless, competition is regulated or replaced by agreements, rules, and procedures.

The 'rules and "due process" give people protection from the arbitrary exercise of authority that is typical of the power orientation. They are able to spend less time "looking out for Number One" and thus they can devote more energy to the work' (Harrison, 1995, p191). Handy (1993) argues that a role culture is frustrating for anyone who is power-oriented, wants control over their work, is ambitious or more interested in results than method.

### **The task orientation**

'The "task" culture best approximates to the project or matrix form of organisation which is able to restructure people and resources according to need. This kind of culture is usually found in unstable, rapidly changing environments where speed and suitability of response are vital' (Parker, 2000, p163). Handy (1993) suggests the form of a net best represents its structure. It is a team or project oriented culture where 'achievement of a superordinate goal is the highest value' (Harrison, 1995, p154). Harrison (1995) later renamed this to "achievement orientation".

In this culture tasks are assigned according to the resource and expertise requirement of the job and the persons with most knowledge and expertise about the problem make decisions. This is because they are considered the ones with legitimate authority, and not those with position or power. This means that day-to-day control is difficult with senior management only retaining control through the allocation of projects, people and resources (Handy, 1993).

The organisation uses its mission to mobilise individual energy, with people aligning themselves towards a common goal where status and style differences are minimised (Handy,

1993). People who do well in a task culture are technically competent and effective, with a strong sense of loyalty to the organisation. They compete for excellence of contribution to the task. Harrison (1995) notes that while this culture ‘evokes enthusiasm and commitment, it may not have a heart. People’s needs are subordinate to the organization’s mission and its needs’ (p195). This type of culture is typical of those most promoted through organisational behaviour theories with their ‘emphasis on groups, expert power, rewards for results, merging individual and group objectives’ (Handy, 1993, p189).

### **The person orientation**

‘The “person” culture is almost an anti-culture which exists simply to serve the individuals who choose to be part of it. The ideal-type case would be a partnership formed to share support services but not expecting any other kind of co-ordination between the activities of the participants’ (Parker, 2000, p163). The aim is for people to make a reasonable living doing meaningful and enjoyable work with congenial people, rather than maximising income and profits (Harrison, 1995). Handy (1993) describes the structure of this kind of organisation as a cluster or galaxy of individual stars. Harrison (1995) later renamed this culture a “support orientation”.

These rare organisations are based on mutual trust where people are valued as human beings, not just cogs in a machine or contributors to a task. The culture fosters warmth even though ‘business organizations are tough places to nurture tender feelings’ (Harrison, 1995, p187). People care about each other, they help each other beyond the formal demands of the job, communicate about work and personal concerns, and like spending time together (Harrison, 1995). This may be because ‘people are already more caring and cooperative than their organizations allow them to be’ (Harrison, 1995, p188).

In such organisations, people who do well are effective and competent in personal relationships, with a strong commitment to the growth and development of people. Competition is for attention to one’s own personal needs. Tasks are assigned according to the personal wishes and needs for learning and growth of the individual organisation members. The persons most personally involved and affected by the outcome make decisions.

Harrison (1995) suggests that this culture may develop in small groups ‘where people work together for long enough periods of time to build personal relationships, work out their



differences, and arrive at a degree of trust' (Harrison, 1995, p196). Hence it is possible that such a culture may prevail in a small group within a larger organisation where another cultural type is dominant.

The risk of a person culture is that 'consensus may be overvalued... sometimes favoritism affects decisions about people, and injustice results. Differences in skill and ability may be ignored in the interests of "equal treatment". Tough decisions about people's performance may be postponed out of "kindness", negatively impacting the organization's effectiveness' (Harrison, 1995, p197).

An alternative typology to Harrison's ideologies is Schein's (1985) three levels of culture: artefacts, values and assumptions. This typology has been described as the best published to date (Ott, 1989), and with enduring importance and usefulness (Hatch, 1993). Schein (1990) defines culture as:

'(a) a pattern of basic assumptions, (b) discovered, or developed by a given group, (c) as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, (d) that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore (e) is to be taught to new members as the (f) correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems' (p111).

While Harrison's (1972, 1995) approach is useful for characterising the culture of an organisation, Schein's (1990) typology provides a framework for understanding its structure. Further, Schein's (1990) definition illustrates that it is through our interactions with others – our role relatedness and personal relationships – that culture, and therefore climate, is developed and maintained. At the same time and given the reflexive nature of organisational culture and climate, the context determines interaction (Denison, 1996; Beyer, Hannah & Milton, 2000). Hence, while the focus in this thesis is on how the organisational context determines interaction, it is acknowledged that organisational culture and climate, as well as the relational context at work, are mutually determined and co-evolve.

## THE RELATIONAL CONTEXT

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Organisational culture and organisational climate, the two dominant and traditional approaches to assessing the context of organisations, are primarily concerned with the group

and organisational level systems of organisations. In contrast, the relational context is mainly focused on individual and interpersonal level systems.

For Josselson (1992), the relational context means all the relationships that matter to a person, not only a specific or particular type of relationship as has been more typically researched. This is because while few relationships are uni-dimensional, similarly few are omni-dimensional. That is, most people need a number of relationships with different people at any given time in order for their relational needs to be met. For example, an individual may find the needs for passionate experience and mutuality and resonance met through his/her partner; the need for tending (care) met through his/her children; and the need for idealization and identification and validation met through his/her mentor at work. For this reason, Josselson (1992) considers it important to consider individual relationships in their larger relational contexts.

In the workplace, the relational context takes on a different meaning. This difference can be understood by distinguishing between the personal relationship and role relatedness with other persons-in-role at work (Lawrence, 1979; Newton, Long & Sievers, 2006; Reed, 1988). In the workplace, it is necessary to interact with a range of people based on the role relations as prescribed by the organisation, and these individuals may or may not personally matter to us. This means that the relational context at work is necessarily broader than as defined by Josselson (1992).

In the workplace the relational context is further complicated by the task. In leader-member relations for example, the leader's perception of a member's contribution to the task influences the quality of their relationship (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Understanding the relational context therefore requires consideration of the task system as the two are inextricably linked and form the sociotechnical system of an organisation (Trist & Bamforth, 1951; Zobrist & Enggist, 1984).

## TASK AND THE RELATIONAL CONTEXT

An organisation has a primary task, that is, the dominant task it must perform in order to survive (Rice, 1969). At the same time, many other tasks are being performed – some at a more conscious level such as making money, providing a service or producing a product,

providing employment; and some at a less conscious level such as satisfaction of social and psychological (i.e. relational) needs (Miller, 1993). For an individual to competently perform a task, he/she needs to have more than the prerequisite skills. He/she also needs to understand clearly the task to be performed and have the ability to manage the boundaries between self and role, other role-holders, the organisation and the environment (Miller, 1993).

In order to complete the systems of activities an organisation is required to perform, members are assigned roles whereby 'one member may take more than one role; and one role may be taken by more than one member' (Rice, 1969, p28). However, in assigning people to roles to undertake activities, it is not always possible to 'predetermine the role-sets that will emerge or the relative sentience of the various groups to which each individual will belong. These factors are, nevertheless, relevant to the effectiveness of task performance, supporting or opposing it' (Rice, 1969, p28).

Any organisation will therefore have a sentient system in which an individual's human relational needs for affiliation and identity are met (Miller, 1994) as well as a task system. These two systems and the relationship between them need to be managed. The boundaries – what is inside and outside the organisation, a department, a particular group, a role etc. – will also need to be managed. According to Rice (1969), three kinds of boundary management or control are required:

- '(1) Regulation of task system boundaries (i.e. regulation of the whole enterprise as an import-conversion-export system, and regulation of constituent systems of activity);
- (2) Regulation of sentient system boundaries (the boundaries of the group to which individuals belong, either directly through their roles in systems of activity or indirectly through their consequential role-sets and personal relationships);
- (3) Regulation of the relation between task and sentient systems' (pp28-29).

The relation between task and sentient systems may coincide, as with semi-autonomous work groups, but are mostly separate (Miller, 1994).

Rice (1969) suggests that 'unless a boundary is adequately located, different people will draw it in different places and hence there will be confusion between inside and outside' (p30). If individuals are uncertain about the location of a boundary, that is, they do not know who or what belongs where, then every transaction across the boundary is potentially chaotic and will

reduce the efficiency of the organisation and cause confusion in individuals (Rice, 1969). This implies boundaries are a line. Miller (1993) argues that it is more useful to consider the boundaries as a region because they are ‘never stable and static... and... are subject to perpetual renegotiation and redefinition’ (p11).

Hirschhorn (1992) provides some examples of poorly designed and managed boundaries: ‘the worker who cannot influence the stockroom attendant controlling the toolroom, the salesperson with a weak relationship to the plant manager who produces the goods to be sold, the quality inspector unable to identify who made a faulty part and why’ (p32). These examples highlight the need for good personal relationships and role relatedness for competent task performance at work.

Miller (1994) in describing a healthy organisation, suggests that an enterprise with its requirement for three types of organisation – the task system, the sentient system, and the relationship between the two systems is ‘a woolly construct that needs disaggregating. Much the same applies to “health”’ (p4). Miller (1994) illustrates this with the example of how ‘it is possible to have a “healthy” task system with high output but also a high casualty rate; or a “healthy” sentient system but a high scrap rate. Overall health is a function of the task and sentient structures and of the overarching management system and their capacity to provide containment and thus psychological safety’ (pp4-5).

Miller (1994) suggests that in order to provide psychological safety the organisation needs to be designed in a way such that the member has ‘clear role boundaries, a meaningful definition of the task attached to the role, and thirdly authority to ... use discretion and initiative’ (p7). This will facilitate the organisation member to bring the relevant skills, experience, feelings and attitudes to those tasks.

In fulfilling a role, Kahn (1992) observes that what is required now more than before is psychological presence – total attention and involvement, intellectual and emotional, that is, “being fully there”. The paradox being that the environment within which an organisation operates is increasingly unpredictable and consequently employment is perceived as increasingly unreliable. The result is that the implicit contract of employment security is dead (Capelli, 1999) and organisations are no longer a safe container. Hence, ‘we are seeing a

widespread phenomenon of psychological withdrawal. Instead of dependency, the individual has adopted a more instrumental relationship' (Miller, 1994, p5).

The challenge is that the task must still be performed. Even if the relationships are instrumental and ascribed, individuals must bring some of themselves to the task. Regulation of sentient system boundaries therefore requires management between the role and one's self, in addition to the boundaries between people as noted by Rice (1969) above – those of the group to which individuals belong, either directly through their roles in systems of activity or indirectly through their consequential role-sets and personal relationships.

Fulfilling these roles and managing their attendant relationships inevitably involves compromise. Each interaction involves negotiation (Howard, 2000) and there are interdependence challenges such as 'conflicts of interest,... unequal dependence,... exchange and coordination problems' (Blumstein & Kollock, 1988, p480). Relationships are saturated with uncertainty and change (Wood, 1995). It is therefore understandable that Burleson (1995) characterises personal relationships as a skilled accomplishment.

## MANAGING THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN ONE'S SELF AND OTHERS AT WORK

### ROLE RELATEDNESS BOUNDARIES

One of the challenges of being a person-in-role at work is in recognising and managing the boundaries between our different role relations. It is not uncommon today for organisations to acknowledge the need for employees to find ways to achieve a work-life balance (Messersmith, 2007). This refers to balancing the time between being a person-in-role at work and a person-in-roles outside of work. What is less acknowledged is the potential for crossing role relatedness boundaries at work. For example, two people start out with a work-based role relatedness and through this work relatedness develop a friendship. Difficulties arise when the friendship role relatedness interferes with the work role relatedness. Hence, any non-work role relatedness generally must be subservient to the role relatedness at work for optimal task performance (see Bion, 1961).

Another difficulty arises if the role relatedness is not shared. For example, if it is friendly work relatedness for one employee and both a work and friendship relatedness for the other

(Kurth, 1970). This may arise because it can be difficult to discern when, and indeed if, a friendly personal relationship based on a work-based role relatedness becomes a friendship-based role relatedness.

Another challenge of role relatedness occurs between ‘the role as given (which constitutes the organization’s expectations) and the role as taken (how one’s role is taken up and internally held)’ (Krantz & Maltz, 1997, p147). The extent to which the ‘role as given’ and the ‘role as taken’ align is critical for organisational management and performance. Borwick (2006) illustrates that ‘a perfectly nice fellow can turn into a dictator when promoted to the role of supervisor. Not because he is a nasty fellow, but because he believes that is his role’ (p12). In such an instance, attributing the nastiness to the personal relationship and not a misunderstanding of role relatedness requirements would be unlikely to result in constructive change. This is akin to a relational schema, more or less consciously held, with interaction expectations primed based on previous experience (Baldwin, 1995). In this case constructive change would involve identifying and then changing the schema the individual holds in relation to authority and the role of a supervisor in particular.

Rice (1969) further illustrates this difficulty when a role holder does not like the role as given: ‘dislike of the role and of the activities or behaviour required in it, and the demonstration of the dislike by attempts to change the role or modify behaviour, or the intrusion of feelings or judgments that contradict role requirements, inevitably distort intakes, modify conversion processes, and can only result in inappropriate outputs. It is as though the management of a multiple task enterprise ... were to set up a project team for the solution of a particular problem but not only could not be sure whether the team was working on the right problem but could not even control membership of the team or the resources they used or squandered’ (pp36-37).

#### PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP BOUNDARIES

There are also boundary management challenges in personal relationships. Brewer and Gardner (1996) illustrate that it is a dilemma and a matter of degree as to how much the other is included at the personal, relational and collective levels of the self-concept. At the level of the personal self this takes the form of seeking similarity with significant others and, at the same time, striving for a sense of uniqueness from them (e.g., Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). At the relational level, there is the tension between intimacy with others and separation from

them, such as discussed in psychoanalytic theories of social development (e.g., Sullivan, 1953). At the collective level, this is characterized by the need to simultaneously satisfy the need for inclusion and distinctiveness, or as Kunda (1992) states, ‘the seductiveness of increased involvement and the desire and need to maintain personal autonomy’ (p215). There are paradoxes in belonging and engaging with others (Smith & Berg, 1997).

At the social levels of the self, this natural tension between the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and the need for an independent identity (Stokes, 1998) comes about because ‘our sense of being a person can come from being drawn into a wider social unit; our sense of selfhood can arise through the little ways in which we resist the pull’ (Goffman, 1961, p320). Hence, as Pizer and Härtel (2005) suggest, ‘the issue we all face, and not just when we first join an organization but also until we leave, is how much of ourselves to invest’ (p346).

In all interactions, these tensions at the individual, relational and collective levels of the self require negotiation and management. As Josselson’s (1992) model of relational needs illustrates, there is a range within which management of these tensions optimises the quality of connection and therefore the capacity for task performance. Outside of this range such management becomes problematic when either too little or too much of the self is brought to work.

In summary, managing one’s self in role requires management of the task and sentient systems and the relationship between the two. In the task system, alignment is needed between the role as given and the role as taken for the task to be performed as expected. In the sentient system, alignment of both the role relations and personal relationships is required. The role relatedness needs to be aligned so there is no confusion between people as to the basis of their connection. The personal relationships need to be aligned so the tension between similarity and uniqueness, intimacy and separation, and inclusion and autonomy is managed so that it is comfortable for all concerned.

The relational demands of managing one’s self in role at work are complex and occur within a wider organisational system that can both constrain and enable relating. As Alvesson (2002) says, organisational culture has the capacity to “*simultaneously* create order, meaning, cohesion and orientation, thus making collective action, indeed organizational life possible

*and* to restrict autonomy, creativity and questioning, thereby preventing novel, potentially more ethically thought through ways of organizational social life being considered” (p13).

The two primary types of relationships an individual employee has to manage in the organisational context are the relationship with his/her appointed leader and those with co-workers. These are discussed next.

## LEADER-MEMBER RELATIONS

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According to Hunt and Dodge (2000), relational perspectives are considered to be at the forefront of the work on leadership. Yet, as Uhl-Bien (2006) points out, ‘while the concept of relationship-oriented behavior has been around since the earliest formal studies of leadership in organizations (Stogdill & Coons, 1957), the term *relational leadership* is surprisingly new’ (p654). As such, its meaning is still open to interpretation.

Uhl-Bien (2006) classifies the relational leadership literature into two categories. They are: ‘an *entity* perspective that focuses on identifying attributes of individuals as they engage in interpersonal relationships, and a *relational* perspective that views leadership as a *process of social construction* through which certain understandings of leadership come about and are given privileged ontology’ (p654).

This thesis adopts an entity perspective as the focus is on the followers’ experience with his/her appointed leader. From an entity perspective, leader-member exchange (LMX) theory is the most prominent (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

## LMX

LMX is a theory of leadership that suggests that leaders do not use the same style with all subordinates; rather they develop, over time and through a series of exchanges, a different type of relationship with each one (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). According to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), LMX relationships are ‘based on the characteristics of the working relationship as opposed to a personal or friendship relationship’ (p238).



Central to LMX is the principle that the resultant leader-member relationships vary in quality (Sparrowe, Soetjipto & Kraimer, 2006). The quality of these relationships can range from those based strictly on employment contracts (low LMX or “out-group”) to those characterized by mutual trust, respect, obligation, liking and reciprocal influence (high LMX or “in-group”).

The theory suggests that subordinates who are willing to engage in activities beyond that which is required from the formal employment contract become part of the in-group; and by giving more in exchange they receive more valued resources (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). These valued resources could include physical resources (budgetary support, materials and equipment); and/or other types of valued resources such as more information, desirable work assignments, autonomy, influence, confidence and concern from their leaders. In other words, ‘leaders exchange their personal and positional resources for a member’s performance’ (Fairhurst & Hamlett, 2004).

The theory was initially developed 30 years ago by Graen and colleagues (e.g., Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975) and has spawned a multitude of studies. Initial studies validated that managers did indeed develop different relationships with each subordinate, rather than a general or average leadership style with all subordinates as was previously assumed (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Most of the subsequent studies have focused on the characteristics of the LMX relationship and the relationship between LMX and organisational variables. These studies have demonstrated the value of high LMX for many important work outcomes at the individual, group and organisational level. For example, high LMX relationships have been associated with better job attitudes, organisational commitment, satisfaction with supervision, positive performance evaluations, frequency of promotions, more organisational citizenship behaviour, and less employee turnover (for reviews, see Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997; Schriesheim, Castro, & Coglisier, 1999).

Conversely, the research suggests that those in low LMX relationships are at a relative disadvantage, for instance, in terms of job benefits, career progress, access to the supervisor, resources and information. Potentially, this leads to dissatisfaction in the job, lower organisational commitment and increased employee turnover.

Tierney (2005) points out that at the individual level, studies have examined attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, and not the possible intrapersonal effects of LMX. This may be because leadership research from the perspective of the follower, while important, is an undeveloped area (Hunt, 1999; Lord & Brown, 2004; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). As van Knippenberg et al (2004) state, 'the enterprise of understanding leadership still seems to have much to gain by research that concentrates on the psychological effects on followers' (p. 826). Tierney's (2005) own research begins to address this gap. She finds support for the notion of a LMX role identity specific to involvement in the LMX dyad.

Fairhurst (2001) suggests that successful LMX development is conceptualised as a unidirectional and cumulative process characterised by increasing closeness, relational stability and transformation beyond self-interests. She argues that this underplays the experience of LMX, along with sense-making and communication processes. In contrast, a dialectical approach takes into account that 'even healthy relationships are marked by dialectical oppositions that create simultaneous pulls to fuse with and differentiate from the other' (Fairhurst & Hamlett, 2004, p9).

Fairhurst and Hamlett (2004) further suggest that the underlying assumption of relational stability results in 'scant attention to the tension, contradiction, dynamism and flux in relationships-as-they-happen' (p10). As LMX is assessed quantitatively via a rating scale, it is a snapshot of the relationship without 'just *what* is experienced as effective or ineffective, trustworthy or not, etc.' (Fairhurst & Hamlett, 2004, p10) the subject of inquiry. They therefore suggest that 'the stories leaders and members tell about their relationship should be reflective of the quality of their exchange' (p11), thereby advocating the value of a discursive lens for LMX research (Knapp, 2008).

As will be shown later in the thesis, LMX is used to select participants. They are then given the opportunity to talk in detail about their relationship with people they identify as important to them at work, such as their appointed leader.

## CO-WORKER RELATIONS

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‘Although an individual is likely to have more peer relationships than any other kind of relationship in the workplace (e.g., superior-subordinate, mentor-protégée), peer relationships have been largely ignored by researchers’ (Sias & Cahill, 1998, p273). Furthermore, ‘for many, these workplace peers become more than simply co-workers; they may also become friends’ (ibid. p274).

Morrison (2004) presents a brief history of the academic interest in workplace relationships – beginning with Mayo (1933), through to Maslow (1954) and Hackman and colleagues in the 1970’s. She suggests that it has only been in the last decade that interest in workplace relationships has resurfaced.

Sias and Cahill (1998) consider the development of peer friendships in the workplace, where it moves from friendly relations to a friendship (Kurth, 1970). Friendly relations grow out of formal role relations and, according to Kurth (1970) are a preliminary stage in friendship development. Friendly relations are different from friendship in that they ‘lack the intimacy, sense of uniqueness, strength of affective bond, and felt obligations associated with personal friendship’ (Bridge & Baxter, 1992, p202). Friendly relations are desirable. They may facilitate interaction in formal role relations, providing a pleasant basis of association and the potential for enhanced cooperation (Kurth, 1970). Because there are fewer felt obligations, it is possible to sustain friendly relations with many people, but not friendships (Kurth, 1970).

Friendships are ‘voluntarily developed and privately negotiated’ (Rawlins, 1992, cited in Sias & Cahill, 1998, p275). Unlike most romantic relationships, they are nonexclusive (Berman, West & Richter, 2002); and involve ‘mutual trust, commitment, reciprocal liking and shared interests or values’ (ibid. p218). According to Sias and Cahill (1998), the development of friendships tends to be more gradual and less deliberate, unlike romantic or mentoring relationships that tend to be punctuated by discrete events.

Friendships serve a distinct function from friendly relations at work (Gibbons, 2004). ‘People discuss work problems with co-workers, but they seek counseling and companionship from friends’ (ibid. p239). Similarly, Sias and Cahill (1998) discuss how friendly relations may

facilitate career advancement and provide an outlet for some personalised, informal interaction; but friends provide, for example, emotional support, interdependence, and self-affirmation. In friendship, people ‘come to know and treat each other as whole persons, rather than simply workplace role occupants’ (Sias, Heath, Perry, Silva & Fix, 2004). Friendships have also been found to benefit the work association through information access, work-related assistance, psychological support and improved working relationships (Bridge & Baxter, 1992).

At the organisational level, while difficulties with friendships may arise (Bridge & Baxter 1992; Morrison & Nolan, 1997), by and large their impact is positive. For example, they are associated with job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions (Morrison & Nolan, 2007). They ‘can help employees to get their jobs done, provide a climate of openness and support, and increase cooperation and acceptance of change’ (Berman, West & Richter, 2002, p225; see also: Gibbons, 2004).

In the literature on friendships, ‘relatively little attention has been given to the nature of closeness itself’ (Aron & Fraley, 1999, p140). In work relationships it has been variously categorised. For example, Bridge and Baxter (1992) used a typology of friendship closeness of “good friends”, “very good friends” and “best friends”. Sias and Cahill (1998) use a modified version of Bridge and Baxter’s (1992) typology. Bridge and Baxter’s (1992) study was only concerned with people who someone would consider as a close or good friend. Hence, Sias and Cahill (1998) added “friend” to capture the closeness of those relationships that go beyond friendly relations but are not as close as a good friend. Their final typology was “acquaintance”, “friend”, “close friend” and “best friend”. As will be discussed, Sias and Cahill’s (1998) typology is adapted for use in this study.

At the societal level, social needs are increasingly being met at work rather than the church, community, or extended family (Morrison, 2004). For example, co-workers are often an important source of emotional support when dealing with important life events outside of work, and such sharing may lead to increased closeness in the relationship (Sias & Cahill, 1998).

As with all relationships, ‘workplace friends must work through the unique challenges of their relationships, which may involve envy, competition, instrumental purposes, and physical

attraction' (Berman, West & Richter, 2002, p219). Bridge and Baxter (1992) specifically examine the potential role conflicts that may arise between friends who are also work associates. In their study they identify five dialectical tensions present in these blended relationships: *autonomy-connection* – daily contact may provide too little autonomy or separation and jeopardise the friendship; *equality-inequality* – the friendship norm for egalitarianism is strained by inequalities in the work relationship such as differential status and remuneration, and competition for jobs; *impartiality-favouritism* – organisations usually aim to provide impartial treatment, while the expectation of support in friendship legitimises, if not requires, special treatment; *judgment-acceptance* – organisations require critical evaluation while friendship is built on expectations of mutual affirmation and acceptance; and *openness-closedness* – organisations expect confidentiality and caution that may require friends to not be as open and honest with each other as usual.

In addition to the interpersonal tensions caused by friendships, Morrison and Nolan (2007) identify how friendship can impede work performance. According to their study, this can occur in relation to the task whereby friends can be a distraction from work, or result in having to do extra work. Friends can also negatively influence team climate, such as through gossip or complaining, whereby the negativity overflows to the rest of the team.

Nevertheless, and importantly, Fritz (2002) points out that 'problematic relationships may be a source of learning and growth as well as of distress. Even those persons whose behavior is offensive to us remind us that our actions have consequences for others' (p434).

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## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I discuss the methodological issues related to the three studies that comprise the research. I begin with a discussion of the nature of the research and describe how it draws on different paradigms. I then discuss the approach to the three studies as this influences the methods employed and subsequent data analyses. The methods used both to gather and analyse data in each of the studies are then described in detail in following chapters.

### NATURE OF THE RESEARCH

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The purpose of this research is to explore the relational experience of work. It assumes that an organisation is comprised of ‘a series of relationships in a network of relatedness’ (de Gooijer, 2006, p83) and that each member of an organisation is personally involved in their own series of relationships and network of relatedness. This relational context includes the relations between people or the social aspects of the organisation, and the relations between technical aspects of the organisation such as roles and tasks. That is, the relational system is inextricably linked with the socio-technical system of an organisation (Trist & Bamforth, 1951; Zobrist & Enggist, 1984).

It is the experience of being in one’s own series of relationships and network of relatedness that is the subject of this research. The aim is to uncover how individuals’ interpret or make sense of their own relational experience at work, with an emphasis on the social aspects. This locates the research within the interpretive paradigm where the inner world of the individual

is of interest and interpretations of subjective meanings are sought (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Macdonald, Harvey, & Hill, 2005; Smircich & Calás, 1987).

At the same time, the research is concerned with taking the organisational culture and climate into consideration. This is because, as discussed previously, it is through our interactions with others – our role relatedness and personal relationships – that culture and climate are developed and maintained. At the same time and given the reflexive nature of organisational culture and climate, the context determines interaction (Denison, 1996; Beyer, Hannah, & Milton, 2000). Hence, organisational culture and climate, as well as the relational context at work, are mutually determined and co-evolve.

As this research is concerned with the individuals' personal experience of their relational context, the focus here is on how the organisational context determines interaction. That is, how it shapes the meanings and actions of employees and sets the stage for certain behaviours, thoughts and feelings but not others (Ashkanasy, Wilderom, & Peterson, 2000). Hence the context, and more specifically the culture, provides a solution to the 'age-old managerial dilemma: how to cause members to behave in ways compatible with organizational goals' (Kunda, 1992, p11). In this sense, the organisational context is as an internal variable that managers can use for their own ends (Smircich & Calás, 1987).

This locates this aspect of the research in the functionalist paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). In this paradigm, the concern is with explanation and producing "useful" knowledge, that is, knowledge that aids 'prediction, control and manageability across situations' (Smircich & Calás, 1987, p233). Functionalist approaches to organisational culture mainly describe it in terms of the organisation's shared norms and values. The organisational context is, essentially, the sharing of meanings, of underlying deep assumptions. The implication is that these underlying assumptions can be managed from above, through influencing the norms and values, if their underlying structure is understood. This includes the climate as, in this research, climate is assumed to be a cultural artefact arising out of espoused values and shared underlying assumptions (Schein, 2000). In other words, the organisational context is something an organisation has rather than something an organisation is (Smircich, 1983).

## A MULTI-PARADIGM INQUIRY

By adopting a functionalist approach to the organisational context to inform the interpretive consideration of the relational experience of work, the research can be described as a multi-paradigm inquiry (Lewis & Kelemen, 2002). According to Lewis & Keleman (2002), multi-paradigm inquiry is considered provocative because each paradigm has its own assumptions related to ontology, epistemology, human nature and the nature of society (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). For example, the interpretive paradigm is characterised by a regulatory view of society, a subjectivist vision of social reality, an anti-positivist epistemology, and a voluntarist view of human nature (Smircich & Calás, 1987). The functionalist and interpretive paradigms adopt a regulatory view of society. They both have in common their ‘concern for the sociology of regulation; both concentrate on the ways social reality is meaningfully constructed and ordered from the point of view of the individuals directly involved’ (de Gooijer, 2006, p4). However in contrast with an interpretive approach, the functionalist paradigm has an objectivist vision of social reality, a positivist epistemology, and a determinist view of human nature’ (Smircich & Calás, 1987).

These differences are illustrated in the following table. According to Weber (2004) the differences between these paradigms ‘lie more in the choice of research methods rather than any substantive differences at a metatheoretical level’ (px). He argues that while he is a positivist, the metatheoretical assumptions attributed to positivism are spurious and reflect ‘a naïve, archaic view’ (pxi) of the paradigm. He further suggests that even if they are true: ‘excellent researchers simply choose a research method that fits their purposes and get on with the business of doing their research. They understand both explicitly and implicitly the criteria that their colleagues will use to evaluate their research. They also are reflexive researchers.’ (pxi).



**Table 2: Comparing metatheoretical assumptions between positivism and interpretivism.**

<b>Metatheoretical Assumptions About</b>	<b>Positivism</b>	<b>Interpretivism</b>
Ontology	Person (researcher) and reality are separate.	Person (researcher) and reality are inseparable (life-world).
Epistemology	Objective reality exists beyond the human mind.	Knowledge of the world is intentionally constituted through a person's lived experience.
Research Object	Research object has inherent qualities that exist independently of the researcher.	Research object is interpreted in light of meaning structure of person's (researcher's) lived experience.
Method	Statistics, content analysis.	Hermeneutics, phenomenology, etc.
Theory of Truth	Correspondence of truth: one-to-one mapping between research statements and reality.	Truth is intentional fulfillment: interpretations of research object match lived experience of object.
Validity	Certainty: data truly measures reality.	Defensible knowledge claims.
Reliability	Replicability: research results can be reproduced.	Interpretive awareness: researchers recognize and address implications of their subjectivity.

Source: Class notes provided by Jorgen Sandberg and reproduced by Weber (2004, piv).

Weber (2004) admits he is committing sacrilege by suggesting these two paradigms are more similar than different and is contrary to current rhetoric. Not surprisingly, therefore, there are debates over commensurability between the paradigms (Lewis & Grimes, 1999; Schultz & Hatch, 1996). At the same time, there are arguments that multi-paradigm research offers 'tremendous yet unrealised theory-building potential' (Lewis & Grimes, 1999, p673). Its potential lies in overcoming the necessarily limiting nature of single paradigm research, namely that any one paradigm will expose certain aspects of organisations while obscuring others (Lewis & Kelemen, 2002; Morgan, 1986).

While multi-paradigm inquiry may be considered provocative by some researchers it is not new. Socio-technical systems theory was developed over 50 years ago at the Tavistock Institute by 'combining conceptual frameworks that are usually segregated' (Neumann & Hirschhorn, 1999, p684) – psychodynamic and organisational theory, in other words, theories from interpretive and functionalist paradigms respectively. The approach has enabled researchers and practitioners to attend 'to both motivational dynamics and work roles and structures' (Neumann & Hirschhorn, 1999, p687). According to Neumann and Hirschhorn (1999), being able to pay attention to these organisational aspects simultaneously is part of the reason for the theory's rapid dissemination.

This research is incorporating both sequential and parallel multi-paradigm research (Lewis & Grimes, 1999). Sequential multi-paradigm research is when the ‘outputs of one paradigm-specific study provide inputs for a subsequent study’ (Lewis & Grimes, 1999, p675). The research comprises three studies:

- Study 1: Selecting research participants;
- Study 2: Assessing Josselson’s model for the workplace; and
- Study 3: Exploring the relational experience of work using the relational needs as an organising framework and, at the same time, taking the influence of the organisational context into account.

Study 1 is a functionalist study used to provide input for Studies 2 and 3. Study 2 is an interpretive study. Study 3 is primarily an interpretive study, with a smaller parallel functionalist element related to consideration of the organisational context. The underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions and their implications for the approach to the studies are discussed next.

## THE APPROACH TO THE STUDIES

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The overall aim of the research is to study subjective experience in the organisational context. The methods employed and subsequent data analyses are directly influenced by the approach taken to studying subjective experience, the organisational context, and the subjective experience in the organisational context.

### STUDY 1: SELECTING RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

In this study, the methodological issues concern the selection of participants and organisations.

#### ISSUES IN SELECTING PARTICIPANTS

As the main purpose of the research is interpretive in nature, it is not necessary for the sample to be representative (MacDonald, Harvey, & Hill, 2005). Nevertheless, it is necessary to consider that Josselson (1992) found that each of the dimensions of human connection

explicated in her model are ‘probably present to at least some extent in everyone’s life’ (Josselson, 1992, p9), although ‘people often develop along particular relational pathways that highlight one or two relational themes in favor of others’ (Josselson, 1992, p9). This indicates that it will be important to select a number of participants to maximise the possibility of finding evidence of the different relational needs at work.

A key aspect of Josselson’s (1992) model is the notion of pathological poles. She argues that our relationships will be both satisfying and growth promoting when each of these needs is optimally met, and that there are problematic outcomes when they are either suppressed (absent) or over-used (excess). This means it will be important to select a number of participants and that together these participants have a range of positive and negative relational experiences.

Whilst the organisational literature is only beginning to address relationship quality, leader-member exchange (LMX) theory has at its centre, the principle that the relationships between a leader and his/her members vary in quality (Sparrowe, Soetjito & Kraimer, 2006). As previously discussed, the research shows that subordinates in high LMX relationships have a number of advantages over those in low LMX relationships as they receive more valued resources (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). As such, high LMX relationships have been associated with better job attitudes, organisational commitment, satisfaction with supervision, positive performance evaluations, frequency of promotions, more organisational citizenship behaviour, and less employee turnover (for reviews, see Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997; Schriesheim, Castro, & Coglisier, 1999).

These findings suggest that those in high LMX relationships will have more positive relational experiences with their leaders compared with their low LMX counterparts. In addition, it has been argued that an employee’s relationship with his/her leader provides ‘a lens through which the entire work experience is viewed’ (Gerstner & Day, 1997, p840). Hence, participants will be selected on the basis of the quality of their relationship with their leader.

The focus of this research is on the intrapersonal experience of interpersonal relationships in the organisational context. As such, determining the quality of the leader-member relationship will be based on the participants’ perceptions only.

Selecting participants based on the quality of the leader-member relationship has the advantage of obtaining data that will contribute to an underdeveloped research area, namely understanding the psychological effects of leadership on followers (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, de Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). For example, in relation to LMX research, Tierney (2005) notes that at the individual level, studies have examined attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, and not the possible intrapersonal effects of LMX. Similarly, as Kellerman (2007) states: ‘good leadership is the stuff of countless courses, workshops, books, and articles. Everyone wants to understand just what makes leaders tick – the charismatic ones, the retiring ones, and even the crooked ones. Good followership, by contrast is the stuff of nearly nothing’ (p84).

### **Ethical issues in selecting participants**

An ethical issue in selecting participants in organisations regards voluntary participation. Even if participants are advised that their participation is voluntary, how voluntary is that participation really? Requests for participation in organisational research typically go through the chain of command. As such, any request for participation may not feel voluntary at all.

Issues of confidentiality and anonymity also need to be considered. In this study, surveys are numbered and names kept separately, so that unless an individual can be directly identified by his/her responses to any demographic information, anonymity can be assured. In such quantitative studies, presenting the findings in aggregate form so that neither participants nor their organizations are identifiable, further ensures anonymity and confidentiality is retained.

Another ethical issue concerns the use of incentives. On the one hand, it can be considered unethical to do so. On the other, it can be considered quite proper to thank participants for their time. Kumar (1999) argues that most people participate in a research project because of the importance of the study, not for the incentive. He suggests that a small gift as a token of appreciation is not unethical.

### ISSUES IN SELECTING ORGANISATIONS

Chatman and Jehn (1994) assess the relationship between industry characteristics and organisational culture. They study 15 firms representing four industries in the service sector. Their findings indicate that ‘stable organisational culture dimensions existed and varied more

across industries than within them' (Chatman & Jehn, 1994, p522). Hence, the way the organisational context influences relationships at work, and therefore the relational needs that manifest, is more likely to vary across industries than within them.

The size of the organisation also needs to be considered, as people in larger organisations are more likely to have more opportunities for different relational experiences than those in smaller organisations. Together this suggests that participants should be selected from different and larger organisations in different industries.

## STUDY 2: ASSESSING JOSSELSON'S MODEL FOR THE WORKPLACE

The aim of Study 2 is to find good examples for use as evidence of the presence of each relational need, thereby indicating that Josselson's multi-dimensional model of relationships does indeed apply at work. The study is concerned with subjective experience and begins with 'distilling, elucidating, and illuminating the intended meanings of the informant' (Josselson, 2004, p5). Collecting the data is 'a hermeneutics of faith which aims to restore meaning to a text' (Josselson, 2004, p1). The analysis of this text is limited to unearthing its meaning for the participant in light of Josselson's (1992) multidimensional model of relatedness. It does not intend to not to give voice to the participants' experience in any coherent way. This is taken up in Study 3.

## STUDYING SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE

Berg and Smith (1985) remind us that 'all social research occurs in the context of a relationship' (p21) between the researcher and the researched. This is important to studying subjective experience as the assumption is that social reality can only be understood from the perspective, or lived experience, of the participant (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). It is the inner world of participants that is of interest, and what is revealed of this inner world, depends on the relationship that develops (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). This is because:

- 'the inner world of research subjects can only be understood through the knowledge of their experiences of the world;
- these experiences of the world can only be understood through knowledge of the way in which subjects' inner worlds allow them to experience the outer world;

- these two realms of ‘the known’ can only be known through another subject – the researcher’ (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p4).

If different people conduct the research different data may emerge. This is because ‘the way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe’ and ‘we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves’ (Berger, 1978, pp8-9). Berg and Smith (1985) highlight the centrality of the research relationships to the research itself. They advocate for ‘a commitment to report and describe the relationships’ (Berg & Smith, 1985, p23) developed. The description of the relationship provides ‘the context necessary for interpreting what has been discovered’ (ibid.). In writing the thesis, an aim has been to describe the method in the context of the research relationship so that the data can be understood in that context.

Researching the inner world of participants assumes that they will both know themselves well enough, and be willing to reveal their inner selves in an interview situation with a “stranger” (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Yet in practice, participants may not know why they experience things the way they do, or they may hide their true feelings.

In order to facilitate eliciting the elusive phenomena of relational experience that may be hidden and unconscious, such as how we feel about someone and how he or she is important to us, Josselson (1992) conducted a series of in-depth interviews using a relational mapping technique. Relational maps are similar to a sociogram (Josselson, 1992) – a pictorial method that symbolically shows how the individual thinks and feels about those relationships at particular points in time (Abbey & Dallos, 2004). The first step is for participants to draw their ‘relational space’ by mapping with circles the most important people around them, with themselves depicted as a circle in the centre like a sun (see Appendix A).

In Josselson’s (1992) study they were asked to begin at age 5, and then draw relational maps at five-year intervals until their current age. Participants were asked how each person on the map had been important to them, how their importance changed over time, about the important moments in their relationship, and the relational atmosphere. In this way, through the use of relational maps, she was able to access participants’ relational experience and ‘get a glimpse behind defences to the anxieties they protect’ (Hollway & Jefferson, 1997, p60).

Drawing the relational maps over time also has the advantage of seeing a person more completely, in the context of their relational life as they now understand it. It allows for exploration of the changes in a person's relational world and the opportunity to understand the reason for, and impact of, those changes on relational experience. Josselson's (1992) methodological approach is adapted for this research.

The way questions are framed also helps participants to access elusive phenomena. Hollway and Jefferson (1997) describe how using a traditional question and answer format is ineffective for eliciting this type of information. They suggest a biographical-interpretive method based on the method first developed by German sociologists for producing accounts of the lives of Holocaust survivors and Nazi soldiers. The aim is to elicit concrete stories in a non-directive way using open rather than closed questions, avoiding "why" questions and following-up using the participants' ordering and phrasing. This approach is incorporated into the conduct of the research to the extent that concrete examples of the participants' relational experiences are sought.

Even if participants know how they feel and are willing to share it, they may not be able to find the words to describe it. This is because there is a limited language available for describing relationships (Josselson, 1992). Josselson (1992) argues that relationships are usually described only in terms of good or bad and with the richness and difference between the different types of connections lost. A strength of her multi-dimensional model of relationships is that it provides a language for describing relational experience. The model itself is therefore used to facilitate the conduct of the research and interpret the results.

### **Ethical issues in studying subjective experience**

There are ethical issues in conducting a study of subjective experience that involves the real lives of real people. As Josselson (2007) states:

'we can never know *for sure* at the outset that we will not have an impact on them that could be in some way painful. We can never know that what we publish will not be in some way distressing to them. We have a lot of evidence that most people find our interviews with them healing, integrative, useful, and meaningful, but this does not guarantee that nobody will ever have a less sanguine experience' (p559).

I do not know if any participant in this research had a less sanguine experience, although there was no indication that they did.

An ethical issue in reporting this study involves being faithful to the meaning of the text as intended by participants (Josselson, 2007). I select particular quotes that I consider best illustrate the presence of a particular relational need. My intention is to be faithful to the participants' meanings and the methods I adopt for validity and reliability in this study are detailed in a later chapter. But I still cannot know if the way that I have classified their response means what I think it means.

### STUDY 3: RELATIONAL EXPERIENCE AT WORK

Study 3 involves re-analysing the data obtained in Study 2 as a series of case studies. Unlike Study 2, which as described above, is a hermeneutics of faith, Study 3 is 'a hermeneutics of suspicion (Josselson, 2004). The aim is to uncover what lies hidden, decode what is being disguised, and may not correspond to what was intended. That is, from this perspective, the individuals involved in the research are no longer research participants. They are anxious, defended subjects (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000; see Josselson, 2004).

Josselson (2004) suggests that there are few recognised frameworks in psychology apart from psychoanalysis for re-authoring the meanings of a text in this way. She indicates that this form of thinking has fallen out of favour in American (and Australian) psychology, and is a less favoured form of narrative analysis. As such, the onus is on the researcher to 'persuade the reader that the narrative does not fully make sense on its own terms and is thus in need of further interpretation' (Josselson, 2004, p18). I endeavour to "persuade" the reader of the need for further interpretation, but the final assessment must ultimately rest with the reader.

#### **Ethical issues**

In this study, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity is more challenging. Even if the names of the participants, any people they refer to, and the organisations are changed as they have been in this research, it is still possible that some people will recognise them on reading any published report. Furthermore, in a study such as this where the participant's narrative is the subject of scrutiny, 'adequate concealment of identity protects confidentiality, but does not prevent narcissistic injury' (Josselson, 2004, p20).



In studies where sensitive, personal material is being obtained such as this one, Josselson (2007) argues that the idea of informed consent is an oxymoron. It is not possible to fully inform the participant at the outset about what they are consenting to. When obtaining the data for this study, I was not intending to analyse it in this way. I was planning to use it to inform the development of a measure and this is what participants were advised.

Josselson (2004) discusses the importance of the implicit contract and the need for an ethic of care. This is because ‘the greater the degree of rapport and trust, the greater the degree of self-revealing and, with this, the greater degree of trust that the researcher will treat the material thus obtained with respect and compassion’ (Josselson, 2007, p539).

In presenting the data and discussing the results, I aim to be respectful and sensitive to those who participated, even if they may not read it themselves. I selected with care the quotes I chose to include. All participants were given the opportunity to modify their transcripts but only one did. This participant made minor editorial changes only. I nevertheless specifically omitted quotes from one story that was particularly painful for another participant even though they would have been useful as a clear illustration of an aspect of that participant’s experience.

#### STUDYING ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Study 3 also involves a smaller functionalist study to assess the organisational context. A functionalist approach to culture ‘assumes that what is required for successful organisational functioning is the development of a culture that is congruent with whichever organisational niche the managers feel they wish to occupy. “Cultures” then become sets of potential states for feeding into a socio-economic-technological “spreadsheet”’ (Parker, 2000, p63).

It is common for researchers in this paradigm to measure organizational culture, although they disagree on the best way to measure it. Nevertheless, questionnaires in a quantitative analysis of the construct play an important role (Reichers & Schneider, 1990). This approach is considered to be limited to what is ‘observable and measurable manifestations of culture as represented by the shallower levels of Schein’s typology’ (Ashkanasy, Broadfoot & Falkus, 2000, p132). Ashkanasy, Broadfoot and Falkus (2000) review the use of questionnaire measures for assessing organisational culture and argue that the different measures lack

consensus in terms of their theoretical basis and questionnaire format or style. They categorise questionnaires as either typing or profiling surveys.

Profiling surveys describe an organisation's culture based on a measure of its strengths or weaknesses on a variety of organisational members' beliefs and values that assess various cultural dimensions. They can be sub-categorised into effectiveness surveys, descriptive surveys and fit profiles (Ashkanasy, Broadfoot & Falkus, 2000).

The construction of a multiple typology is common in the functionalist culture literature with different authors conceptualising different cultural types (Parker, 2000). Typing surveys usually provide detailed descriptions of cultural prototypes that enable respondents 'to understand the consequences of their type-category membership and also to compare their types with others' (Ashkanasy, Broadfoot & Falkus, 2000, p134). A cultural type also serves as a template for guiding managers on how to shape enduring norms and values towards a higher or better organisation that suits their technocratic interests (Alvesson, 1987). As such, it is considered useful for assessing the degree of fit with the prototype and the extent to which culture change programs are successful.

Ashkanasy, Broadfoot and Falkus (2000) identify three limitations to typing surveys. The first is that organisational cultures are unique in nature, whereas this approach suggests that all organisations of a particular type are similar. The second is the implication that the categories are discontinuous when they are more like "fuzzy sets" that may overlap with one another' (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994, p23). The third is that organisations may not conform to a particular type, or is a mixture of types.

I adopt a profiling approach for this research because I am seeking a global description of organisational culture that will provide some insight into the relational consequences of membership in a particular cultural category. Harrison's (1972) fourfold classification, as discussed previously in Chapter 4, is used for this purpose. This typology specifically considers the way people interact and relate to each other at the individual level.

It is worth noting some of the criticisms of a functionalist approach to organisational culture more broadly as they highlight some of the potential limitations of adopting it. For instance, Parker (2000) discusses how it has a managerial bias and, as such and unlike some other more

critical approaches, power is treated as unproblematic and uncontested. In addition, the approach assumes consensus when there may be different cultures or sites of culture in the one organisation (Louis, 1985); conflict is considered pathological even though the culture itself may be creating or reinforcing tensions; and the problem of meaning is ignored or glossed over. This means there is little space for multiple understandings and the conflicts and confusions that are typically found in practice.

### **Organisational climate**

Organisational climate is considered, for the purposes of this thesis, a cultural artefact arising out of espoused values and shared underlying assumptions (Schein, 2000). In this way it provides clues to the culture that lies beneath the surface. More specifically, climate is defined as ‘a shared perception within discrete work groups’ (Ashkanasy & Nicholson, 2003, p25).

This means participants need to be from the same work group in order to assess its climate. This is taken into consideration in the design of the studies.

This raises an ethical issue. What is the impact of selecting some participants and not others from a particular work group for Study 2 and Study 3? What influence will it have, if any, on group relational dynamics? What is the experience of the individual who hoped to be selected and is not? These are issues not normally considered in organisational research as they are beyond the scope of the research at hand, as they are in this research. At the same time, the researcher’s responsibility is to safeguard against harm to participants, and to provide full details of the research to participating organisations so that they can make an informed decision regarding participation.

The next chapter describes the selection of organisations and participants for the research.

## **PART B: THE STUDIES**

# . 6 .

## STUDY 1: SELECTING PARTICIPANTS

The aim of Study 1 is to select participants for the subsequent studies. This chapter describes the method and presents the results.

### METHOD

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This section describes the process of selecting participants. Five organisations were first selected and then two participants from each organisation, resulting in a total of ten participants. The steps involved are described below.

#### SELECTING ORGANISATIONS

The first step was to identify suitable organisations willing to participate. In selecting organisations, as described in the chapter on methodology, the aim was to select large organisations from different industries. Large organisations were sought because it was anticipated that participants in large organisations would be more likely to have more opportunities for different relational experiences. Organisations from different industries were sought as it was anticipated that different relational needs would be more likely to manifest between rather than within industries.

I began with contacting people I knew personally in relatively senior levels in large organisations in different industries. I approached people at more senior levels as I thought

they would be more likely to be in a position to approve participation or influence those who would. I also asked people I knew whether they knew anyone they were happy for me to contact who might also be interested in participating in a PhD project.

I found that when I called, if the contacts were not the Head of Human Resources, I was referred to the Head of Human Resources to approve the project in each case. This may reflect organisational protocols, or the nature of the research. As one contact stated when she said they might be interested, 'the softer skills are becoming more important'.

As I was seeking five organisations, once I had contacted five at any given time I held off contacting more until I knew whether they would participate or not. I did not want to be in the position of saying no to anyone after they had taken the trouble to consider the project and obtain approval on my behalf. This meant that it took some time to select the organisations. I first started contacting organisations in July 2003 and it wasn't until December 2003, over four months, that I had successfully recruited five. Four were based in Melbourne and one in Sydney.

I contacted 15 organisations altogether over this period. The reason for the ten refusals varied and included being too busy, doing other studies already, bad timing (usually because they were too busy), and simply not being interested.

#### MEETING THE ORGANISATION CONTACT

The first organisation I contacted asked for a brief overview of the study in writing, including what would be required of them (see Appendix B). This was provided to subsequent organisation contacts as requested. Once the study was approved I met with the contacts to discuss the project in more detail. This meeting was conducted over the phone with the contact based in Sydney. At this meeting I asked for their approval on the materials I was planning to use. For Study 1, this included a questionnaire (described below) accompanied by a letter providing details of the project, confidentiality of the data and feedback of the results (see Appendix C). I also provided them with a brief description of Harrison's four cultural types (see Appendix D) and asked them to classify their organisation accordingly. The aim was to provide a snapshot of the organisation's culture from the managerial perspective.

For the subsequent studies where two participants from one team in their organisation were to be selected for interview, I showed the organisation contact the explanatory letter I was planning to send to the selected participants. It was written to meet ethics requirements. It was somewhat formal in nature and included details of what to do if there were any adverse reactions as a result of participation and how to make a complaint about the research.

The first organisation contact I spoke with about these letters was not happy for me to send the letter and requested I simply contact the selected participants to arrange the interview without it. He considered it unnecessarily alarmist. While I advised him that it was needed to meet ethics requirements, he was satisfied for me to discuss those issues with the participants directly. He would keep the details on file should any problems arise (none did for any of the interviews). I was personally relieved that he felt this way. To meet university ethic requirements, I had to modify my originally composed letter. The revised letter was more formal and therefore distancing than that originally proposed and yet I wanted to “get close” to the participants and use an empathetic approach (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The revised letter suggested a more traditional interview style where the interviewer is to remain “neutral” (Fontana & Frey, 2005). But, it did not seem possible or desirable to remain “neutral” when interviewing the participants about their very personal experiences of their relationships at work.

Based on this request from the first organisation contact to not send the letter, I subsequently gave all the organisations the option to do this as well. Not sending the letter was the preferred approach in each instance although they kept the details themselves and I discussed the issues with participants at the interview.

As an incentive to encourage selected participants to agree to participate and in appreciation for giving of themselves and their time, I offered to make a donation of \$20 to a charity of their choice. The participants seemed to appreciate this offer and each nominated their preferred charity. They were sent a thank you letter with details of the donation after the interview (see Appendix E).

## SELECTING RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

In order to select participants, the organisations were first asked to identify two teams that, where possible, comprised:

- Approximately 10 employees:
  - This is to maximise the possibility that there will be employees with both positive and negative relational experiences within a given team;
- Employees who have been in the job for at least two years:
  - This is to enable following Josselson's method of asking about relationships at different times;
- Highly articulate and insightful employees:
  - This is because the information sought is elusive with limited language available; and
- Employees in roles with a wide range of connections:
  - This, like selecting larger organisations, is to maximize the possibility of having more opportunities for more varied relational experiences.

It was not always possible to meet these criteria. The contact in the first organisation that agreed to participate suggested I drop the two-year criterion as this was too limiting in their organisation. The team criterion was also problematic as they were not organised that way. I conceded because it had not been as easy as I had hoped to find organisations willing to participate, and they were organised into departments comprised of smaller groups of people who reported into the same leader anyway. The team criterion was also problematic in the second organisation that agreed to participate. While there was one sufficiently large team, the remainder of the organisation was primarily organised into departments. The subsequent three organisations did not raise an issue with the request for teams. It turned out this was because each of these organisations ran call centres that they each nominated to participate.

In order to select participants based on the quality of their relationship with their leader, each team member was asked to complete the LMX-7 (Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982). This is a seven-item measure based on LMX theory that is considered 'the standard these days' (Ashkanasy, 2003, personal communication). Gerstner and Day (1997) reviewed different measures based on LMX theory and concluded that the LMX-7 had the soundest psychometric properties. Similarly, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) found the LMX-7 measure to



be ‘the most appropriate and recommended measure of LMX’ (p236). While they conclude that LMX is a multi-dimensional construct, they argue that the ‘dimensions are so highly correlated that they can be tapped into with the single measure of LMX’ (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, p237)

LMX-7 has the added advantage of only taking a few minutes to complete. This was important because minimising the time spent on the project was a key consideration for each organisation in agreeing to participate. In addition to the LMX-7 items, demographic questions were added to facilitate sample selection. They were: time in current position; time in organisation; employed full-time or part-time; age; country of birth; being part of ethnic or minority group; and gender. Previous studies have shown such characteristics influence the quality of the leader-member relationship (Duchon, Green & Tabor, 1986). The questionnaire comprising the LMX-7 and demographic characteristics is contained in Appendix F.

The aim was to select the two team members with the highest and lowest LMX rating respectively from one of the teams in each organisation. The idea of having the team members from the same team was to facilitate assessing the context. Even though final selection was to come from one team, two teams were nevertheless recruited in each organisation. This was to safeguard against any problems in a particular team, such as the possibility of a very small LMX range. Further, while the LMX rating was the primary criterion for selection, where two team members had the same or similar (that is, one-point difference) LMX rating, the sample was to be selected to ensure it comprised, where possible, a cross-section of participants based on the demographic characteristics measured.

In three organisations, the organisation contact distributed the questionnaires for the team members to complete. They were provided with reply-paid envelopes so they could be returned directly to the university. In the remaining two organisations, the organisational contact asked me to liaise directly with the respective team leaders. In these cases, both call centres, the team leaders preferred that I attend their weekly team meeting and administer the survey directly.

A research assistant at the university collected the questionnaires and entered their responses into a spreadsheet. I set up the spreadsheet so that each participant’s LMX score was automatically calculated. My supervisor at the time then selected participants. First she

selected the team from within each organisation with the greatest range in LMX ratings, and then the team members with the highest and lowest LMX rating respectively, taking the demographic characteristics into consideration. I was purposely not involved in this stage of the selection process. This was done to ensure both the participants and myself were blind to the LMX rating so as to not bias the data collection for the subsequent studies.

## RESULTS

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### THE ORGANISATIONS

The participating organisations were all medium to large in size, and each operated in a different industry: telecommunication services, diversified financials, electric utilities, employment services, and airfreight and logistics. One organisation is listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, one is privately owned, and the remaining three organisations have an international parent company. Table 3 shows the organisational cultural type based on Harrison's ideologies as assessed by the organisation contact.

**Table 3: The organisation, industry and organisational cultural type.**

Organisation	Industry	Organisational Cultural Type
1	Telecommunication Services	Task (achievement)
2	Employment Services	60% Task, 40% Person (support)
3	Airfreight and Logistics	Task
4	Diversified Financials	Role
5	Electric Utilities	Mainly Task, some Role, fewer Power, not Person

### THE PARTICIPANTS

Overall, 106 questionnaires were distributed across the five organisations and 91 questionnaires were returned. This resulted in a high average response rate of 86%. This does not account for the fact that in one organisation, the contact first emailed all potential participants and asked who would be willing to participate before distributing the questionnaires. In this organisation, five questionnaires were distributed and returned.

The teams from three organisations (six teams), and one of the teams from another organisation, were from call centres, all inbound calls except for one outbound calls team. They represented the majority (85%) of returned questionnaires. The other teams comprised people in different functions including finance and accounting, legal, company secretarial and human resources.

LMX RATING

Table 4 below shows the range of LMX ratings for all teams. The LMX ratings can range from a low of 7 to a high of 35. The lowest rating received was 15 and the highest was 35. The average LMX rating for all participants was 26. The range in LMX ratings in any given team varied from four (Organisation 1, Selected Participants' Team) to 18 (Organisation 4, Selected Participants' Team).

**Table 4: The number of participants and range of LMX ratings for each team in each organisation.**

Organisation	Selected participants' team		Other team	
	n	LMX ratings	n	LMX ratings
1	4	21 - 25	1*	24
2	10	18 - 34	5	19 - 33
3	17	15 - 28	10	28 - 35
4	10	15 - 33	10	21 - 31
5	15	20 - 34	10	23 - 35

\* Participation was voluntary and only one participant agreed to participate from this team.

Table 5 shows the demographic characteristics of all participants, as well as for high<sup>2</sup> and low LMX participants respectively, and the subset of 10 selected for the subsequent studies.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that the LMX ratings could range from a high 35 to a low 7. For illustrative purposes, participants whose LMX rating is 25 or more are categorized as high LMX, and participants whose LMX rating is 24 or less are categorized as low LMX.

**Table 5: Demographic characteristics of the sample.**

	<b>All participants</b> (n=91)	<b>High LMX</b> (n=54)	<b>Low LMX</b> (n=37)	<b>Selected participants</b> (n=10)
<b>Time in current position</b>				
<1 year	42%	43%	41%	20%
1-2 years	27%	35%	16%	40%
3+ years	31%	22%	43%	40%
<b>Time in organisation</b>				
<1 year	21%	24%	16%	10%
1-2 years	29%	31%	24%	20%
2-3 years	13%	13%	13%	30%
3-5 years	22%	19%	27%	30%
5+ years	15%	13%	19%	10%
<b>Employed full-time</b>				
	96%	97%	94%	100%
<b>Age</b>				
<25 years	18%	17%	19%	10%
25-34 years	67%	66%	68%	90%
35+ years	15%	17%	13%	-
<b>Born in Australia</b>				
	69%	70%	68%	80%
<b>Part of ethnic or minority group</b>				
	18%	17%	19%	30%
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	33%	32%	38%	40%
Female	66%	68%	62%	60%

No significant differences<sup>3</sup> were found between high and low LMX participants, and between all participants and those selected for interview, on the demographic characteristics measured (see Appendix G).

<sup>3</sup> To determine significance, a chi-squared test was performed on the demographic characteristics: employed full-time or part-time, country of birth, being part of an ethnic or minority group, and gender. A Mann-Whitney test was performed to determine significance on the non-parametric data: time in position, time in organisation, and age.

## SUMMARY

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In this chapter, the steps taken to select participants for the research is described and the results presented. The method and results for the subsequent studies – Study 2: Assessing Josselson’s Model for the Workplace, and Study 3: Relational Experience at Work – are presented next.

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## **STUDY 2: ASSESSING JOSSELSON'S MODEL FOR THE WORKPLACE**

The aim of Study 2 is to examine whether the relational needs as explicated by Josselson (1992) are apparent at work. This chapter describes the method and presents the results.

### METHOD

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Overall, ten double blind in-depth interviews were conducted with employees who had the highest and lowest LMX rating within their work team respectively. The interviews are double blind in that both the participants and I were “blind” to the participants’ LMX rating. The interviews took between 1.5 and 2 hours to complete and were all conducted at the participants’ workplace.

### ARRANGING THE INTERVIEWS

Once the participants were selected, the organisation contact was informed who, in turn, advised the participants of their selection. I then contacted the participants to arrange a convenient time for the interview.

### CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEWS

As described in the chapter on methodology, Josselson (1992) developed her model using in-depth interviewing incorporating a relational space mapping technique. In Josselson’s (1992)

study, work relationships were only investigated when a participant included someone from work into their broader relational world. Hence, it was not known whether the model would be useful in its current form in the workplace.

I adapted Josselson's (1992) method for this study. Her method was closely followed, except that instead of asking participants to draw relational space maps at five-year intervals, I asked them to draw two relational space maps only. These were for the current time and an earlier time when things were different, usually in a previous role in the organisation and reporting to a different manager.

It became apparent after the first two interviews that modifications were needed. The most significant changes were made at this time, with smaller changes made as successive interviews were conducted. These are described below.

## THE FIRST TWO INTERVIEWS

I conducted the first two interviews with participants from Organisation 1. They were the people with the highest and lowest LMX ratings in their team, and were male and female respectively. I remind the reader that LMX ratings could range from a high 35 to a low 7. For illustrative purposes, participants whose LMX rating is 25 or more are categorized as high LMX, and participants whose LMX rating is 24 or less are categorized as low LMX.

I asked the participants to draw and describe relational space maps for two time periods – one for the present time and one for an earlier time in the organisation, usually when in a different position and reporting to a different manager. I then asked them to describe their relational space maps following Josselson (1992) as outlined in Appendix A. The advantage of using relational space maps was that they would reveal important relationship networks in the workplace, would show visually how important each person was relative to others, and would facilitate each participants' discussion of their work relationships.

These first two in-depth interviews comprised two sections. Initially I asked them to draw and describe their two relational space maps and asked about each person on the maps accordingly. At the end of each interview, I then showed the participants a chart describing Josselson's (1992) relational needs (see Appendix H).

The chart aims to link Josselson's (1992) model of relational needs to the organisational context using Schein's (1985) levels of organisational culture as a framework. It briefly describes each relational need at the surface levels of culture, namely artefacts and values. The artefacts level is separated into two parts. First, the anticipated affective outcome for the employee is described following Josselson, illustrating the relational need and its pathological poles. Second is shown the patterns of observable behaviour that would be expected when each of the relational needs are met in a "good enough" way.

When describing the chart to participants, I briefly described it and read out the description of each relational need. I asked for any comments that came to mind and whether they thought their relationships at work were captured by the relational needs as shown.

### **Difficulties with the first two interviews**

The two initial interviews revealed difficulties in eliciting information about relational needs at work. On the positive side, the two participants in the pilot study were willing and cooperative and it was evident that thinking about who was important to them was a relatively easy task. This was evidenced by their ease in drawing the relational space maps.

However, there were difficulties, particularly for the male participant, indicating that modifications to the research approach were needed. While responding to questions about who is important to them was straightforward, describing how someone is important to them was more difficult. For example, even after being asked three times how his manager was important to him in different ways, the male participant was still only able to respond in a broad and general way. As he stated, "*clearly significantly impacts on well, one, what you do, and you know job satisfaction etc. etc. I would have thought that he was probably the biggest influence at work*". When further prompted about his feelings when he's with his manager, the participant did not use feeling words and simply stated "*we get along fine*", later stating that "*he's alright, pretty good*".

As this participant had the highest LMX rating for his team, this difficulty may be an example of how the relational needs are quiet and in the background until they are not met.

Nevertheless, it is also possible that the responses reflect discomfort for this male being interviewed by a female and about feelings.



While both men and women experience all the relational needs (Josselson, 1992), there are differences between them. For example, Josselson (1992) finds that some otherwise articulate men find it difficult to describe their important relationships beyond that they are simply important. Another difference is that ‘men view their connections in simpler terms, with fewer shadings and layerings’ (Josselson, 1992, p223). However, Schwalbe and Wolkomir (2001) suggest that ‘the nondisclosure of emotions, or their very limited disclosure, is a key part of signifying a (hegemonic) masculine self’ (p95). For example, Padfield and Procter (1996) studied the effect of interviewer’s gender on the interviewing process and found that both the researchers and the participants bring their gendered self to interviews. The difference, they found is that in some same sex interviews (female), unsolicited and sensitive information is volunteered which does not occur in the cross-gendered interviews. They conclude by arguing that the interviewee’s sense of gender influences the interview and that ‘it is difficult to either predict or be aware of quite how interviewees’ perceptions do shape the interview’ (p365). In this study, it may be that the difficulties reflected this male participant not being entirely comfortable in dealing with his own feelings, or his feelings in front of a female.

There are other possibilities including the participant not feeling comfortable enough to reveal his true feelings (regardless of the interviewer’s gender), not being consciously aware of his feelings, not being sure how to label his feelings, and that the line of questioning was inadequate to elicit that type of information. This last point highlights the importance of eliciting concrete stories or examples. It was only when I was able to do this that more revealing information emerged. However, this is not easy to do. As Hollway and Jefferson (1997) indicate from their experience, while it may be ‘apparently simple, it required discipline and practice to transform ourselves from the highly visible asker (sic) of our questions to the almost invisible, facilitating catalyst of the interviewees’ stories’ (p60).

This male participant had difficulty in acknowledging the importance of his relationships and emotions at work. This suggests that he does not feel comfortable revealing his true feelings generally, not only in interview situations. This participant asserted early in the interview that emotions were not in his “comfort zone” and that doing a good job was all he cared about. Later, however, he was able to cite an example of how it feels good when his ideas are acknowledged by more senior colleagues in emails that are also sent to the Chairman of the

Board or external advisors. As he says, *“I guess that makes you feel part of the team”*. However, even telling me about this example in a confidential setting was not entirely comfortable as evidenced by his prefacing this statement with *“I know it sounds a bit vain but it’s not...”*. Further, he downplayed its importance with “I guess that” at the beginning of the sentence.

It was problematic finding ways to capture the relational and emotional aspects of work life without leading or forcing responses. For example, as mentioned previously, I asked the male participant three times how his manager is important to him. This felt like an attempt to force a response. In another example, in attempting to understand the relational experience the participant was describing, I asked, *“so you feel a bit excluded sometimes?”* to which he replied, *“there is definitely that, and I mean, that’s a conscious decision sometimes and its also unconscious at others”*. While it appears that I may have understood the participant correctly this time, there was some leading of his response as “excluded” was my word and not his. Another time, I did not adequately understand the participant. Again, I attempted to understand what was being said by summarizing my understanding of the participant’s comments: *“getting more involved, and you feel like you’re part of it”*, to which he replied, *“No, well, yes – but...”*. At least the participant corrected me, indicating that the impact of my sense of at times leading or forcing responses may have been minimized.

I found it necessary, particularly with the male participant, to keep bringing the conversation back to talking about the relational aspects of work and not the work itself. For example, at one point I said, *“Going back to the comfort zone, well, what’s not your comfort zone...”*. Then only two paragraphs later the participant was back to talking about the work and I felt the need to say: *“So any more feeling stuff?”*.

Another difficulty related to the relational needs overlapping. I found I could not always be sure whether, for example, what they were talking about related to holding or attachment or both. This would create problems when analysing the data. Additionally, the chart was too complex. The key information sought related specifically to the relational needs and whether they are sufficient to capture their relational experience at work. Linking it to the organisational context turned out to be an unnecessary and unhelpful addition.

## REVISING THE APPROACH

As a result of the first two interviews, the approach was revised for the remaining eight interviews. The final approach comprised three sections, each using a different technique.

They were:

1. A series of semi-structured open-ended questions designed to directly address each relational need. This helped address the potential difficulties in distinguishing between them.
2. The drawing and describing of relational space maps was modified as participants were asked to draw the circles so that distance reflected the importance of a person to them, and for the size of the circle to indicate the quality of the relationship, larger circles indicating better quality relationships.

Participants were also asked to draw organisational charts for the two time periods to illustrate their position in the formal hierarchy. The organisational charts were added as, based on the pilot, it was considered that an understanding of the formal work relationships and the work itself at the beginning of this section of the interview would facilitate the discussion.

3. The chart was modified to a series of rating scales where participants rated the extent to which the relational needs were met for themselves, and as they perceive it for most people in the organisation. They were then asked to comment on their ratings.

In addition, a revised introductory statement set the scene for the focus of the research, and three open-ended questions were asked about (a) what would you tell a newcomer about what it's really like working in the organisation, (b) aspects of the culture that help or hinder getting the job done; and (c) describing relationships that are particularly gratifying or meaningful, and those that are fraught (see Appendix I for the final interview proforma).

Additional revisions were made because it was apparent from the first interview that the model requires modification for the workplace. While there is evidence for all the relational needs, the socio-technical systems notion of differences between a task system and a social

system (Trist & Bamforth, 1951) would need to be taken into consideration in order to adequately capture the participants' relational experience at work.

For example, the researcher routinely asked whether there were any aspects of their relationships at work that hadn't been covered. In the very first interview, and in relation to the relational need *eye-to-eye validation*, the participant said:

*"I don't know. I guess, where do we put results... rather than me being me... you know, the output or, you know, where's the recognition for what you've done rather than the salary and that sort of thing".*

### **Distinction between social and task aspects**

After the first four interviews, evidence was found for a distinction between the social and task aspects of work for the relational needs of *holding*, *eye-to-eye validation*, *idealization and identification*, and *mutuality and resonance*. Task-related *holding* refers to feeling safe and secure, bounded and grounded in relation to the work itself. Task-related *eye-to-eye validation* refers to feeling that your contribution to the task is validated fairly and equitably. Task-related *idealization and identification* refers to ambition and a sense of hope that it will be achieved, specifically in relation to the work and career rather than personal qualities. Task-related *mutuality and resonance* refers to participating fairly and equitably in shared tasks.

As no further modifications to the model emerged after an additional six interviews, for the purposes of this study, it was considered that theoretical saturation of the phenomenon 'relational needs' had been sufficiently reached at ten interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, resulting in 331 pages of single-spaced text.

## DATA ANALYSIS

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In order to analyse the data, an interpretive, qualitative approach is adopted. The general strategy involves using Josselson's descriptions of each relational need and their pathological poles as a thematic template and identifying good examples of these in the transcripts for use as data. No attempt is made to quantify the number of good examples for each relational need,

as this is not the aim of the study. Rather, the aim is to find good examples for use as evidence of the presence of each relational need, thereby indicating that Josselson's multi-dimensional model of relationships does indeed apply at work.

Note that through the process of analysing the data and discussing the issue in supervision, I decided to include *passionate experience*. Initially, following Flum (2001), I decided to exclude this in relation to the workplace. The thinking was that such libidinal connections are outside the range of relational needs an organisation should be held accountable for fulfilling. However, *passionate experience* is an important part of the relational experience of work. Further, Josselson (1992) suggests that while sexuality plays a central role, adopting an object relations approach means that sexuality is not essential for feeling passionately connected. For example, it may arise through feeling particular or special to someone. In describing their relationships, participants (both male and female) discuss what they feel to be inappropriate sexual references from others, and/or feeling special in relation to a significant other at work. There is also a distinction between task-related and socially based *passionate experience*. Task-related *passionate experience* refers to feeling intensely about the work itself.

## VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

A criticism of research using such an interpretive, qualitative approach is the lack of suitable criteria for justifying knowledge consistent with their underlying epistemological and ontological assumptions (Giorgi, 1992, 1994; Jones, 1998). Hence, Sandberg (2000, 2005), drawing on a long tradition of phenomenological approaches and criteria recommended by several researchers (see for example, Kvale, 1989, 1995; Lather, 1993, 1995; Richardson, 1995, and Sandberg, 1995), argues for communicative, pragmatic and transgressive validity, together with reliability, as suitable criteria. Detailed below are the various steps taken both during the data collection and analysis stages of this study to ensure such validity and reliability is achieved.

### COMMUNICATIVE VALIDITY

Communicative validity concerns 'the extent to which the researcher has achieved a truth claim can be justified' (Sandberg, 2005, p54). This is achieved in three ways.

First, during the interview phase, communicative validity is achieved by ensuring both researcher and participants have a common understanding of what they are doing, referred to as a ‘community of interpretation’ (Sandberg, 2005). In this study, all participants received an explanatory letter outlining the purpose of the study. They then completed the LMX-7 that focuses on the quality of the relationship between the participant and his/her manager. At the beginning of each interview with the selected participants, I reminded them of the purpose of the study. As a result of the first two interviews, I also asked participants to briefly describe their job and draw their organisational chart to show how their role fits in to the organisation overall. The structure of the interview was also outlined including that it comprises three sections. In addition, participants had the opportunity to review their transcripts. Only one chose to make minor edits, the others indicated they were happy with what they said during the interviews. Hence, clarification was obtained on both sides to facilitate a constructive community of interpretation for each interview.

Second, communicative validity is achieved by striving for coherence – aiming for the parts of the text to fit the whole and for the whole to fit the parts (Sandberg, 2005). In this study, the general analysis strategy involves using the relational needs and their pathological poles as a thematic template. First evidence is sought from the interview transcripts for each relational need. With regard to communicative validity, I strove for coherence by reading and re-reading each transcript and making interpretations about which relational need is in operation consistent with the immediate context and the transcript as a whole. The focus is on the meaning of the statements in context for this particular participant, unlike most forms of content analysis that focus on particular statements (Sandberg, 2000). This is important as participants refer to the same individuals and situations in the different sections of the interview. It is also particularly challenging given the general lack of language to describe the nature of our relationships with others (Josselson, 1992) and the close connections between the relational needs.

As an example of the close connections between the relational needs, in the following quote the participant is talking about being a part of his professional network (*embeddedness*) and, at the same time, how it provides him with a base to fall back on, a sense of “good enough” *holding*. As he says:

“If this place [the organisation] got sold tomorrow and I had to go and work somewhere else, well that’s fine because, you know, I have got this or that experience... I’ve got this base [professional network]. I know these people.”

As such, and for ease of interpretation, only statements that are good examples of a single relational need are used as data.

After identifying good examples for each relational need, the data was then grouped and further subdivided according to the extent to which the need is met or not. The data was then compared both within and between high and low LMX participants, and according to whether the need is met by the manager or someone else at work. This process enables refinement of the coherence of my interpretations, important for communicative validity.

Thirdly, discussing findings with other researchers and professionals establishes communicative validity (Sandberg, 2005). In this study, the researcher discussed the findings with her thesis advisor at the time, who also served as the second rater in this study for reliability purposes (see Reliability section of this chapter). Two feedback reports were provided to each organisation, one in relation to the questionnaire and the other the interviews. While offers were made by the researcher to discuss the findings of each report with each organisation, they were not taken up.

#### PRAGMATIC VALIDITY

Pragmatic validity involves checking that what people say is what they actually do (Sandberg, 2005). Without a separate study in which the findings are re-contextualized into practice, or participant observation, this can be achieved by asking follow-up questions to constantly embed the statements in concrete situations. Another way is to observe the subject’s reaction to a particular interpretation of a statement.

In this study, follow-up questions were constantly used such as “Can you give me an example?” “How does that fit?” “What do you mean by that?” Further, as illustrated earlier, participants would correct me when I gave an incorrect interpretation enabling a clearer understanding to be obtained.

That the interviews comprised three methodological approaches – open-ended questions, relational space maps and a rating scale – further enhances pragmatic validity and, at the same time, minimizes method bias.

#### TRANSGRESSIVE VALIDITY

Transgressive validity involves searching for differences and contradictions rather than coherence. In this study, this was achieved by going through the data identified as a particular relational need and specifically assessing it against the possibility of it actually being a different relational need. This was achieved by a “back translation” exercise (Smith & Kendall, 1963). It involved placing all the “good examples” on separate cards and then sorting them into their relational needs. When examples were not easily sorted or not sorted back into their original relational need, they were replaced with new examples that met these requirements. In addition, data that did not conform to the relational needs as described was sought.

The back translation exercise was conducted about three months after identifying the “good examples”. This was to ensure I was approaching the task “fresh” and minimised interference due to memorising past ways of categorizing the data. The exercise highlighted the closeness of the dimensions. While I was able to sort the majority correctly, I was surprised how difficult it was at times given that I had originally identified all the “good examples” myself.

#### RELIABILITY

Initially two transcripts were coded using the relational needs as a thematic template and a second rater (the thesis advisor at the time) assessed the data against them. Any disagreements were discussed until resolved. Based on the results of this process, the remaining transcripts were coded by the researcher. For the final review of coded results by the second rater, any disagreements were again discussed until resolved.

Reliability is also achieved by interpretive awareness. This requires the researcher to maintain an interpretive awareness and explicitly deal with his/her own subjectivity (Sandberg, 2005). For example, by remaining open to alternative explanations during the research process I modified both the method and the model to better fit the data. In analysing the data, in addition to the formal process described to achieve transgressive validity, I was constantly checking that the data categorised as a particular relational need was not plausibly another.



Interpretive awareness is also characterised by beginning with description and then focusing on explanation (Weber, 2004). In this research, Study 2 focuses on describing the relational needs as found in the data. Study 3 aims to integrate and explain the data.

## RESULTS

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This section presents the evidence from the interviews for each relational need at work. Overall, support is found for the application of Josselson's multi-dimensional model of relationships to the workplace, with modification. Seven of the eight dimensions are present in all the interviews, the exception being *passionate experience*. Five of the dimensions (*holding, eye-to-eye validation, passionate experience, idealization and identification, and mutuality and resonance*) are altered to incorporate the findings that participants also have these needs in relation to the task itself. In terms of the extent to which employees' relational needs are met, overall the relational needs are met to a "good enough" extent for most, are in absence for some, and in excess for few.

The results show detailed findings for each relational need in turn:

- *Holding*
- *Attachment*
- *Passionate experience*
- *Eye-to-eye validation*
- *Idealization and identification*
- *Mutuality and resonance*
- *Embeddedness*
- *Tending (care).*

After a brief description of each relational need (see Chapter 3 for full descriptions), a table is presented that summarises where good examples are found in the data according to the extent to which they are met, and by whom, for both high and low LMX participants. This is followed by specific quotes from the interviews to illustrate these good examples.

HOLDING

As described by Josselson (1992), *holding* is the feeling of being safe, secure and grounded. It is an internalized sense of support from the world that develops over time and is akin to Erikson’s (1968) notion of basic trust (Josselson, 2003). In its absence we feel like we are falling with nothing or no one to hold onto; and in excess, we feel suffocated. As an adult, we can feel held by institutions or ideas as well as people. Based on the interviews, this dimension of Josselson’s model is modified to include a sub-set of task-related *holding* for the workplace. This sub-dimension refers to feeling safe, secure and grounded in relation to the work itself.

Table 6 indicates where good examples are found in the data of *holding* and task-related *holding*, the extent to which these needs are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants. It shows that there are examples of “good enough” *holding* and task-related *holding* for both high and low LMX participants. However, there are only examples of *holding* and task-related *holding* being met by the manager to a “good enough” extent for high LMX participants. In contrast, there are more examples of low LMX participants experiencing either an absence or excess of *holding* and task-related *holding* than their high LMX counterparts.

**Table 6: Where good examples of *holding* and task-related *holding* are found according to the extent to which they are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants.**

Met by:	HOLDING					
	High LMX			Low LMX		
	Good enough	Absence	Excess	Good enough	Absence	Excess
Manager	x				x	
Other						x
Context	x		x	x	x	x
TASK-RELATED HOLDING						
Manager	x				x	x
Other	x	x		x	x	
Context	x		x			x

Specific quotes illustrating where these needs are met and by whom, for high and low LMX participants are presented below.

## GOOD ENOUGH HOLDING

Only high LMX participants mention “good enough” *holding* by their managers. As one high LMX participant says:

*‘He’s the manager... he’s just a great person... I believe you can just tell that someone’s confident in what they’re doing and where they want things to go, and without saying too much about anything... He’s just a nice guy to, to sort of have there, and he sits right sort of behind me’.* Participant # 5

Both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” *holding* by the organisational context at work. This is most clearly demonstrated in relation to the environment created by the group for both high and low LMX participants as illustrated in the following quotes:

*‘Just the team environment; the [X] team environment rather than necessarily anyone. I mean, look, at the end of the day you’ve got those skills so you’re sort of grounded yourself. But you know, the team, well that’s what the team does’.* Participant # 1 (high LMX)

*‘It’s just that security feeling, that feeling that you’re coming to work, but it doesn’t actually feel like work most of the time... how do I explain it? You know when you’ve been in a place for so long and it’s just, you get that comfort feeling’.* Participant # 8 (low LMX)

### **Good enough task-related holding**

Participants also mention feeling held in relation to the task. However, only participants in high LMX relationships mention “good enough” task-related *holding* by their manager. For example, for one high LMX participant, this manifests as public support of her actions:

*‘It’s good to know that she’s there and like she backs us up... Sometimes it looks like they’re going to get it today and you say ‘yeah, you’ll get it today’ and then they don’t. And they ring and they want to speak to a manager and they’re going off their head... but like [Manager’s] always really good and she’ll never say ‘well she shouldn’t have said that’. She’ll say ‘it did look like it was going to go out, but however it hasn’t, I do apologize’.* Participant # 7

Both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” task-related *holding* from others at work:

*‘If someone’s not happy... in my team anyway, it seems like there’s more than one or two people that are willing to support or help out. Or if they’re under pressure, you know... we try and sort of soften the blow if anyone’s having a hard time’.* Participant # 5 (high LMX)

*‘[Colleague] would stick up for me all the time... and like if we were in a meeting she would be sitting there: “no, I agree with what [Participant] said”’.* Participant # 2 (low LMX)

Both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” task-related *holding* by the organisation such as through its policies, practices and structures. For example, one high LMX participant mentions the training policy and her experience of participating in training:

*‘Very big on training, like I said, we had orientation and I spent three days. One day you got workplace safety and workplace goals and whatnot, and like they pretty much explained how the whole company worked and give you a good idea of sort of what you’re up for in the first three days’.* Participant # 7

A low LMX participant mentions the team structure, illustrating how it contributes to “good enough” task-related *holding*:

*‘There’s a big support mechanism. Even though you don’t, you’ve got a team leader who’s overseeing that the team, you’ve also got like specialists in the team’.*  
Participant # 10

#### ABSENCE OF HOLDING

Only low LMX participants report an absence of *holding* in relation to their manager. For example, one participant in a low LMX relationship made this observation about his manager:

*‘I’ve never caught her saying anything bad about me, but you see her with other people when she’s talking to them and, as soon as they’re gone, she’ll talk about them behind their back. So you think, if she does it to them she must do the same thing to you, so you’ve got to watch out for her’.* Participant # 8

Neither high nor low LMX participants report an absence of *holding* in relation to others at work. This is not to say that it does not or would not occur for these participants, rather that it does not feature in the relational worlds of the participants in this sample.

One low LMX participant mentions an absence of *holding* in relation to the organisational context:

*'When I first started I'm just like 'Oh my God, this is an absolute classic, like, how much fun is this'. But it's very hard sometimes to know when that flexibility stops. Like how you don't know the boundaries, the façade of being casual clothed, kicking a football, you think, "oh wow, this is fantastic". But sometimes it can work in the opposite way because it's sort of like, well, how far do I go without being perceived to be too ..., do you know what I mean?'* Participant # 6

### **Absence of task-related holding**

Only low LMX participants report an absence of task-related *holding* in relation to their manager. For example, one participant in a low LMX relationship makes this observation about her manager:

*'If they're not giving you feedback, and you have no idea whether your work is at the level it should be, then you have no idea. You just keep doing what you think you're doing, and making you know, repeating yourself over and over again, and you're not, you don't really know where you stand'.* Participant # 4

Both high and low LMX participants report an absence of task-related *holding* in relation to more senior others at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*'There's one person there and it's not [Manager]... it's funny, there's people who just are OK, you've got 10 runs on the board OK, something goes wrong, as long as she can fix it that's fine. And they'll help you fix it. Or you know, they won't come down on you, you know, unreasonably. There's other people who, OK, well 10 runs doesn't actually mean anything, It's you know, it's merits and would actually, I don't say cut off or whatever, but you'd definitely know about it even though you could fix it or it could be rectified'.* Participant # 1 (high LMX participant speaking of another senior manager in the organisation)

*'He's not scary. He's just very, for example, one day a guy came in, well actually he didn't come in, and he got fired. He just told him not to come back anymore because he was sick one day... You don't get any second or third chances with him. He might give you a first chance, but that's it... don't mess up'*. Participant # 8 (low LMX participant speaking of his manager's manager)

One high LMX participant mentions an absence of task-related *holding* at the organisational level:

*'There's a retention rumour now that our call centre's going to go overseas. So there's a few people worried about that'*. Participant # 9

Both high and low LMX participants recognize there are limits to *holding* at work. As one high LMX participant says:

*'Everybody knows that the job's not going to be there forever... I think that's just the way it is now. Nobody thinks you'll get a job for life'*. Participant # 9

Similarly, a low LMX participant comments:

*'I don't think my job is safe and secure. I don't think really that anyone's job here is safe and secure... I mean, I don't feel scared and I don't feel like I'm going to lose my job. At the same time, I don't think, I don't take anything for granted'*. Participant # 4

#### EXCESS HOLDING

Neither high nor low LMX participants mention excess *holding* in relation to their manager.

Only one low LMX participant mentions excess, and that is in relation to the restrictive nature of the culture and the way the work is organized:

*'A bit more like a school yard where, you know, you've got people on top of you all the time. So the culture there is really, you know, it's, there's not much freedom to do things there... if you come late you've got to call someone, if you go to the toilet you've got to tell someone'*. Participant # 10

#### **Excess task-related holding**

Only one low LMX participant mentions excess task-related *holding* by his manager and the work itself:

*'I feel too secure and too safe that it's like, I've done this before, this is so easy'.*

Participant # 8

As he went on to say:

*'There's no challenge and you think, oh you've been here the longest and you sort of get away with this, you can get away with that ... I haven't been told not to [by the Manager]... you see other people saying how come you get away with everything? Blah, blah, blah'.* Participant # 8

This participant felt both an excess and an absence of *holding* by his manager, the excess in relation to the task and the absence in relation to the social aspects of the relationship.

Both high and low LMX participants comment on excess task-related *holding* in relation to the work role itself:

*'You get comfortable and cushy in your environment... and because you are sort of very insulated in a little department in a comfy little job that I think you can get quite suffocated to what other options there are, not just in [our organisation] but outside'.* Participant # 9 (high LMX)

*'It's pretty comfortable here... it's a bit cruisy. So that... like okay, if you want to go move to another position, yeah it might be a couple of grand more... do I want to, you know?'* Participant # 10 (low LMX)

## ATTACHMENT

As described by Josselson (1992), *attachment* is the feeling of being emotionally bonded to another, of feeling close and secure that in turn enables us to feel sufficiently self-reliant to explore our environment. In its absence we feel alone or lost, and in excess we fearfully cling to whom we feel insecurely attached.

Table 7 indicates where good examples of *attachment* are found in the data, the extent to which this need is met and by whom for high and low LMX participants. It shows that there are examples of “good enough” *attachment* for both high and low LMX participants. The examples for high LMX participants are from both the manager and someone else at work. In

contrast, the only examples of “good enough” *attachment* for low LMX participants are from someone else. Additionally, there are no examples of high LMX participants experiencing either an absence or excess *attachment*, yet their low LMX counterparts experience both.

**Table 7: Where good examples of *attachment* are found according to the extent to which they are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants.**

Met by:	ATTACHMENT					
	High LMX			Low LMX		
	Good enough	Absence	Excess	Good enough	Absence	Excess
Manager	x				x	x
Other	x			x	x	

Specific quotes illustrating where these needs are met and by whom, for high and low LMX participants are presented below.

GOOD ENOUGH ATTACHMENT

Only high LMX participants mention “good enough” *attachment* with their manager. As one participant in a high LMX relationship says of her manager:

*‘You can just come in and ask her anything... like if something’s bothering me I’d say... and she’d go “oh” and we’d discuss it’.* Participant # 3

Both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” *attachment* with others at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*‘Definitely if I’ve got an issue, he’s somebody I could rely on’.* Participant # 1 (high LMX participant speaking of an ex-colleague with whom they act as mentor/confidante for each other)

*‘There are a couple of people that I’m very close to and it’s nice to be able to walk into work and, you know, see a friendly face and be able to talk about your personal life and just get along with people... even though you may not necessarily work closely with them it’s nice to know... if you are... having a bad day they’re there and you can always go and say “hi” and talk to them’.* Participant # 4 (low LMX participant speaking of colleagues on the same floor)



#### ABSENCE OF ATTACHMENT

Only low LMX participants mention an absence of *attachment*, either in relation to their manager or someone else. As one low LMX participant says about her relationship with her manager:

*'I couldn't confide in her and, as much as we talk about what we did on the weekend and stuff, that's as far as it would go'.* Participant # 6

That same low LMX participant speaks of her sense of loss when a co-worker left:

*'We had a very good friendship, so, and that was quite disheartening when she left. But, you know, it happens doesn't it. What can you do?'* Participant # 6

#### EXCESS ATTACHMENT

Only low LMX participants mention excess *attachment* and only in relation to their manager. This low LMX participant is anxious about his relationship with his manager. He is unsure if she will hold his needs in mind and feels it necessary to make sure she continues to know about them:

*'Like the manager that I have now... there's things that... you think, better remind her that this is what I want'.* Participant #8

#### PASSIONATE EXPERIENCE

Josselson (1992) describes *passionate experience* as the need for union and intensity, a heightened sense of arousal and a desire for particularity and specialness. In its absence we feel emotional deadening, and in excess obsessive love. Based on the interviews, this dimension of Josselson's model is here modified to include a sub-set of task-related *passionate experience* for the workplace. This sub-dimension refers to the need for feeling intensely in relation to the work itself and a desire for a special capacity to undertake it.

Table 8 indicates where good examples of *passionate experience* are found in the data, the extent to which it is met and by whom for high and low LMX participants. It shows that there are few examples of *passionate experience* and none are in relation to the manager. Only low LMX participants experience "good enough" *passionate experience* in relation to someone else at work, and only high LMX an absence. Both high and low LMX participants experience "good enough", as well as an absence of, task-related *passionate experience*.

There were no direct examples of excess *passionate experience* or excess task-related *passionate experience*.

**Table 8: Where good examples of *passionate experience* are found according to the extent to which they are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants.**

Met by:	PASSIONATE EXPERIENCE					
	High LMX			Low LMX		
	Good enough	Absence	Excess	Good enough	Absence	Excess
Manager						
Other		x		x		
TASK-RELATED PASSIONATE EXPERIENCE						
Manager						
Other	x	x		x	x	

Specific quotes illustrating where these needs are met and by whom, for high and low LMX participants are presented below.

GOOD ENOUGH PASSIONATE EXPERIENCE

No participants mention passionate experience in relation to their manager. However, one low LMX participant commented on her relationship from her manager’s perspective:

*‘If they come across someone who’s junior who’s them, that’s exactly like them, a little mini version of them, well then obviously they’re going to really be able to relate to them. They’re going to adore them... I think it’s just human nature to be like that...I think that if they can almost see a young version of them, they get all excited... my old manager was like that... on a personal level, I reminded her of herself’.* Participant # 4 (who was in a high LMX relationship with her previous manager)

Only two low LMX participants mention “good enough” *passionate experience* with others at work. These participants are currently having an intimate relationship with someone they met through work:

*‘My boyfriend as well, definitely. Like we always have a bit of a chat, which is fantastic, healthy and unhealthy, you know. I’d prefer probably not to be in the same company but met him through [the organisation]’.* Participant # 6

### **Good enough task-related passionate experience**

Only one high LMX participant mentions having “good enough” task-related *passionate experience* at work. As he says:

*‘I get the buzz out of... you know, give the right advice’*. Participant # 1

### ABSENCE OF PASSIONATE EXPERIENCE

Only one high LMX participant mentions an absence of *passionate experience* at work:

*‘I don’t have any sort of passion for... call centres... and the type of people that they attract... doesn’t really interest, it doesn’t actually interest me at all’*. Participant # 9

### **Absence of task-related passionate experience**

One high and one low LMX participant mention an absence of task-related *passionate experience* at work:

*‘I’d probably like rather get out... I’ve been here for quite a few years already, it’s four years and it gets a bit stale after a while... something a bit more challenging... that you have a little bit more passion about’*. Participant # 9 (high LMX participant)

*‘The actual role that I’m doing... really it’s pretty monotonous at the moment um for myself. It’s not that challenging so I guess I want to be challenged but I’m not sure exactly... what direction I want to go in... personally I’m sort of just stagnant’*.

Participant # 10 (low LMX participant)

### EXCESS PASSIONATE EXPERIENCE

There were no examples of excess *passionate experience*. However, one high and one low LMX participants mention their experience of their previous manager:

*‘Would walk past me and go, “Feel like a root?” ... I think that maybe she was lonely in her personal life, and maybe I wasn’t the one, or [male co-worker] or someone else wasn’t the one, but it made her feel good to be surrounded by men’*. Participant # 5 (high LMX participant)

*‘He used to come up and go, “Are you cold”, this was one of the things, yeah, it’s a big sexual harassment thing, but that’s how dysfunctional he is, he thought this was funny. “Are you cold?” I’m like, “Yeah, it’s a bit cold in my office, yeah, um”*.

*“Show me your nipples then” and I’m like, “What!” and I go, “I’ve got a push-up bra*

on, you're never going to see them and he's like, "What's a push-up bra?" and I'm just like, "Just get out of my office, you know, ra, ra, ra"... so that's how dysfunctional he was'. Participant # 2 (low LMX participant in a high LMX relationship with her previous manager)

### **Excess task-related passionate experience**

There were no examples of excess task-related *passionate experience*. However, one high LMX participant comments on his low LMX counterpart:

*'It upsets her too, you know, if something doesn't work or whatever. Because every year we come to do FBT and you get told, she gets stressed or whatever, because she gets sick and she takes it to heart. She does, she gets sick, and quite literally she'll be away the week after the FBT returns are done, because she'll be crook, and then she'll come back and she'll be peachy, you know'.* (Participant #1)

### EYE-TO-EYE VALIDATION

As described by Josselson (1992), *eye-to-eye validation* is the feeling of experiencing ourselves through the eyes of another as valued, understood and mirrored. In the absence of feeling known and accepted, we feel annihilated and rejected. In excess, we feel like we are being invaded or controlled. Based on the interviews, this dimension of Josselson's model has here been modified to include a sub-set of task-related *eye-to-eye validation*. This sub-dimension refers to feeling our contribution to the work itself is validated and in a fair and equitable way.

Table 9 indicates where good examples are found in the data of *eye-to-eye validation* and task-related *eye-to-eye validation*, the extent to which these needs are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants. It shows that there are examples of "good enough" *eye-to-eye validation* for high LMX participants by their manager or someone else but not for their low LMX counterparts. The examples of *eye-to-eye validation* for low LMX participants relate to an absence and excess of this relational need by their manager, and also an absence by someone else at work.

There are examples for both high and low LMX participants of task-related *eye-to-eye validation* being met by someone else at work and the context itself. In relation to the

manager, there are examples of high LMX participants experiencing “good enough” task-related *eye-to-eye validation*, low LMX participants experiencing an absence, and a high LMX participant experiencing an excess.

**Table 9: Where good examples of *eye-to-eye validation* and task-related *eye-to-eye validation* are found according to the extent to which they are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants.**

Met by:	EYE-TO-EYE VALIDATION					
	High LMX			Low LMX		
	Good enough	Absence	Excess	Good enough	Absence	Excess
Manager	x				x	x
Other	x				x	
Context						
TASK-RELATED EYE-TO-EYE VALIDATION						
Manager	x		x		x	
Other	x			x		
Context	x			x		

Specific quotes illustrating where these needs are met and by whom, for high and low LMX participants are presented below.

GOOD ENOUGH EYE-TO-EYE VALIDATION

Only high LMX participants mention “good enough” *eye-to-eye validation* from their manager or someone else at work. As one participant says when reflecting back on her high LMX relationship with her previous manager:

*‘I got along really well with her. She was very supportive, looked after me really well, made my days more enjoyable, had bigger social chats with her as well about bush walking and hiking and camping and stuff. So we had a few common interests... she was always interested to hear what I had to say... she was supportive of my work life and always interested to hear anything else I had to tell her as well’.* Participant # 9

As another high LMX participant says of his co-worker:

*‘I like the fact that it’s a bit transparent. If you are not being right or you’re not being honest about it, or whatever you know, she’ll call you on it’.* Participant # 1

### **Good enough task-related eye-to-eye validation**

Participants also mention the importance of their contribution to the work itself being validated, and both high and low LMX participants comment on the relationship between personal and task-related *eye-to-eye validation*:

*'Because of my personality, I was very good with the clients, so he'd send me out to the clients. But he'd like just sit there and write and I like to review, so... we changed the way that a partner and a manager worked together'*. Participant # 2 (Participant in previous high LMX relationship where, through having her personal qualities validated, is able to extend her role and contribution to the task)

*'I think just in on a general level where your manager might um feel, might get along with somebody else better more so than what you, and as a result they would um see, wouldn't see your effort as it wouldn't really stand out as much as it would if they liked you on a personal level as well'*. Participant # 4 (low LMX participant commenting on the importance of personal eye-to-eye validation for task-related eye-to-eye validation)

Only high LMX participants mention “good enough” task-related *eye-to-eye validation* from their manager:

*'Actually recognized the hours I'd been putting in and it gives you good morale and it makes you want to work harder'*. Participant # 3

Both high and low LMX participants mention task-related *eye-to-eye validation* from others:

*'I know it sounds a bit vain but it's not... it will be in an email, it will say Bill's idea or Bob's idea... or my idea... it may well be look that that email happens to go to the Chairman of the Board or whatever... so you know, from that sort of touchy feely, you know, feel good type of stuff'*. Participant # 1 (high LMX participant receiving task-related eye-to-eye validation from senior managers)

*'She respected my work ethic... I don't believe in stretching something. You know, saying "oh yeah, you could do this and get a really good outcome for everyone". But if the Tax Office walks in they're going to be paying all the benefit back. So let's just do it within the law and everybody is happy with that and we can all sleep at night'*.

Participant # 2 (low LMX participant receiving task-related eye-to-eye validation from a colleague)

Both high and low LMX participants mention group level task-related *eye-to-eye validation*.

As one high LMX participant says:

*'If you do put in the work and if you, yeah, you work really hard, they'll certainly recognize it in some form or another... I think they do a lot of that'*. Participant # 3

This high LMX participant added that that she felt it is fair and equitable:

*'People are getting those rewards for a reason'*. Participant # 3

Similarly, as one low LMX participant comments:

*'You do have a lot of monthly awards where top performers get... validated or... there's a weekly thing where the top person, the people, top people, basically get mentioned. Everyone has a bit of a clap'*. Participant # 10

#### ABSENCE OF EYE-TO-EYE VALIDATION

Only one low LMX participant mentions an absence of *eye-to-eye validation* from his manager:

*'You get used to it and it just becomes... it's a job where it becomes, like you know that if you don't come... it's still going to run without you... You want to feel like you're contributing... making a difference... Like if you're here or you're at home, they're going to feel that you're not here today'*. Participant # 8

Similarly only one low LMX participant mentions an absence of *eye-to-eye validation* from others:

*'I'm sitting there I'm going "yep, you did not think that I was even close to 33 I'm sure of it. I'm sure you thought I was about 28 or 29..." I think it's a perception issue as well. Like if I was sitting at a table and people didn't realise how old I am, they're going to perceive that I'm this... you know, like I've got so much life left to lead, don't worry about what she's got to say type things'*. Participant # 4

### **Absence of task-related eye-to-eye validation**

Only low LMX participants report an absence of task-related *eye-to-eye validation* from their manager, as illustrated in the following quote in relation to a previous manager:

*'I mean we had common things but we just didn't really hit it off and um I felt that he was a bit, he didn't really acknowledge um role, you know, my kind of sort of my effort or anything like that as, as much... another guy... doing that role'.*

Participant # 10

Neither high nor low LMX participants report an absence of task-related *eye-to-eye validation* in relation to someone else at work.

### EXCESS EYE-TO-EYE VALIDATION

Only one low LMX participant mentions excess *eye-to-eye validation* and only in relation to her previous manager with whom she had also had a low LMX relationship. In this instance, she feels she has given away too much of herself and now avoids that old manager and her new department:

*'I could name, every person in [Department] would not go near her, or [Manager's new Department], for that very reason, it becomes a personal thing or that person actually enjoys hearing a problem, your personal upsets or upheavals and I hate that feeling'.* Participant # 6

### **Excess task-related eye-to-eye validation**

Only one high LMX participant mentions excess task-related *eye-to-eye validation*. As this participant comments:

*'I think that all positions and all opportunities should be given to everybody equally. Um it has worked in my favor because I've been hand picked a couple of times and just, you know, sort of like okay great but at the same time it's not fair'.*

Participant # 9

While low LMX participants did not report personally experiencing excess task-related *eye-to-eye validation*, they perceived others in high LMX relationships receiving it. As one low LMX participant says:

*'You just sort of see certain people with certain roles you think, you know, maybe that was just because they get along very well with the manager'.* Participant # 6



IDEALIZATION AND IDENTIFICATION

As described by Josselson (1992), *idealization and identification* is the feeling of having someone to look up to. It may be a role model giving you something to strive for and showing you what is possible for yourself. In its absence we feel disillusioned and purposeless; and in excess, we feel slavishly devoted, subordinating our own initiative and desires in the hope of making a connection. Based on the interviews, this dimension of Josselson’s model has here been modified to include a sub-set of task-related *idealization and identification*. This sub-dimension refers to ambition specifically in relation to the work and career, rather than personal qualities.

Table 10 indicates where good examples are found in the data of *idealization and identification* and task-related *idealization and identification*, the extent to which these needs are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants. It shows that there are examples of “good enough” *idealization and identification* and task-related *idealization and identification* for both high and low LMX participants. However, there are only examples of *idealization and identification* and task-related *idealization and identification* being met to a “good enough” extent by the manager for high LMX participants.

There are examples of both high and low LMX participants experiencing an absence of *idealization and identification* by both their manager and someone else at work. Only low LMX participants gave examples of an absence and excess of task-related *idealization and identification* by their manager.

**Table 10: Where good examples of *idealization and identification* and task-related *idealization and identification* are found according to the extent to which they are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants.**

Met by:	Idealization and identification					
	High LMX			Low LMX		
	Good enough	Absence	Excess	Good enough	Absence	Excess
Manager	x	x			x	
Other	x	x		x	x	
TASK-RELATED idealization and identification						
Manager	x				x	x
Other	x			x		

Specific quotes illustrating where these needs are met and by whom, for high and low LMX participants are presented below.

#### GOOD ENOUGH IDEALIZATION AND IDENTIFICATION

Only high LMX participants mention “good enough” *idealization and identification* with their manager. As one high LMX participant comments:

*‘Like the way she deals with a lot of difficult circumstances like... she’s the only executive female executive yet deals with the men... very strong yet... still feminine... just so smart. So I respect that about her, and yeah, I’ve just learned heaps from her’.*

Participant # 3

Both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” *idealization and identification* with others at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*‘He’s the CEO... I like the fact that he’ll walk around and he’ll name everybody personally... well actually not only know your name but remember that you were talking about X or Y or whatever’.* Participant # 1 (high LMX)

*‘I respect her probably more than certain other Execs... she just holds herself so well and professionally and I really aspire to that. She doesn’t take advantage of any situation’.* Participant # 6 (low LMX)

#### **Good enough task-related idealization and identification**

Participants also mention the importance of “good enough” *idealization and identification* in terms of the idealized other’s task performance.

Only high LMX participants mention “good enough” task-related *idealization and identification*. For example, one participant says of her previous manager with whom she had a high LMX relationship:

*‘He taught me a lot... the way in which he was devoted towards his work, that was really good... very particular about crossing the T’s and dotting the I’s... taking the time to get things right’.* Participant # 2

Both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” task-related *idealization and identification* with others at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*'He made me raise my standard, you know, whether, whether I wanted to or not, and my standard raised 'cause I wanted to get to a certain level and, and I, I guess I didn't want to disappoint him, with all the work that he put it in'.* Participant # 4 (high LMX participant speaking of a more senior co-worker and his influence on his own task performance)

*'I looked up to the fact that she was quite hard working and moved pretty rapidly... she sort of moved up... someone to think "oh yeah, that's cool, that can be done"'*.

Participant # 10 (low LMX participant referring to a co-worker)

#### ABSENCE OF IDEALIZATION AND IDENTIFICATION

Both high and low LMX participants mention an absence of *idealization and identification* in relation to their manager. However, the high LMX participants only refer to their managers indirectly, as one high LMX participant says:

*'I don't have any role models here or any mentors or anything like that'.*

Participant # 9

Conversely, the low LMX participants did speak directly about their managers:

*'If you look at your manager and you think, 'you know what, I do not want to ever be like you', then it kind of puts you off'.* Participant # 4

Both high and low LMX participants mention an absence of *idealization and identification* with others at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*'I've been assigned a mentor... and you know you've got to actually move towards someone that you look up to and that you get along with, so you can't really be... she's nice, but...'* Participant # 9 (high LMX)

*'I don't have a role model here'.* Participant # 2 (low LMX)

#### **Absence of task-related idealization and identification**

Only low LMX participants mention an absence of task-related *idealization and identification* in relation to their manager, as illustrated in the following quote by a low LMX participant who did not feel she had her manager “batting” for her:

*'I don't um have, one of my goals is not to become a manager because I know, first of all, I probably wouldn't be able to become a manager. 'Cause like I said, you need to have the right people battling for you and um supporting you and I don't believe I have that'. Participant # 4*

As this low LMX participant subsequently says:

*'Sometimes you do feel disillusioned and lost ... you may not know exactly where you're headed or what you're doing'. Participant # 4*

While neither high nor low LMX participants speak directly of an absence of task-related idealization in relation to others at work, low LMX participants mention limited opportunities.

As one low LMX participant says:

*'I think it was '90 or '92 which it started... so most of the managers have been around since that time, and because there's not a lot of openings, it's very hard to move up. Because it's such a small company in Australia... I don't see myself as going up high because of, like I said, the managers'. Participant # 8*

#### EXCESS IDEALIZATION AND IDENTIFICATION

There are no examples of excess *idealization and identification*. A possible explanation is that someone would not consider his/herself slavishly devoted to someone until things went awry.

#### **Excess task-related idealization and identification**

Only one low LMX participant reports excess task-related *idealization and identification*, although this is only apparent with hindsight as he now has an absence of task-related *idealization and identification*. This subordinate was in a high LMX relationship when he first started at the organisation and had a manager who he felt cared about him and his career. This manager encouraged him to climb the ladder and the participant followed his instruction without thinking realistically about his abilities and about what might really interest or suit him best. As he says about the early days in the organisation:

*'He sat you down a couple of times... I see you as a person that wants to move up and then he used to lead me the right way; do this, or do this a certain way, don't do this, don't do that'. Participant # 8*

However, that participant is now in a low LMX relationship with a new manager. He comments on his years at the organisation:

*'I've just been moving side to side, side to side and every six months or seven months I get this thing like... hope that maybe I will get somewhere... I think I'm running out of positions'*. Participant # 8

This participant has now learned that pleasing a manager and getting close to him/her as he did with his first manager isn't all that's required:

*'Going through all the disappointment of get some work, get close to the manager and going through the disappointment of work... you're on your own type thing'*. Participant # 8

As he says, he's very close to his current manager but that's not helping him realize his ambitions:

*'We're very close, my manager that I have now, we're close; if we could go out outside of work we'd be great friends... But as a manager you don't see... where she's guiding you... you just feel like she's a great friend, but not a friend as in a great manager friend'*. Participant # 8

Another low LMX participant comments on her observation of employees who she perceived as being slavishly devoted to their managers:

*'They're not balanced people. They're very um career driven, and very um almost like just too eager to please the manager'*. Participant # 4

## MUTUALITY AND RESONANCE

*Mutuality and resonance*, as described by Josselson (1992), is the feeling of experience shared through authentically participating in someone else's life. In its absence, we feel emotionally isolated and lonely. In excess, the boundary between our self and another is lost, losing our sense of ownership of our own experience. Based on the interviews, this dimension of Josselson's model has been modified to include a sub-set of task-related *mutuality and resonance*. This sub-dimension refers to participating fairly and equitably in shared tasks.

Table 11 indicates where good examples are found in the data of *mutuality and resonance* and task-related *mutuality and resonance*, the extent to which these needs are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants. It shows that there are examples of “good enough” *mutuality and resonance* for high LMX participants by their manager or someone else, but only by someone else for their low LMX counterparts.

Only low LMX participants gave examples of an absence of *mutuality and resonance* either by their manager or someone else. However, there are examples of both high and low LMX participants experiencing an absence of task-related *mutuality and resonance* by both their manager and someone else at work.

A high LMX participant in relation to her manager, and a low LMX participant in relation to the organisation more broadly, experience excess *mutuality and resonance*. A low LMX participant also gives an example of excess task-related *mutuality and resonance* in relation to her manager.

**Table 11: Where good examples of *mutuality and resonance* and task-related *mutuality and resonance* are found according to the extent to which they are met and by whom for high and low LMX participants.**

Met by:	Mutuality and resonance					
	High LMX			Low LMX		
	Good enough	Absence	Excess	Good enough	Absence	Excess
Manager	x	x	x		x	
Other	x			x	x	
Context						x
Met by:	TASK-RELATED mutuality and resonance					
	Manager	x	x		x	
	Other	x	x	x	x	x
	Context					

Specific quotes illustrating where these needs are met and by whom, for high and low LMX participants are presented below.

GOOD ENOUGH MUTUALITY AND RESONANCE

Both high and low LMX participants mention the importance of “good enough” *mutuality and resonance*, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*'If you take a walk around this floor, I won't say ghost town, but it's very quiet... I think it would be a much quieter area if [Co-worker] and I weren't around. And people say that, but I know that makes their environment a bit easier too'.* Participant # 1 (high LMX)

*'You know... I heard you got married, 'where's the photos', all those kind of things. So people want to take a like a an actual active interest in each other um, and because the fact that you're not drawn to the phones so much, you can do that... you really need to have those common experiences and um laughs and jokes and interaction to make your day, you know, a little bit more sane I guess'.* Participant # 10 (low LMX)

Only high LMX participants mention “good enough” *mutuality and resonance* with their manager. As one high LMX participant says of her previous manager with whom she also had a high LMX relationship:

*'I could always sit go in to his office and have a chat and just talk about other stuff rather than work. So yeah, he was really good'.* Participant # 3

Both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” *mutuality and resonance* with others at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*'We sat next to each other, and we were we're similar age, and we used to jibber about all sorts of things um, and just got on really well'.* Participant # 3 (high LMX participant speaking about a colleague)

*'I work with some really good people and I can speak to them and we muck around a lot and joke around, but that's just between us. I mean it's not like that with everyone. And that's just quietly in the background'.* Participant # 4 (low LMX participant speaking about particular co-workers)

### **Good enough task-related mutuality and resonance**

Participants mention the importance of others, as well as themselves, “putting in” to get the work done.

Only one high LMX participant directly mentions her “good enough” task-related *mutuality and resonance* with her manager. This participant is working particularly closely with her manager on a specific project:

*‘With yeah [Manager] it’s quite relaxed and you know, we know what we’ve got to do, we have our meetings, we get through it. So yeah, that works well’.* Participant # 3

Both high and low LMX participants comment on “good enough” task-related *mutuality and resonance* with others at work, as illustrated in the following examples:

*‘We have to all work together otherwise it just doesn’t work. We share the workload, pass it round... that’s very important and it works well’.* Participant # 3 (high LMX)

*‘One of us will organise one function, like somebody does the wine trip and someone else does the trivia night and I do like a murder night or something like that... and we just spread the load a bit and then sort of, you know, when we actually do the function, two or three of us will actually help the person who organised it and put little showbags together and bring the water and the ice’.* Participant # 2 (low LMX)

One high LMX participant comments that organisational rewards contributed to “good enough” task-related *mutuality and resonance*:

*‘Everybody has to work towards their own target but then they’ve got a team target, and then a department’s target as well... they’d look after their own customers but they will also help other people’s as well’.* Participant # 9

#### ABSENCE OF MUTUALITY AND RESONANCE

Only low LMX participants mention an absence of *mutuality and resonance* with their manager. For example, one participant now in a low LMX relationship contrasted the current experience with her previous manager with whom she had a high LMX relationship:

*‘Although I did get along with her on a professional level... it wasn’t the same as [previous manager], ah, there was a definitely a barrier... there was no um you know, no mucking around as much... it was more doing your work... and spending time with each other at work in order to get the job done, but not sitting down and having a coffee and talking just about general things about personal things’.* Participant # 4



Similarly, only low LMX participants mention an absence of *mutuality and resonance* with others at work, as illustrated in the following example:

*'I've had relationships with senior my seniors, and a few of them where I just I feel as though they can't relate to me I can't relate to them. And it's just a purely um strictly professional um relationship that you have with them and it's if, if you're talking about work it's okay, but if you say you're in the elevator and you, and you have to talk about something other than work, then it's extremely strained and very uncomfortable. You don't know what to say to each other'.* Participant # 4

### **Absence of task-related mutuality and resonance**

Only one high and one low LMX participant, both from the same team, mention an absence of task-related *mutuality and resonance* with their manager.

The high LMX participant laments his manager not sharing information as he thinks he should and how that prevents him from giving his best, and prevents them from working well as a team:

*'There's real issues... in relation to sharing, and quite often there will be projects going on and I haven't seen it before... you need the information actually to make a decision or give some advice'.* Participant # 1

The low LMX participant also experiences an absence of task-related *mutuality and resonance* with that manager, in her case, because he keeps all the fun tasks for himself so it doesn't feel like they are a team:

*'It just annoys us a bit because he's one of these people who wants to do all the fun things but doesn't, he's not good at delegating down... but like, you know, you should be managing the whole function and pushing the whole account'.* Participant # 2

Both high and low LMX participants mention an absence of task-related *mutuality and resonance* with others at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*'I think I do as much work or if not a little bit more than [Co-worker 1] and together we do 80% more work than [Co-worker 2] does... definitely an unfair distribution of work there'.* Participant # 9 (high LMX)

*'[Co-worker's] very nice and everything, but she doesn't, she doesn't give you 110%, she gives like 90%'. Participant # 2 (low LMX)*

That low LMX participant later notes that:

*'It probably puts a bit of stress on [Co-worker] and me that shouldn't be there. We're sort of going, well, she doesn't do it, who's going to get on with it?'* Participant # 2

#### EXCESS MUTUALITY AND RESONANCE

Only one high LMX participant reports excess *mutuality and resonance*. In this instance, she feels her manager wants a closer relationship than she does:

*'I get along well with my manager, um I don't see her outside of work and I wouldn't want to... tries to take it to more of a friendship level and I sort of try and bring it back a bit... it's bit of a constant battle'. Participant # 9*

There is no evidence that low LMX participants experience an excess *mutuality and resonance* in relation to their manager.

Interestingly, one low LMX participant comments on how she feels that, at the organisational level, they try to force relationships between departments. As she comments:

*'I think they force us to do a lot of things as far as activities and that whole interdepartmental kind of relationship, they want us to sort of be very close to say, [Department Y], but they don't let us do that naturally'. Participant # 6*

#### EXCESS TASK-RELATED MUTUALITY AND RESONANCE

Only one low LMX participant mentions excess task-related *mutuality and resonance*, and only in relation to how she used to be. As she says:

*'I'm not killing myself anymore'. Participant # 2*

#### EMBEDDEDNESS

As described by Josselson (1992), embeddedness is the feeling of belonging in a social group. In its absence we feel alienated and yearn to belong, and in excess we over conform and lose our individuality to the group.

Table 12 indicates where good examples of embeddedness are found in the data and the extent to which this need is met for high and low LMX participants. It shows that there are examples of “good enough” and excess embeddedness for both high and low LMX participants. Only low LMX participants give examples of experiencing an absence of embeddedness at work.

**Table 12: Where good examples of embeddedness are found according to the extent to which they are met for high and low LMX participants.**

Met by:	Embeddedness					
	High LMX			Low LMX		
	Good enough	Absence	Excess	Good enough	Absence	Excess
Context	x		x	x	x	x

Specific quotes illustrating where these needs are met and by whom, for high and low LMX participants are presented below.

GOOD ENOUGH EMBEDDEDNESS

Both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” embeddedness at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*‘We were all in the same boat... As the year went on, you know, friendships grew. They saw my personality come out, my sense of humor come out in certain situations, which they obviously appreciated, and we got closer as, as time went on and, as time went on and we did get closer, the, the, kind of the rain sort of eased up a little bit’.*

Participant # 5 (high LMX)

*‘People are the best in this place... everyone’s friendly... it’s just a warm feeling. It just feels like my family life at home’.* Participant # 8 (low LMX)

Both high and low LMX participants mention organisational activities that contribute to a sense of embeddedness for them:

*‘We ended the [X] project as you know in um December... we had the Christmas parties and team lunches... everyone was very respectful of what we’d been through... “you must be so pleased it’s over” and “we’re glad you’re back” sort of thing’.*

Participant # 3 (high LMX)

*'Usually have functions to celebrate things... I think things like that help create you know unity and it makes everyone feel like they're a part of something'*. Participant # 4 (low LMX)

#### ABSENCE OF EMBEDDEDNESS

Only low LMX participants mention an absence of embeddedness. As one low LMX participant says of not fitting in with the management group:

*'You don't want to become somebody you're not just to fit in'*. Participant # 2

Both a high and low LMX participant from the same organisation observes an absence of embeddedness in relation to a colleague. As the high LMX participant says:

*'She only started probably six weeks before she left but she never fitted in and she left... she never tried, there was no team work there sort of thing. Like she didn't try to um, she had no initiative sort of thing, she never asked questions and try to fit in to the group sort of thing, and she'd just sit there with her head down'*. Participant # 3

#### EXCESS EMBEDDEDNESS

Both one high and one low LMX participant mention excess embeddedness, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*'Whilst I fit in I don't feel that I belong to this group of people at all...'*. She goes on to say: *'There's no no genuine interest, there's feigned interest, I'll pretend to be interested... nobody really notices'*. Participant # 9 (high LMX)

*'You um have to become be careful how you come across. You can't sort of... you can't be too laid back in terms of even the way you look'*. Participant # 4 (low LMX)

#### TENDING (CARE)

As described by Josselson (1992), tending (care) is reaching out emotionally to another and putting aside our own needs as a result of an empathic response. In its absence we feel deadened or unmoved, and in excess we compulsively give of ourselves.

Table 13 indicates where good examples of tending (care) are found in the data, the extent to which this need is met and for whom for high and low LMX participants. It shows that there are examples of both high and low LMX participants providing “good enough” tending (care) for others at work. Neither high nor low LMX participants gave examples of providing an absence or excess of tending (care).

**Table 13: Where good examples of tending (care) are found according to the extent to which they are met and to whom for high and low LMX participants.**

Met by:	Tending (care)					
	High LMX			Low LMX		
	Good enough	Absence	Excess	Good enough	Absence	Excess
Manager						
Other	x			x		

Specific quotes illustrating where these needs are met and by whom, for high and low LMX participants are presented below. This includes examples from both high and low LMX participants observing other peoples’ tending (care) at work.

GOOD ENOUGH TENDING (CARE)

Neither high nor low LMX participants mention tending for their managers.

Nevertheless, both high and low LMX participants mention “good enough” tending (care) of others at work, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*‘There’s a member of my team who has a young child. And she, she does it pretty hard, as a single mum, and ah, I kinda live on the same um, sort of route as her, and ah, so I just wanted to help her out a bit, and to my surprise even, ’cause I usually, I usually get the job done and, and go home to my own life. But I was taking her home, and actually picking up her child instead of her walking, you know, a couple of km’s to pick up the kid and then go home’.* Participant # 5 (high LMX)

*‘I had a sort of a relationship with him you know, um that some of the other people didn’t. So I sort of, I felt I, I actually felt proud of myself that I didn’t really have to um, you know, that I actually wanted to be sort of someone there for him because I just felt, ah, he was a bit um you know’.* Participant # 10 (low LMX)

Both high and low LMX participants observe others “good enough” tending, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*‘If some information comes across the desk that you know, there’s no reason for them to forward that on to you, but which would make your life easier or they think you need to know it, they’ll forward it on to you’.* Participant # 1 (high LMX)

*‘They care, yeah. They don’t just say how are you and then not expect an answer back; they care about the answer’.* Participant # 8 (low LMX)

Both high and low LMX participants also mention organisational-level caring, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*‘Really put emphasis on you know, making it a good day every day for people... Recreation Room... with the table-tennis table, ah, usually there’s a walking club, that goes for a walk at lunchtimes’.* Participant # 5 (high LMX)

*‘I think they care for the employees really well here... they give \$10,000 a year to the social club... they also, you know, do Christmas parties for us and you know, take us out... and they just sort of say here’s a \$50.00 gift voucher for Christmas’.* Participant # 2 (low LMX)

#### ABSENCE OF TENDING (CARE)

No participants report not tending for another themselves, although they did observe an absence of tending in others.

Low LMX participants mention an absence of tending by their manager. As one low LMX participant says:

*‘As long as they get their work done and the work gets done it doesn’t really matter whether you’re feeling sensitive today or vulnerable’.* Participant # 4

Both high and low LMX participants mention an absence of caring by others, as illustrated in the following quotes:

*‘A lot of people get upset about all the gossip, I know my immediate manager’s been the target for example a lot of gossip at times probably most people have and that’s*

*really affected them really, really badly. They've been quite upset to come to work... I know that she's going through that now'. Participant # 9 (high LMX)*

*'I felt it was a bit mean how people treated him'. Participant # 10 (low LMX)*

Both high and low LMX participants mention an absence of organisational-level tending. As the high LMX participant says:

*'Cared for us in like financially remunerated and stuff, I think they feel okay. But cared for more on an emotional side? Probably not'. Participant # 9*

As that high LMX participant explains:

*'I think if they came to work and sort of said oh this 'blah blah blah', then they'd be immediately sort of referred on... we've got... a counselling service'. Participant # 9*

A low LMX participant mentions poor physical working conditions:

*'Even the conditions we have worked in for five years, I mean, are pretty appalling, until now... we didn't have heating or proper cooling, it was just appalling'.  
Participant # 6*

#### EXCESS TENDING (CARE)

No participants report excessively tending for others, and only one low LMX participant reports excess tending at the organisational level. She refers to an over-emphasis on the Christmas party:

*'The Christmas Party... I just think, "hey guys, can we just get together for a really good time? Feel free to dress up, but if you don't want to, no big deal"... And it's every year. Surely, every second year you could have a dress-up or a theme'.  
Participant # 6*

As she later says:

*'You'd think that they would ask people whether it's kind of like, is it a popular thing to do again'. Participant # 6*

## SUMMARY OF THE RELATIONAL NEEDS

The eight relational needs are present across all the participants. They do vary for high and low LMX participants according to whether they are present to a “good enough” extent, in absence or in excess, and who met those needs, either their manager or someone else at work. This is summarized in the charts<sup>4</sup> below.

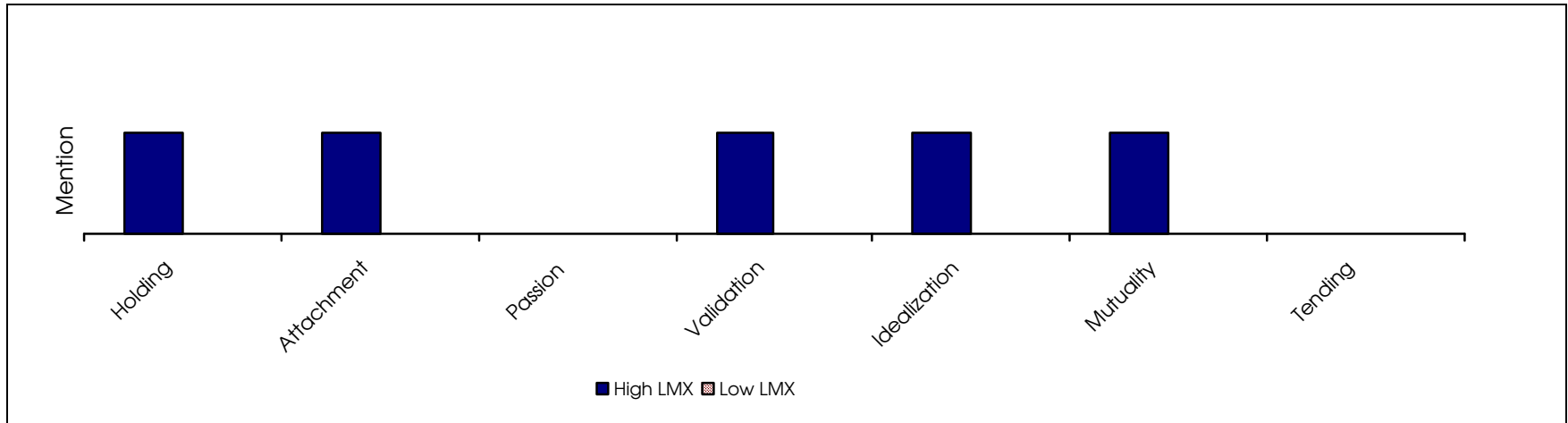
Chart 1 and Chart 2 below summarize the relational needs met to a “good enough” extent for high and low LMX participants – Chart 1 when met by the manager and Chart 2 when met by someone else. They highlight the finding that high LMX participants had their relational needs met to a “good enough” extent by both their manager and someone else at work, while low LMX participants only had their relational needs met to a “good enough” extent by someone else.

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<sup>4</sup> Note: (a) the charts show when the relational need is present for at least one participant in a particular category; (b) the ‘someone else’ category could comprise the group or organisation where relevant, in addition to another person at work; (c) as the manager / someone else distinction is not relevant for embeddedness, the summary findings for this relational need are only included on the ‘someone else’ charts; (d) data for the task and social systems are combined for *holding, passionate experience, eye-to-eye validation, idealization and identification, and mutuality and resonance*.



**Chart 1: Mention of relational need met to a good enough extent by the manager**



**Chart 2: Mention of relational need met to a good enough extent by someone else**

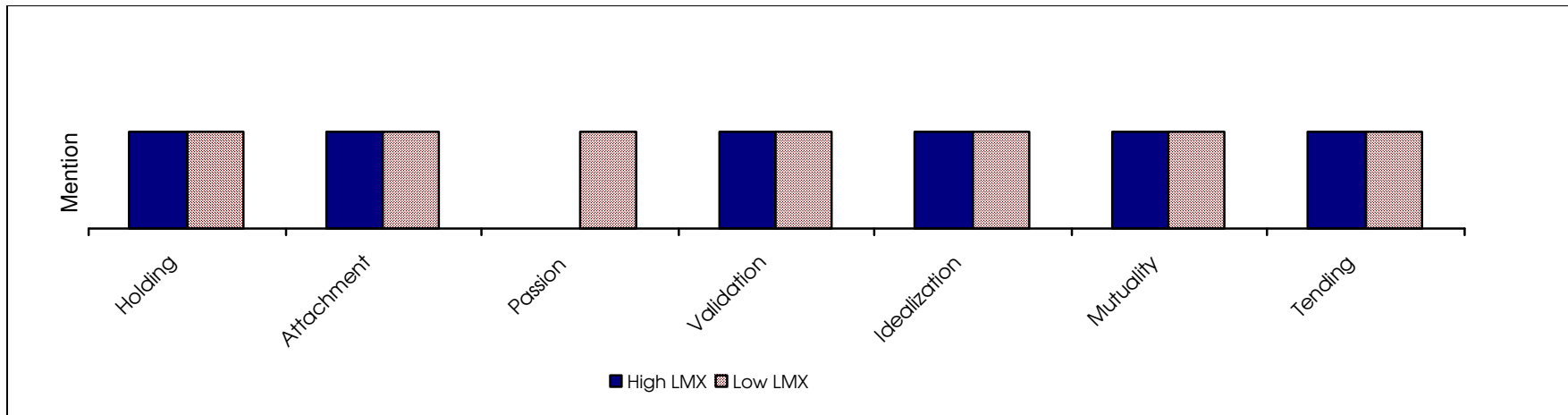
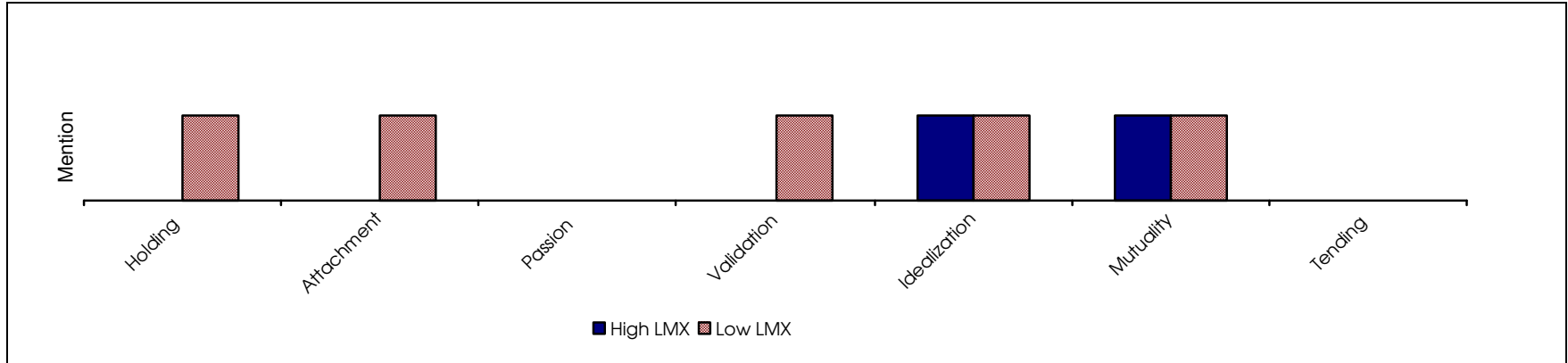


Chart 3 and Chart 4 show an absence of the relational needs – Chart 3 when an absence by the manager and Chart 4 when an absence by someone else. They highlight that low LMX participants are more likely to experience an absence of their relational needs in relation to either their manager or someone else at work than their high LMX counterparts. There are no examples of an absence of *tending (care)*, neither in relation to the manager nor someone else, although there are examples of an absence of tending by others in the data.

**Chart 3: Mention of an absence of the relational need met by the manager**



**Chart 4: Mention of an absence of the relational need met by someone else**

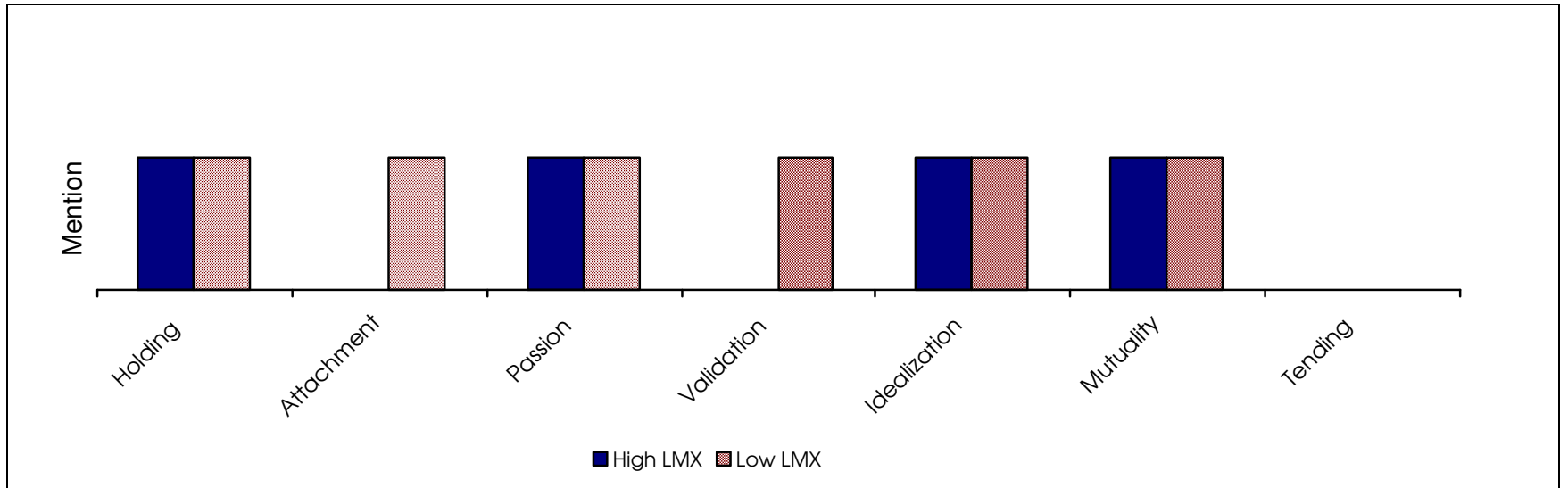
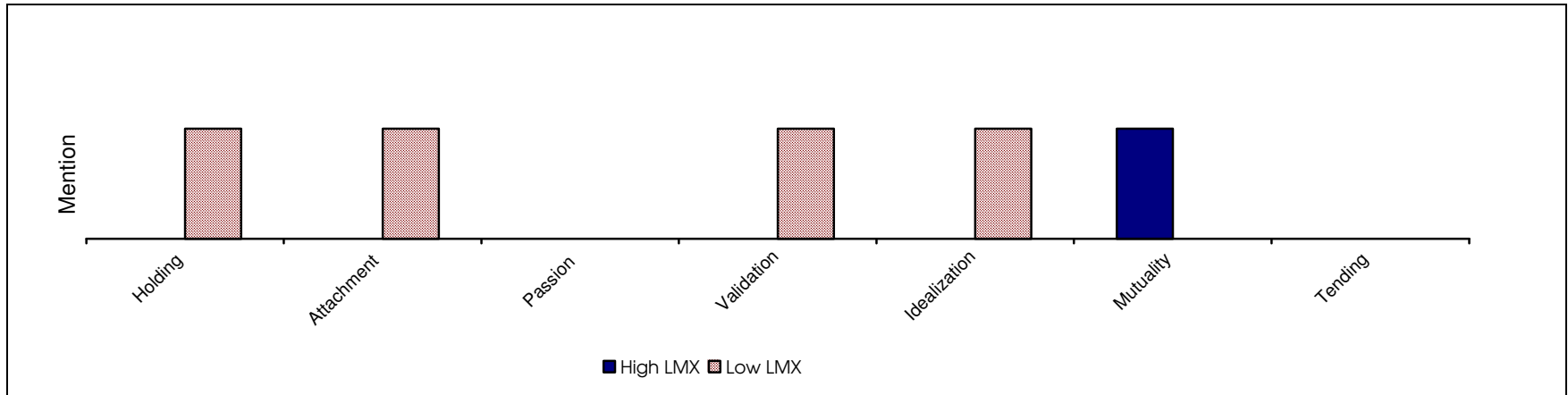
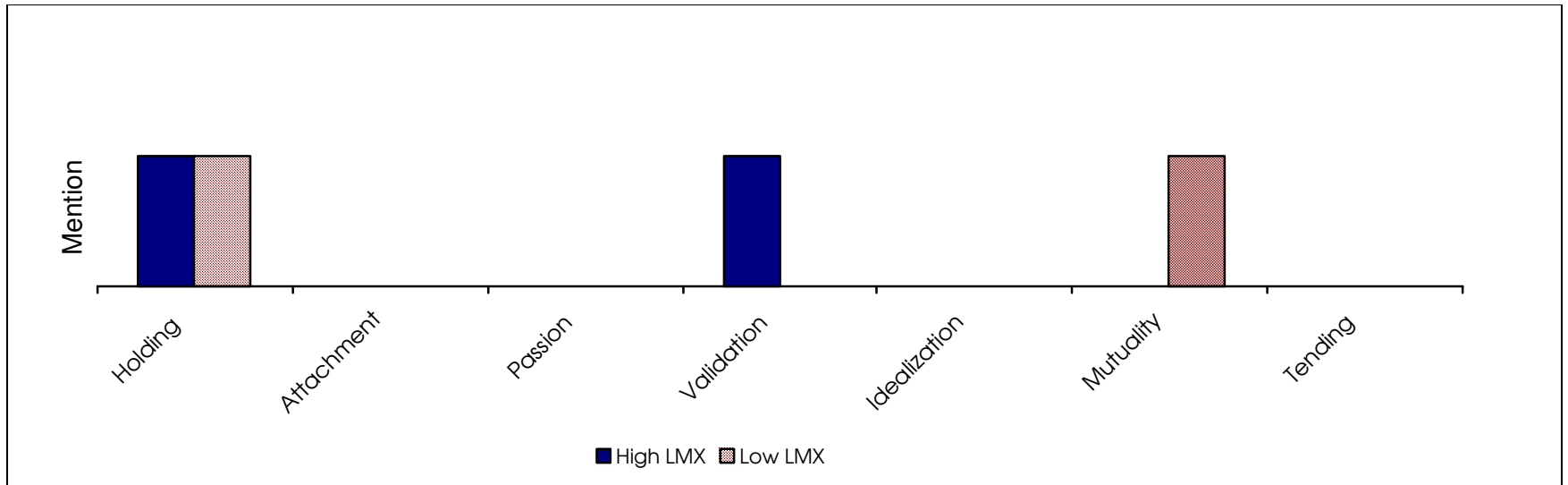


Chart 5 and Chart 6 show an excess of the relational needs – Chart 5 when an excess by the manager and Chart 6 when an excess by someone else. They highlight that while there are fewer examples of excess in the sample, low LMX participants are more likely to experience an excess than their high LMX counterparts. Again, there are no examples of excess *tending (care)* although there is an example of excess *tending (care)* by others in the data.

**Chart 5: Mention of an excess of the relational need met by the manager**



**Chart 6: Mention of an excess of the relational need met by someone else**

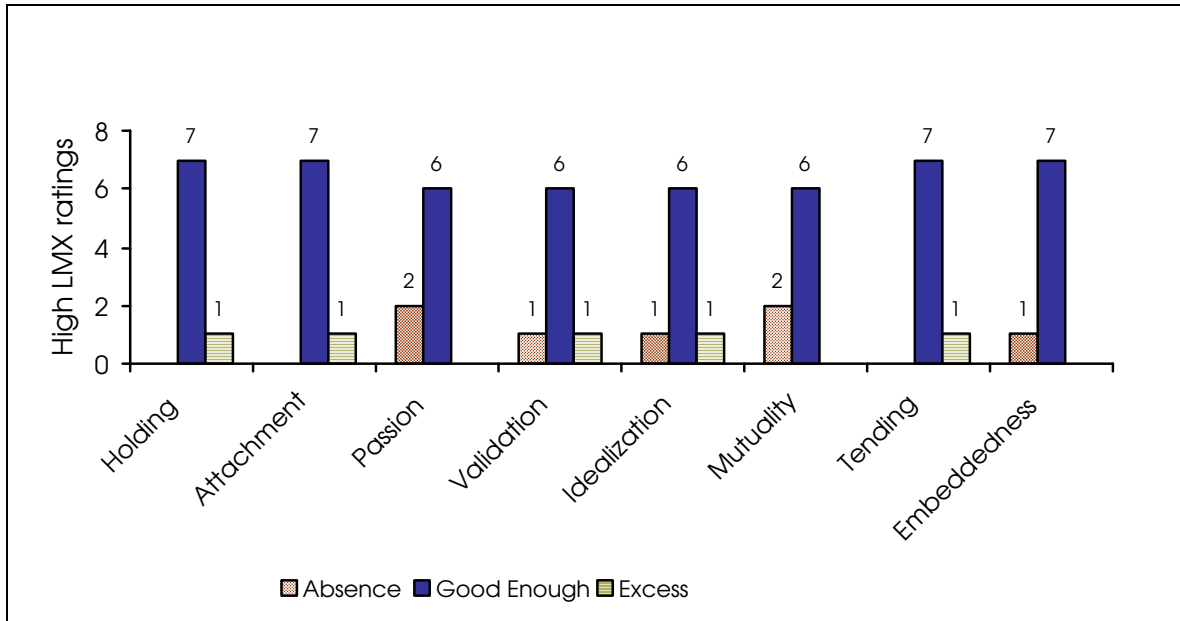


## THE RATING SCALES

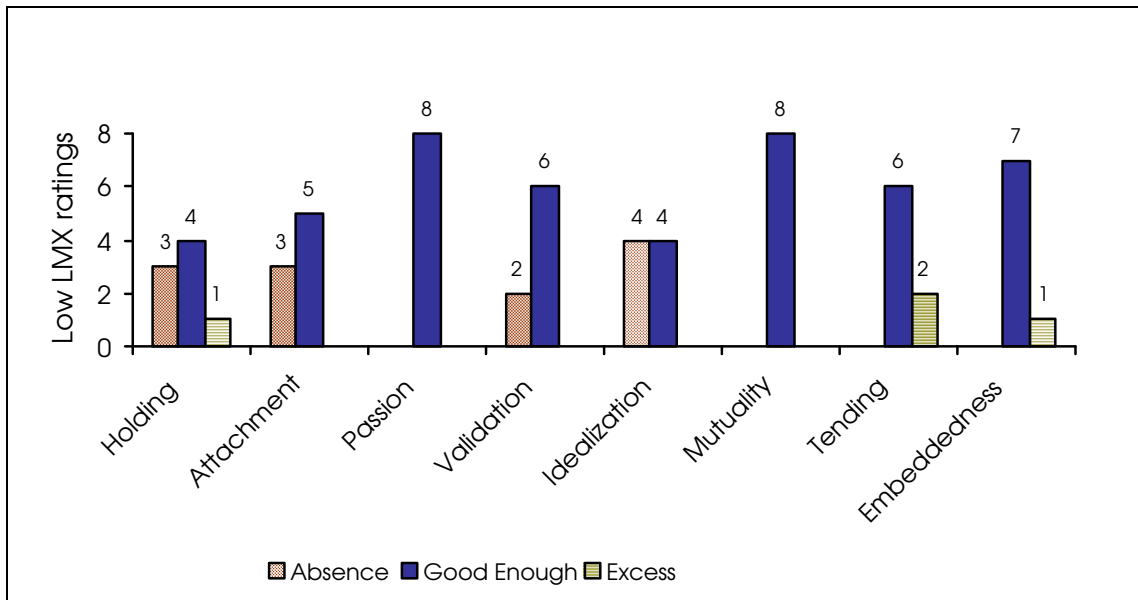
Chart 7 and Chart 8 below show the results for the rating scales section of the interviews for high and low LMX participants respectively. In this section, participants are asked to rate how they saw themselves and most people here (in their organisation) in terms of the extent to which the relational needs are met. They are not asked to consider who met those needs. The ratings are first categorized into “good enough” (a rating of between 4 and 6 on the rating scale), absence (ratings 1-3) and excess (ratings 7-9). The charts show the sum of the number of mentions in each category. An average figure is derived for the relational needs where the task and social systems are separately assessed.

Consistent with the other sections of the interviews, these results highlight that participants are more likely than not to have their relational needs met to a “good enough” extent. The one exception is for low LMX participants who are equally likely to rate their need for *idealization and identification* as being absent as “good enough”. Similarly, the results show that absence is mentioned by some and excess by few, and mainly by low LMX participants.

**Chart 7: Summary of high LMX rating scale results**



**Chart 8: Summary of low LMX rating scale results**





## SUMMARY

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This study provides support for the application of Josselson's multi-dimensional model of relationships to the workplace, with modification. Seven of the eight relational needs are present in all the participants, whether to a "good enough" extent, in absence or in excess, and whether met by their manager or someone else at work. Only passionate experience was not present for one participant – the participant who had been in the organisation for three months.

Five of the relational needs – *holding, passionate experience, eye-to-eye validation, idealization and identification, and mutuality and resonance* – required extending to incorporate the findings that participants also had these needs in relation to the task itself.

The study provides support for the consequences of the extent to which the relational needs are met as defined by Josselson. A notable limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size, leading to fewer examples of when the relational needs are not met, for excess in particular.

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## **STUDY 3: RELATIONAL EXPERIENCE AT WORK**

Study 3 aims to investigate relational experience at work. This chapter describes the method and presents the findings.

### METHOD

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Study 3 involves re-analysing the data obtained from the in-depth interviews described in Study 2 as a series of case studies. A case study method of analysis was selected because this thesis assumes that relational experience and the organisational context within which it occurs are mutually determined and co-evolve. It is when the real-life context is considered relevant to the phenomenon under investigation, and especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not readily apparent, that a case study approach is warranted (Yin, 2003). The focus of a case study is on understanding the dynamics within a single setting (Eisenhardt, 1989). In this study, the focus is on the individual internal dynamics that reveal relational experience at work.

A multiple-case design is adopted involving ten participants: two participants from five different organisations – one participant with a high quality relationship with his/her manager (high LMX) and one with a low quality relationship with his/her manager (low LMX) for each organisation respectively. The advantage of this multiple-case design is that it enables consideration of the influence of different organisational contexts and high and low quality reporting relationships on relational experience at work.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Malan's (1985) triangle of conflict is used to analyse relational experience at work. Relational experience is dynamic and may be hidden and unconscious. Malan (1985), a psychotherapist, is concerned with these inner mechanisms in everyday life. They include 'the ways in which human beings try to avoid mental pain; how they try to control unacceptable behaviour or feelings; how sometimes what is unacceptable creeps in the back door; and finally the kinds of consequence that may ensue from all these processes' (p5). Malan (1985) argues that one of the main tasks of a psychotherapist is to analyse and then interpret to the patient 'the end-product of these mechanisms in terms of (a) the devices adopted for avoiding mental pain, conflict, or unacceptable feelings (the *defence*); (b) the feared consequences of expressing these hidden feelings (the *anxiety*); and (c) the nature of the *hidden feelings* themselves. This is the *triangle of conflict*' (p15).

In this study, as the researcher I adopt an aspect of the role of psychotherapist in that I aim to uncover the inner dynamics of participants in so far as they appear in the interview context. Each case study is an interactional event because the data is co-created between each participant and myself as researcher (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Together, through dialogue, we both actively contribute to generating an understanding of the participants' relational experience at work. This process includes my attempts to make connections and conceptualise issues to ensure that I properly understand the participants from their own perspective. I also guide the interviews and choose to focus on, and more fully explore, some experiences over others. These are those that the participant seemed defensive or anxious about (following Malan's triangle of conflict) and when the feelings conveyed were particularly strong. In these ways, interpretive data analysis is embedded in the interviews (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995).

In analysing the data I consider what is dominant, what most gains my attention, what seems to be most important to the participants and most keenly felt. I aim to identify what Bion (1970) refers to as the "selected fact". The selected fact can be thought of as a way of organising what has been presented. Once identified, all other information that has been collected in an analytic hour seems to fall into place around it (Kernberg, 1997). While the interviews do not resemble an analytic hour in any way, the principle applies here to how the data is analysed. In Malan's triangle of conflict, the "selected fact" is akin to the hidden

feeling around which the anxieties and defences are organised. In a similar vein, Josselson (1992) finds that one relational need tends to be prominent in any given subjects' presentation.

The inherent subjectivity of the interview process and data analysis means that any 'problems of bias, validity, adulterated facts or supposed neutrality of the questions' (de Gooijer, 2006, p104) are data themselves. How meaning is constructed is considered suitable criteria for assessing the value of such 'active interview' data rather than the more traditional criteria of consistent (reliable) or correct (valid) answers (de Gooijer, 2006; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Interestingly, Kernberg (1997) argues that 'focusing on the affectively dominant content' (p306), as occurs during the interviews and the data analysis, is one of the underlying principles for assessing the objective quality of interpretations.

## FINDINGS

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The case studies are presented by organisation. A brief introduction to each organisation precedes each case. This includes two short paragraphs intended to capture the high and low LMX participants' impression of the culture respectively, as well as the classification of the culture by the organisational context according to Harrison's (1972, 1995) ideological framework.

The high and low LMX participants' individual case studies are then presented. Each case study follows the same format: it begins with a quote intending to capture the dominant subjective experience of the individual; followed by a brief outline of their relationships at work; their job; how they came to that job; and their career ambitions. The dynamics in their experience of work, based on Malan's (1985) triangle of conflict, follows. The case concludes with a brief consideration of the participants' relational needs as defined by Josselson (1992) and extended to include the task system as described in Study 2 of this thesis.

In considering the relational needs, the prominent relational need is presented first. More than any other relational need, the prominent relational need captures more of the dominant affective content for that participant. The relational needs met by the participants' appointed leader are then presented. Study 2 described in the last chapter illustrates that either the

appointed leader or someone else at work may meet these needs. These case studies show that a positive relational experience with the appointed leader/manager at work is of primary and central importance.

Each participant nevertheless mentions having a friend at work. The relational needs met by the participants' current friends, that is, those mentioned on their current relational maps, are presented. The nature of these friendships is also considered using McCall's (1970a) social bonds as a framework. This includes ascription (the formal role relationship), investment (whether the resources expended on the relationship are work-based or personal in nature), attachment (the extent to which the relationship is built into the participants' role identity and is non-transferable) and reward dependability (relational needs). Note that commitment is not included as it was not possible to determine the extent of commitment from the interview data.

The closeness of the friendship as it extends beyond friendly relations (Kurth, 1970) is also considered. Sias and Cahill's (1998) typology used to capture the closeness of friendship is adapted for this study. Their typology contains four categories: "acquaintance", "friend", "close friend" and "best friend". In this thesis, six categories were used to capture this aspect of a relationship: "unfriendly relations", "friendly relations" (i.e. acquaintance), "friend", "close friend", "almost best friend", and "closer relationship" (e.g. intimate partner). "Almost best friend" is used rather than "best friend" because no participants mentioned having a best friend at work although some friends are described as closer than "close friends".

## ORGANISATION ONE

Organisation One is the Australian subsidiary of a telecommunication services organisation. The team works in the inbound mobile phones section of the call centre based in Melbourne, Australia. The section is the last port of call for mobile telephone customers about to switch to another telecommunications provider. Their aim is to retain customers and they are given additional scope to offer incentives to customers to stay from the general call centre workers in the company. The team members selected for interview are Ella (high LMX) and Brandon (low LMX).

Ella describes the culture as *'very young'*. It comprises *'a transient group of people... that aren't that passionate about their work'*. In contrast, the organisation itself wants *'to be number one'*. The aim is to *'challenge the way you do your work every day, see if you can find a better way'*.

Brandon also describes the culture as *'young'*. To Brandon it is *'pretty much a fun place to be'*, and at the same time it is *'very results orientated'*. Unlike the general call centre where everything is *'monitored'*, in this team there is more *'autonomy'* and *'no-one really cares'* what you are doing *'as long as'* you get your work done.

The Organisation Contact classified the culture as a task culture (Harrison, 1995). This is consistent with Ella and Brandon's descriptions with their emphasis on achieving results. Their individual case studies follow. Ella is the first interview to be analysed as a case study and is longer than all others. Her interview is selected due to its complexity. It provides a model for the method of analysis to be applied in all cases and hence is done in more detail as an initial exemplar.

## ELLA

*'I don't really feel connected to many people here... you know what I mean? If you come to work and you feel comfortable and you get along with everybody, but you don't actually feel anything beyond that. It's just like I wouldn't want to socialize with nearly all the people here... It's pleasant, but at the same time, like I do guess I definitely feel lonely. I feel like sort of my own little person here'*.

Ella is a young woman aged between 25 and 34 years old. She was born in Australia and does not consider herself part of an ethnic or minority group. She has been in her current full-time role for over a year and has a high LMX relationship with her manager (LMX rating = 34 out of a maximum rating of 35). She also had a good relationship with her previous manager. She has three good friends from her four years in the organisation, including her current flat mate. These good friends *'made my days a lot more enjoyable... loved chatting with them... had common interests... and just brightened up each day'*.

Two of the three *'really good friends... have now left'* and she is *'still in contact'* with them. These friends developed from *'general friendships'* to *'friends outside of work'*. She considers this to be *'really good'*. It is therefore not surprising that she feels more emotionally isolated and lonely now they have left. She says they *'haven't been replaced'*. She's *'only got the one friend left that I regularly go out for coffee with, even though I see other people around and talk to them and, you know, catch up, they're not really important to me... it's... you know, maybe nice to have maybe one or two other people that I really like at work'*.

#### ELLA'S JOB

Ella works full-time in the call centre. She works as a Retention Specialist in this area, providing those on the phones with training and coaching in retaining customers and general support.

Ella currently has a team of people with whom she works directly. She says that *'if you've got a good team you're right'*. Ella feels she has *'a good bunch compared to a lot of other areas'* because *'they're generally quite happy when they come to work. You know, they're enthusiastic they do it, they're positive'*. She feels *'very lucky'*, thinks they *'are really nice'*, and has *'worked really hard to build good relationships with them and that's taken a lot of time and effort'*. If she *'had to move teams'* she would have to build good relationships *'all over again'*.

The team informally reports through Ella to the Team Leader. There are three teams in the area, each with their own Retention Specialist.

#### **How Ella came to this job**

After Ella finished high school she deferred going to university and decided to travel around Australia for a bit. After that, Ella described herself as being *'rather transient'* and that she *'just grabbed a job for the meantime sort of thing and did a couple of those sort of jobs and started up just about four years ago, just on the phones'*. On the phones in the call centre is *'very much entry level'* and *'very much like a battery hen farm... you have to be logged in on the dot. You have to take a specified break... you have to take a certain number of calls per hour. You're constantly supervised. So it's micro-management'*.

Since then Ella has *'been handpicked a couple of times'* for positions that weren't advertised. It has worked in her favour as she has moved up. She is no longer on the phones and she is

'self-managed'. However, she does feel that being 'handpicked' isn't fair and that '*all positions and all opportunities should be given to everybody equally*'.

#### ELLA'S CAREER AMBITIONS

Ella is currently studying for a marketing degree at university. After graduating she sees herself as moving out of the call centre environment to a more professional and challenging role in marketing. There are marketing roles in the organisation and she recognises there is scope for her to move up.

However, there are no '*role models here or any mentors or anything like that*' and Ella does not wish to stay. She adds that after four years '*it gets a bit stale*' and '*I'm not really interested in the industry I think as well. I don't have any sort of passion for mobile phones and you know call centres, and customer service industries, and the type of people that they attract*'.

For the time being though, Ella says she is happy where she is. She describes her job as '*just a means to an end... for the moment... it's comfortable, it's easy, I can come to do it with my eyes closed while I go and study*'.

#### THE DYNAMICS IN ELLA'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

Two key and related dynamics are apparent in Ella's experience of work in this organisation. They relate to how she feels about (i) working in a call centre; and (ii) wanting to do well at work.

##### **Working in a call centre**

During the interview with Ella, I felt that she was going to great lengths to ensure that I understood how different she was from those she worked with in the call centre. She was only working there because she needed '*a job for the meantime*'. It was temporary while she completed her university study.

Ella's hidden feelings in relation to working in the call centre seem to relate to the possibility that she is not really so different from the other workers. For example, she describes the other call centre workers essentially as she describes herself. The call centre workers are '*quite a transient group of people... they sort of end up here, it's not somewhere that they actually choose to go*', just as Ella was '*rather transient*' when she started. There is also the possibility



that the job isn't so temporary after all. So while Ella says she *'can't imagine how anyone could see, like a lot of people do, this as their job for the next five years'*, she had already been working for the organisation for four years at the time of the interview.

The ways Ella defends herself against the associated anxiety are presented below.

### **Distancing herself**

Ella describes herself as different to the other call centre workers. She feels that call centre workers *'don't maybe want to take responsibility for their choices in life'* and that *'they choose to be here every day... but when they get here... they complain about the way everything's done or the way everything's run'*. Unlike Ella who is working towards improving her situation and is career focused, the call centre workers *'talk and gossip, and whinge and whine and bitch all day, and be negative'*.

Ella manages this by being *'careful not to get engaged'*. Her aim is to *'just come to work, do your job, enjoy it as much as you can and go home'*. To *'stay away from all that 'rubbish'* she tries to *'insulate'* herself. She says she will *'often say to my flat mate I'm putting my bubble on now I'm going to work... I think a filmy soapy bubble around me... so that all the rubbish that goes on, because there is a lot of it, it bounces off'*. *'If I do that, then I have a much better day at work'*.

When she is unable to *'insulate'* herself, Ella nevertheless aims to ensure that she appears *'positive, polite, professional at all times'*. She says this is expected by the organisation and means not showing *'how you really feel'*. For example, *'if you're really sad and down in the dumps, then the expectation is that that will be infectious and that you'll bring everybody else down with you'*. Ella has observed this being enforced with people being *'pulled in to a room and talked to on occasions because of maybe their behaviour. Whether they're perceived as being negative, or whether... the manager has heard... this person has been maybe saying things to their colleagues "oh this decision was really bad, blah, blah, blah"'*.

In relation to her own job, she says that *'there's no, no genuine interest, there's feigned interest. I'll pretend to be interested... nobody really notices'*. If *'I come to work and I'm enthusiastic and interested and positive, then that's how everyone perceives me. So that's how I am to them'*. She even says it's *'not really not that hard'* to pretend to be interested. She

admits that *'sometimes you just want to go "oh God, I can't be bothered. Who cares? I don't care, it's boring"'*. However she reserves such negative feelings for outside and will *'say that when I go for coffee instead'*.

According to Ella, appearing *'positive, polite, professional at all times'* also refers to *'the personal life'* that you try to *'leave it at the door when you come in to work'*. Ella feels that the call centre workers *'get so, so sort of involved in the personal side of it, the antics of you know, everybody's personal life, that they take it all a bit too far'*. Hence, she agrees with the organisational expectation to appear *'positive, polite, professional at all times'*. Similar to the *'filmy soapy bubble'*, Ella *'like[s] to have a barrier personally'* and aims to *'to keep [her] private life at home'*. As she says, *'I really like to come to work to get my job done and go home and then not think about it or worry about it. So I'm not really here to make friends... or find friendships with people at all'*. This also makes it easier when working directly with people. *'It's really hard to work with people sometimes if they're sort of like a friend at work because if you need to be maybe a little bit more directive...'*

Ella is also different from the call centre workers because she is hopeful for her future. She finds it hard to imagine how after five years in this job many of the call centre workers will *'go and get another similar sort of one for another five years... they don't see a long term goal... being able to increase their ability, increase their wage, get better jobs and move up'*. For her, Ella feels *'there are a lot of opportunities out there. It's just up to you whether you want to take them or not. So I'm always hopeful, and I know there's room for personal development and that's up to me. And there are opportunities if I want to take them up... So I mean for me, I can move up to the next level without any hassles and it just depends on whether you see that that's a possibility and take steps towards it, or you just sort of sit back and decide that's a little too hard.'*

Ella aligns herself with those already in *'better positions'* such as in *'human resources'* or *'marketing'*. Like them, Ella is more *'career focused'*; and like them, Ella's current role is *'self-managed'*. Ella believes these people would have *'a bit more respect for each other. Maybe they're more mature, more goal orientated... they're not so, the transient entry-level kind of, not putting anybody down, but that sort of group of people'*.

That 'sort of group of people' is different to Ella. She comes from 'a family where you don't treat people like that, and you are, you know, polite and courteous and nice. And if you've got something to say, find the right way to say it... it's a different world'. Here Ella is referring to 'the stuff that's sitting underneath' in the call centre. On the surface there are good working relationships between team members and 'if someone comes and asks them for something they're generally quite willing to go and help them'. She also says that 'when you're sitting at your desk, everybody talks just generally to each other and they know that everybody can hear them and that conversation is generally really good'. However, it's 'when maybe a couple of people get together in a room and they start gossiping and then the third one comes in and it's sort of all that stuff that's hidden in the break rooms... and downstairs having a cigarette and out on your lunch break or just quietly to the person next to you... so it seems under the surface'. There are also 'you know, outbursts and, you know, people getting angry and swearing at other people, or speaking to people with a total lack of respect'.

#### **Reassuring herself**

Given that Ella is here 'for the meantime', she reassures herself that she does enjoy aspects of the job. As she says, 'I like my job, I enjoy my job'. 'I like I like the interaction with people, I like helping people when they get stuck, the problem solving side of it, the little bit of reporting that I do... I'm not micro-managed. I'm totally self-managed... I've got a lot of trust in what I do... the autonomy and the flexibility of my job I like'.

She does worry that she might be complacent like the call centre workers. 'It's all too easy and you know pay comes every fortnight and it's all very safe and cushy and very protected from the rest of the world, very insular sort of environment'. However, she reassures herself that the job is only for while she studies. There are 'opportunities' waiting for when she is ready to 'take them up'.

In addition, she doubts that she would be able to find a manager and area that would support her 'study' that requires 'different hours' and 'really flexible' annual leave.

Ella also seems uncomfortable about "putting down" the call centre workers. So she also points out how 'there are a lot of nice people here, and I guess you spend so much time with the people that you work with that people do want to get to know each other a little bit. You know, ask how was your weekend and that type of thing'. She 'can chat to everybody'.

## Doing well

Ella says that *'whatever job I do, I want to do it well, even if I'm cleaning streets'*. This includes the call centre where Ella consistently receives high performance ratings and *'the highest bonus you can get every year'*.

However she is concerned that doing well may be perceived as receiving special treatment from management. She acknowledges that she has a better relationship than most with her manager and how important that is. She says it *'plays a huge part... if you have a manager that you like and that you can get along with, and that maybe can help to see the good qualities in you and areas for development'*. She adds *'they look after your interests and help with your career progression. And they look after all of your leave, and bonuses... they single-handedly write down how you rated for the year so you can only get \$500, or you can get \$6000 every twelve months, and that sort of thing'*.

For Ella it means that while she thinks that *'most people feel fairly recognized because of all the rewards and incentives schemes'*, she feels that it is *'maybe not quite so much as me'*. It also means better job opportunities. Ella says that *'management might have favourites'*. *'Often jobs will go unadvertised... it slips to one person or there might be a six-month vacancy for a trial and... somebody will be handpicked rather than [the job] being advertised'*. This has worked well for Ella but she does not feel it's fair. Hence she says she's *'always said, "look, you, you should advertise" and they go "no... we're not going to" because they don't want these people to apply and... have to go through rigmarole, we just want to get this person to do it'*.

While there are benefits of a good relationship with your manager, there are also costs. On the one hand she says *'a little bit of friendship is good. But she's really, really opened up to me a lot and told me basically everything about her private life as well... it's not a bad thing. I don't mind'*. But this is inconsistent with how she really feels. She really does mind. She says that while *'I get along well with my manager, um, I don't see her outside of work and I wouldn't want to... the relationship's not that much of a click'*. As a result, *'it's bit of a constant battle'* with her manager who *'tries to take it to more of a friendship level and I sort of try and bring it back a bit'*. Ella is in a bind. She says she does not *'have a manager any more... [she's] got a friend'*, *'it's not as professional'* and *'not as effective... in... getting the job done'*.

Ella says her manager is not the only one in the way of her getting the job done and doing it well. She says her team gets *'so bogged down in all sometimes the gossiping and talking that it really gets in the way of them doing their work and that can be a hindrance when you're trying to get people to achieve targets and to do really well. You've got to steer them away from that back in'*.

The other retention specialists also influence Ella's ability to do her job well. She feels she works harder and does *'as much work or if not a little bit more than [Retention Specialist 1], and together we do 80% more work than [Retention Specialist 2] does'*. She describes Retention Specialist 1 as *'a nice person but you have to be careful. Like maybe she'd be a bit of an ideas stealer'*. Retention Specialist 2 is *'completely ineffective, hopeless at his job'*. *'He's a real problem for me at the moment, always fixing up his work, he's nasty, he's negative, he lies'*.

Ella says that Retention Specialist 2 is poorly managed and *'it makes it hard to do your job'*. She says *'it is a real problem and it hasn't been dealt with very effectively at all. So I attribute a bit of that to [an indirect manager] and certainly a bit of that to his manager who just doesn't like him either and is too scared to deal with it... he can be very patronizing I think and she's maybe not confident enough to deal with it directly. She feels scared to sit down in a room and just lay it on the table how it is, I'm not too sure. She's a bit of a sort of a blonde, dithering, sort of blub, blub, blub, kind of ineffective, nice, bubbly person who maybe doesn't want to get down and do the hard work'*.

Overall, Ella seems to be working hard to do her job well as this helps ensure she makes the most of her situation. To manage the difficulties this presents for her, she tries to maintain a distance from those with whom she currently works, and reassures herself that it is temporary as she works towards a future career in marketing.

#### ELLA'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Ella's presentation was an absence of *mutuality and resonance*. As she says, *'I definitely feel lonely. I feel like sort of my own little person here'*. This is despite Ella still having one of her *'really good friends'* at work, and a high LMX relationship with her manager.

Ella’s relationship with her manager is her most important relationship at work as she recognises it *‘plays a huge part’* in her experience of work. She mentioned her first when describing her current relational map. The high LMX relationship is supported by an experience of “good enough” *holding* and task-related *idealization and identification*. Ella is able to work towards realising her ambitions through her manager’s support for her on the job and with her study. It seems that this is why Ella manages to tolerate her experiences of excess task-related *eye-to-eye validation* and excess *mutuality and resonance* from her manager. On the one hand, it works in her favour to receive more recognition for her work than others. On the other hand, her manager has told her *‘basically everything about her private life’* and Ella finds *‘it’s a bit of a constant battle’* to maintain a boundary that feels appropriate and comfortable for herself.

**Ella’s friends**

In addition to her appointed leader, Ella drew four people on her current relational map. As shown in Table 14, two had become friends, one no more than a friend (Retention Specialist 1) and one an almost best friend (the remaining really good friend). Ella mostly relies on her friend for “good enough” task-related *mutuality and resonance*; and her almost best friend for “good enough” *attachment*.

**Table 14: Who was on Ella’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friend	Work	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>holding</i> , task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification</i> ; excess <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i> , task-related <i>eye-to-eye validation</i>
Team	Subordinates	Friendly relations	Work	Slight	“Good enough” <i>tending</i>
Retention Specialist 1	Peer	Friend	Work	Slight	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Retention Specialist 2	Peer	Unfriendly relations	Work	Not significant	Absence task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Really good friend	Peer	Almost best friend	Personal	Strong	“Good enough” <i>attachment</i>
Indirect report	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	Absence task-related <i>holding</i>

BRANDON

*'When I first started... I was a lot more positive... I was moving up here... I took a sort of lateral step to this, to this position, rather than a forward step mainly due to the shifts. So I'm not sure what that's done to my chances of progression. And I'm also not sure, you know, I'm happy here not... for the actual role... it's pretty monotonous... I want to be challenged... to make more money... I'm not actually sure what direction I want to go in at the moment... There's definitely scope for it, but me personally, I'm sort of just stagnant at the moment'.*

Brandon is a young man aged between 25 and 34 years old. He was born in Sri Lanka and considers himself part of an ethnic or minority group. He has been in his current full-time role for four months and has a moderate LMX relationship with his manager (LMX rating = 25 out of a maximum rating of 35), the lowest LMX rating for his team. As it's early days in the team, Brandon feels there's potential to become closer with her because she's someone you can 'muck around and joke' with. He says 'she hasn't really done anything drastically incorrect to my idea so far... she's quite relaxed and... approachable. But at the same time... she doesn't really hound you... she'll give you feedback but... if it's not necessary she won't... she lets you do your thing'.

This is Brandon's third role in the organisation in almost four years. He said 'if I look back... the times that I'm most happy... was not necessarily about the job... it was the people around me. So I was pretty happy, even though I was in [general call centre] when I was in the team that was doing a lot of social things and... um having sort of a investment in each other I guess I was pretty happy'. In his current role, Brandon said that even though 'the actual role' is 'pretty monotonous', he gets 'through the day because... I actually talk to... and laugh with people' and am able to 'maintain my lifestyle outside consistently'.

BRANDON'S JOB

Brandon currently works on the phones in the same call centre as Ella. Ella is the Retention Specialist for his team. He says the work is 'constantly changing' and 'there's really not... two or three months that are exactly the same um in terms of products... you have to... always be up to speed on things... it's not something that for people who just want to be stagnant and, and be comfortable'.

He says that when he first transferred to the area he *'actually had different ideas of what this would be like. I thought "oh no, people getting annoyed and people escalating from [the general call centre]". I thought it would be much worse. But it wasn't, you know, because people have really calmed down by the time they got to, you know, to this area'*.

Brandon finds the area is *'very social'*, and with the work itself, *'everyone's I guess sort of out for everyone else, so there's a lot of sharing in terms of workload and all that kind of stuff'*. In his team *'there's quite a few guys and um girls around that it's... fun... we just muck around... There's a couple of guys that like cricket... that makes it sort of fun, um, and it hasn't really been like that for me in [the company] before where there's really personal interaction'*. It is because *'you're not drawn to the phones so much'*.

In the general call centre, *'it's not necessarily that people... are not friendly'*, *'you're plugged in to the phone the whole time and you can't really move... apart from like a lunch break. But most people think: "okay, it's my lunch break. I just want sort of time to myself"'*.

It is *'the human aspect, the people aspect there, the social culture, the camaraderie's missing'* in the general call centre. Brandon says *'you really need to have those common experiences and, um, laughs and jokes and interaction to make your day, you know, a little bit more sane'*. *'Like someone you can sort of connect to, um, on some type of personal level, um, that's not work related but you feel you can share it'*.

Brandon says that he *'wouldn't have really talked about people in work prior like... if someone asks "oh, how's work", or my wife will ask me "how's work", and I'll just say "yeah, it's fine, it's all good, I just get my job done". But now I'd say "oh, so and so did this, or so and so, you know, said this"'*.

Brandon feels that *'actually that's how work should be you know. Um, I guess I lost track of how work should be being in Customer Service... when you come here you're like, you're really like excited about this. But really that should be a given, that should be how work should be in the first place'*. He now wonders whether he could do even better for himself. He says *'you get stuck in that rut. Then when you come out of it you think, "ah, this is great"*,



*and you're thinking, "oh, it's not that great", 'cause... probably in other work it's probably even more, you know... the difference between that and Customer Service'.*

### **How Brandon came to this job**

Prior to taking this role, Brandon had worked for three years in the general call centre of the organisation. He worked in the first team for two years and the second team for one year in a slightly more senior role, between his co-workers and the team leader.

Brandon is positive about his experience in the first team and he largely attributes this to the manager. In describing him he says *'first impressions are really big and he was the first person I saw... he's this guy just, you know, ah really out there, very charismatic, and you know basically passionate about his job kind of thing... yeah someone to look up to'. He 'gave me a positive outlook on the company when I first started'. This manager 'basically facilitated myself to get to this [current] position', and if there is 'advice that I need career-wise, I'd still probably call him and ask him'.*

This contrasts with his experience in the second team. Brandon said of his next manager, *'I don't think I had a negative relationship with him I just didn't have one with him... even though we had to work really closely... he was hard to communicate with... we just didn't really hit it off'. Brandon said this manager 'didn't do anything badly... he didn't shy away from work or anything but he didn't do anything to facilitate um a good culture'. Unlike the first manager who 'used to have, you know, Friday night... team functions', this next manager did not 'do any kind of extra-work activities or even in-work activities, so it was just pretty much, you know, just do your role'.*

Brandon said that after *'three years it started to get a bit much'* and he took the current job, a lateral move, *'without thinking of the job itself'*. He said he mainly took this job *'to play cricket in the summer'* as he *'couldn't do that on a seven day shift, rotating roster'*.

### **BRANDON'S CAREER AMBITIONS**

Brandon said he initially came to the organisation for a *'management background'*. He said *'there's always something um to strive for in terms of job opportunities'* and it's up to you *'if you want to take them'* or *'if you want to sit back and do nothing'*. Organisationally, *'they have like a "my career" website internally where you've got all the internal jobs advertised*

*and... how to interview preparation and all of that kind of stuff*'. They offer secondments to gain experience in other areas, offer formal training, and provide opportunities to work interstate. According to Brandon, one of the managers' *'roles is to to see you develop you know your career... not... keep you in their team'*. He has seen others work hard and *'get rewarded and and then go to different higher positions'*. Unlike Ella, he doesn't think there's *'favouritism or anything like that'*.

Brandon is ambitious and he specifically mentioned the "Leaders of Tomorrow" training program. *'Only about ten or twelve people get into that ... a year but that's something that I would look to'*. The program involves *'twelve months of rotational team leader stuff... and a mentor program... if you've got some type of role that you want to go in to um you'll sort of be partnered with someone who's already in that role'*.

However, currently, Brandon is *'not actually sure what direction... to go in'*. Nor is he sure how taking a *'lateral step... to this position'* will effect his *'chances of progression'*. In addition, he says that a *'drawback for someone wanting to move up'* like himself is that *'it's pretty comfortable... you're paid all right'* and, compared with his previous role, it's *'like a walk in the park'*. *'I mean I came here first month and got the highest incentives and I don't think I necessarily was... brilliant or anything like that'* Brandon says he likes *'to get things done early in the morning and then I'm done. So then I'm just surfing on the net like for the rest of the day... it's a bit cruisy'*. So for the moment, Brandon asks himself: for *'a couple of grand more... do I want to, you know?'* A paradox for Brandon is that he doesn't believe this is an area for someone who wants to be *'stagnant'* and *'comfortable'* yet that is how it is for him.

#### THE DYNAMICS IN BRANDON'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

A key concern for Brandon is that he's only recently transferred to this area and does not want to leave as *'it's pretty comfortable'* and he is not *'sure what direction'* to take. However, in *'the last few weeks', 'things have sort of changed'*. As a result *'attitudes'* are *'a little bit... shaky'*.

He says the *'entertainment budget was... cut down. It's 'a bit more results focused', less 'relaxed' and been 'driven to a call centre'*. Brandon feels that *'if you cut spending, it doesn't actually mean that you're going to save in the long run... then you've got workers er feeling,*

*you know, kind of peeved off... you're going to lose that in people, in turnover and stuff like that'. Brandon says 'I attribute that to... the actual Centre Manager of Customer Service [who] is now overseeing this department as well'.*

Brandon specifically mentioned two benefits that were recently taken away. The first was *'an incentive that we used to get paid every three months – a hundred and fifty dollars if you did a certain target - and it was um it was taken off us without actually being sort of documented'*. When we asked the manager about it the reply was *'Yep. No problems... that's going to come to you'*. Then they went back on their word and said *'Oh, we don't have the budget for that. We made a bit of a boo-boo'*.

The second was a pool table *'that was taken out because of... budget constraints'*. But the pool table *'was a big focus of this whole department... every time you were in the... break room or whatever, people who were sitting there, it used to add to sort of cohesion amongst people in different teams because then we all got to talk so. Whereas that now you go in to that room and no one sits there because there's nothing really to do'*.

Brandon's defence is to identify with management. He considers that *'maybe it's the direction of how the, you know, er, this unit needs to be'*. He says that unlike himself, *'a lot of people get annoyed about things and, and don't see the bigger picture... whereas... I look at if, if management make a decision, you gotta sort of look at what where they're coming from um, of what they've got to weigh up um as an organisation... so you know... I don't have that anti-management kind of feel as a lot of workers when, when you take something away from them'*.

After all, Brandon is hoping to become a manager himself and sees that there are possibilities. He says that *'if you're good, you're going to be good and you're going to be noticed in terms of your results. But it's not all you need'*. You also need *'to be a little bit more um sort of people orientated'* and *'work on getting known... so when people say look at it "who's this? Oh yeah, that's that person"'*. Brandon's aligning with management therefore acts as a defence and he hopes it will help him garner a reputation as potential management material.

He also points out how people like working in the area. He seems to try to reassure himself with this. He says people are *'satisfied and then staying here... 'cause I know there's people*

*been here for, you know, two three years and not really, don't even want to move 'cause they like it'.*

Brandon fears that this new area will become like the general call centre and means that he will no longer feel *'comfortable'*. He is being forced to consider his future and face that he is *'stagnant'* even though he doesn't know what he wants to do.

Further, while he says there are always job opportunities in the organisation, it appears that this may be a defence against feeling that there may not be opportunities for him. Brandon says it is up to him to take the opportunities that are there. Yet he also says it is a manager's role to facilitate your career development and he has only been able to get ahead with the support of his first manager. He does not know where he stands with his current manager. He says she has not done *'anything drastically incorrect'*. This suggests that she has not done "anything drastically correct" either. He also seems disillusioned with the organisation in that it has a general call centre where the *'human element'* is missing. Even though he is happier in his current area, he wonders how *'great'* it really is. He says he *'was a lot more positive'* when he *'first started'*. Facing these experiences also forces Brandon to consider his future.

#### BRANDON'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Brandon's presentation was an absence of task-related *idealization and identification*. He is disillusioned and is being forced to consider his future even though he is *'not actually sure what direction... to go in at the moment'*. To compensate, Brandon emphasises his experience of "good enough" *mutuality and resonance* during the interview. That is, being able to *'muck around'* and have *'fun'* with his new co-workers. Yet towards the end of the interview he acknowledges that he does not *'want the good time that much'*. It is still important to have *'someone you can sort of connect to um on some type of personal level'* but he really wants to *'make more money'* and have a *'bit more security'*.

Brandon's relationship with his first manager remains his most important relationship at work, even though he no longer reports to him. The primary relational need in this relationship seems to be "good enough" *attachment*. This directly contrasts with his relatively low LMX relationship with his current manager that is characterised by an absence of *attachment*. While she is *'quite relaxed and... approachable'*, at the same time she is *'pretty distant'*. Brandon would like to develop a closer relationship with her, presumably so that she

will help him with his career like his first manager has done. Brandon is the only participant who did not mention his current manager first when describing his current relational map. He mentioned one of his new co-workers who is ‘worth talking about... at home’.

**Brandon’s friends**

In addition to his appointed leader, Brandon drew ten people on his current relational map. As shown in Table 15, two had become friends, and his ex-manager a close friend. Brandon mostly relies on the friend worth talking about for “good enough” *mutuality and resonance*; and his other friend has provided “good enough” task-related *idealization and identification* as well as “good enough” *mutuality and resonance*.

**Table 15: Who was on Brandon’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	Absence <i>attachment</i> , task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification</i>
Friend worth talking about at home	Peer	Close friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Member of another team	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Team member	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Team member	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Member of other team, joined area at same time	Peer	Friendly relations	Personal	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>holding, mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Retention Specialist	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>holding</i>
Current and first team member	Peer	Friendly relations	Personal	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>holding</i>
Member of first team	Peer	Friend	Work	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i> , task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification</i>
First manager	Superior	Close friend	Work	Strong	“Good enough” <i>attachment</i> , task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification</i>
Manager’s manager	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	Not discussed

## ORGANISATION TWO

Organisation Two is a privately owned employment services organisation. The team works in the outbound calls section of the call centre based in Melbourne, Australia. The team members selected for interview are George (high LMX) and Jane (low LMX).

George describes the culture as *'I wouldn't say casual, but a step back from corporate... it's just easygoing... it's up to you to put in the performance, it's not someone riding you to perform'*. For George, *'it's a fun environment'* and *'everyone here is... you know, really great to work with'*.

Jane describes the culture as *'very relaxed'* and *'very friendly'*. She says the company is *'successful'*, *'growing... fast'* and *'becoming more corporate'*. Now you have to go *'through a lot of avenues to... get things done'*. They now also *'force us to do a lot of things as far as activities and that whole interdepartmental kind of relationship, they want us to sort of be very close... but they don't let us do that naturally... we follow these values which... is fine, but I don't think it needs to be thrown upon a person'*.

The Organisation Contact classified the culture as 60% task culture and 40% person culture (Harrison, 1995). This is consistent with George and Jane's descriptions. The organisation is growing fast and changing from a more supportive environment to a focus on achievement. Their individual case studies follow.

## GEORGE

*'I really didn't know much about computers when I started here... I was sort of asked career-wise where I wanted to go within [the company] and I'm sort of into design, and things like that. So I, ah, went to night school and um, got my Web Design Certificate, and from there, I'm now the backup person for our production team, which builds all the templates and profiles... I can see that they're, they've put in the effort in, 'cause I kind of put the effort in'*.

George is a young man aged between 25 and 34 years old. He was born in Australia and does not consider himself part of an ethnic or minority group. He has been in the organisation and

his current full-time role for over two years. He has a high LMX relationship with his manager (LMX rating = 27 out of a maximum rating of 35). He says she's *'quite a good friend'* although they would *'never go out to dinner or anything like that'*. She's *'close because she's my manager at this point'*. The manager of the Design Team *'is important'* too even though he does not have *'a lot of contact with him'*. That's because *'he's the one that makes the decision to... discuss it with [my current manager] to say "can you get George to come up and work with me today?"'* George is aiming to *'get into that team'*, although he is *'sceptical on whether I want to just do that full time... at this point'*.

George feels he has *'a good relationship with everyone'* in the organisation. Additionally, within his own team he says *'they've become friends, more than I thought they would have... I've really made a lot of friends here... become dinner friends on the weekend... it probably got more personal than I would have thought, but ah, I'm glad it did, 'cause they're all good people here'*.

#### GEORGE'S JOB

George works in the Customer Service department of an employment services organisation. As an Account Manager, he looks after particular accounts which he says involves *'just answering queries and talking to people'*. He is also *'the backup person for our production team, which builds all the templates and profiles'* for online advertisements.

#### How George came to this job

Prior to working in this job, George worked in the call centre of another organisation that was *'really stringent'*. This contrasts with the current organisation where George says *'it's fun to come in to work... if I want to drop something that I'm doing and go have a hit at table-tennis, no one's going to look badly upon that... it's relaxed... that type of freedom... doesn't make you feel like you're chained to the job... it's your own conscience, that wants you to, to do well... it's casual yet, we, we get results'*.

George started working in call centres after working *'in quite a few bands over the years'* as a drummer. This is because he *'wanted to get married, and I wanted a day job. I didn't want my wife to come home while I was going out to sound check, so, and we did that in our relationship for five years. So it was important to me to get a day job and actually start living the way the majority of people live'*.

At first it was *'tough'* and George *'wanted to resign'* in *'the first three months because... well there was no training program'* it was *'the phone's there, answer it'*. So George *'had no idea what the job was about, and so... of course you're going to make mistakes and making mistakes meant getting yelled at by, by a certain person, and coming from a band, I don't know, I didn't take crap from anybody. So when I was getting crap thrown my way, I was like, you know, I'm, I'm about to walk'*. However George *'swallowed it'* because he *'didn't want to go back to bands'*.

At the time George needed *'information from these guys to get through what we had to learn'*. He decided *'to hang around... because the culture was very similar back then, where you just came on in, no one was on your back, but don't make a mistake... it's probably a lot more forgiving now'*. *'Now you... get an induction, you get three weeks training'*.

He says he *'was probably comfortable about four months in of... what I was doing and where I was and being really happy going in there every day'*. *'As the year went on, you know, friendships grew, they saw my personality come out, my sense of humour come out in certain situations, which they obviously appreciated, and we got closer... the rain sort of eased up a little bit'*.

#### GEORGE'S CAREER AMBITIONS

George feels he has his *'own direction and things that I can sort of do'*. George says he knew he *'didn't want to be a part of Customer Service my whole life, because I just thought there are bigger and better things out there'*. He is therefore *'really grateful'* to be *'given the opportunity to, to sort of aspire inside the team'*. He adds that *'the changes don't come quickly, but, you know, you know that there is a goal that you can get to, and, once you get to that goal, hopefully there'll, there'd be another one'*.

George is also grateful for a more senior co-worker when he first arrived who helped him develop and reach his goal at that time. As he says, *'he made me raise my standard, you know, whether, whether I wanted to or not, and my standard raised 'cause I wanted to get to a certain level and, and I, I guess I didn't want to disappoint him, with all the work that he put it in'*.



Currently, George is *'sceptical'* about whether he wants to work in the Design Team full-time and thinks he'll *'do a little bit of here and a little bit there and, and, and sort of mix it up'* for now. He feels supported in pursuing his *'own direction'* in this way. He says that his current manager and the manager of the Design Team *'always meet on, you know, how they can improve the role for me and things like that'*.

### **The dynamics in George's experience of work**

The notion of reciprocity is apparent in George's experience of work. Being patient and "hanging around" in the organisation is working well for him. His effort at night school and on the job is rewarded with career opportunities, even if they don't come quickly. He feels *'grateful'* and says that *'other people in our department... have been given an opportunity'* too. He is aware of how reliant he is on his own manager and the manager of the Design Team for the current opportunities. This is why they are both so important to him. It is possible that he defends against this reliance by pursuing his *'own direction'*, and hoping that working in both teams for now will foster his career.

In relation to the notion of reciprocity on a personal level, *'it's a matter of, you know, giving respect and getting it back, and I've never been disrespected here'*. George is *'surprised'* by how *'involved'* he has become with people at work and how *'glad'* he is about it. Some people have become *'dinner friends'*. Another he helps out: *'a member of my team who has a young child... she does it pretty hard, as a single mum, and ah, I kinda live on the same um, sort of route as her, and ah, so I just wanted to help her out a bit, and to my surprise even, 'cause I usually, I usually get the job done and, and go home to my own life. But I was taking her home, and actually picking up her child instead of her walking, you know, a couple of k's to pick up the kid and then go home... it was kind of an off-the-cuff moment where I heard her sort of saying that it's difficult... at the time I was going home and just getting right into cooking, and waiting for my wife to come home... it was kinda getting me down, so I couldn't imagine, with a child, where, how hard it would be, where you have to get things done straightaway'*.

It seems that George is able to give more of himself than he thought he would through the organisation providing an environment where he is trusted to do his job well without anyone *'riding'* him and being rewarded with opportunities to pursue his own career direction.

GEORGE’S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in George’s presentation was “good enough” task-related *idealization and identification*. He is ‘*really grateful*’ to both his current manager and the manager of the Design Team for being able to follow his ‘*own direction*’, and to be able to ‘*aspire inside the team*’. This gratitude manifests through continuing to put the ‘*effort in*’ and his “good enough” *tending* of a co-worker. He also experiences “good enough” *mutuality and resonance* with the people at work, feels embedded in the organisation, and has developed some ‘*dinner friends*’.

George’s relationship with his current manager is his most important relationship at work, simply because she is his manager. The high LMX relationship is supported by “good enough” experiences of *holding* and task-related *idealization and identification*. George trusts that his manager will support his career ambitions and help ‘*improve his role for him*’.

**George’s friends**

In addition to his appointed leader, George drew six people on his current relational map. As shown in Table 16, four had become friends – a friend, two close friends and an almost best friend. George mostly relies on these friends for “good enough” *mutuality and resonance* and task-related *mutuality and resonance*.

**Table 16: Who was on George’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>holding</i> , task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification</i>
Colleague in another area	Superior	Friend	Work	Moderate	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Colleague in another area	Superior	Close friend	Work and personal	Strong	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i> , task-related <i>holding</i>
Design team member	Peer	Almost best friend	Work and personal	Strong	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i> , task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Manager, Design team	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification</i>
Manager’s Manager	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>holding</i>
Team member	Peer	Close friend	Social	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>

JANE

*'When I first started I'm just like "Oh my God, this is an absolute classic, like, how much fun is this." But it's very hard sometimes to know when that flexibility stops... you don't know the boundaries, the façade of being casual clothed, kicking a football... how far do I go without being perceived to be too, do you know what I mean? It's a little bit hard... it can sometimes come back to bite you... they put down these values... how do you sort of say one thing and do the other... sometimes I think... we should go semi-formal or semi-corporate so we can actually sort of match the values'.*

Jane is a young woman aged between 25 and 34 years old. She was born in Australia and does not consider herself part of an ethnic or minority group. She has been in her current full-time role and the organisation for three years and has a low LMX relationship with her manager (LMX rating = 15 out of a maximum rating of 35). She says it's *'a huge area of concern'*, *'completely frustrating'* and *'disappointing'* *'when you feel you can't go to your manager and say, "look, this is strictly between you and I"'*. *'As much as we talk about what we did on the weekend... I would never go to her with an issue now, purely because she hasn't demonstrated to me that she is trustworthy'*. This is problematic for Jane because, as she says, *'she makes the decisions for me at work'*.

Jane doesn't feel she can go to HR either. One of the company values is to speak without fear. Jane has *'spoken with fear'*. She has been *'pulled aside'* after speaking *'up openly'*. She wonders whether it is *'an individual thing... a personality clash'*, and, at the same time, observes that *'a lot of people feel the same'*.

When drawing her relational maps, Jane was *'getting confused'* about how to distinguish between those who are physically close and whom she really feels close to. She specifically mentions a co-worker who is *'sitting opposite me now, who was on the other side of the room, never hardly spoke to her... now... all of a sudden, you're blurting out your whole home truths. You know what I mean? It's amazing'*. In contrast, she did not know whether she was *'allowed'* to put her boyfriend on her maps or not. He is very important to her and they *'always have a bit of a chat'*, even though he works in a different department. While he

*'understands the issues at work'* and they met through work, the relationship is primarily personal.

*'Getting confused'* about relationships is not new for Jane. She says she *'used to be thinking, "Why can't that person be like my best friend? Why can't everyone be like my best friend?"...My best friend said to me, "Jane... you need certain things from me, but you need certain things from..."*. Now I understand... you can't have everyone with the same qualities'. In describing her relational maps, Jane points out, for example, how she values one of the senior executives because *'she motivates me'* and how a couple of her co-workers are important because they are *'very much in tune with how I'm thinking'*. One of these co-workers is George. She always says *"Can I sit near George?" It's a guy, do you know what I mean? Like, sometimes it can be too girlie. You need the break'*.

Despite her difficulties with her manager and HR, Jane says she feels *'pretty safe 'cause I get along with most people here'*. This is *'one of the first organisations I've actually felt there's not many groups of people that you don't want to be part of, or... that I wouldn't want to work with'*. She says she has *'established some great friendships or relationships... don't go out socially after work, I try to avoid a lot of that, but quite happily go out for a drink with anyone here'*.

#### JANE'S JOB

Jane's job is an *'outbound role. So I'm on the phones, I'm making outbound calls all the time'*. She says it *'is not the most exciting type role'* but *'joking around with people... helps... get through my day'*. She likes how *'there's not... someone always watching every move you make, the Big Brother so to speak'*.

She says *'there are a lot of processes involved'* when she would rather *'just walk up'* to someone, in IT for example, and say *'Hey, can you help me with this?'* But she has to *'have a request sent through'* and then not know *'when it's going to get back to you'*. She says she has been told *'sorry, there's a backlog of other problems'*. She does not *'understand what happens'* and finds that it *'can be really frustrating'*.

She also feels her role *'is naturally perceived as the lower end of the spectrum'* and that there is not *'enough recognition'*.

### How Jane came to this Job

Jane had *'never worked in Customer Service'* prior to this. She worked in McDonalds as *'Assistant Manager'* and has worked *'at other corporates'*. This includes an organisation where she worked with one of the current executives. Jane says this executive was, and still is, *'my mentor'*.

### JANE'S CAREER AMBITIONS

While Jane says she *'chooses to be in Customer Service'*, at the same time, she has *'hit a brick wall'*. She feels *'there's a bit of favouritism here and there... they get along very well with the manager'*. This applies to promotions where *'the ones who they don't look after really, who are equally as talented... it takes them a lot longer to get where they should be'*. It also applies to Jane. As she says, when they *'know that someone's not happy in what they're doing they'll somehow find a position for them, which, you know, would never happen to me'*.

Jane feels she is where she is because she is *'lazy'*. She admires her mentor for her *'enthusiasm... dedication... extremely driven... very well organised... probably all the things I wish I could do, but don't'*. She feels she could reach management and when she looks at her manager, she thinks *'I will do it so differently... but then I think... why don't I put my hand up and force myself to get into that position... that's purely up to me and... I'm lazy'*. While her mentor was *'always pushing me... seeing... my potential'*, Jane thinks *'she's given up now'*.

Jane indicates that she is not driven to climb the corporate ladder, however she is looking to be *'a Mum'* and says that *'one day hopefully I'll be at that stage'*.

### THE DYNAMICS IN JANE'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

Since Jane has been working in the organisation it has *'grown so fast'* and been very *'successful'*. Jane's hidden feeling is that she is being abandoned while the organisation moves forward. For example, her mentor has *'given up'* on her and she hasn't *'seen as much of her as... 12 months ago'*. Her manager would not *'find a position'* for her as occurs for others when they are *'not happy in what they're doing'*. She is unable to *'speak without fear'* to HR. As a result of a recent refurbishment, the executive offices are now *'huge... ridiculously big... when we are basically higgledy piggledy'*. She was so upset when *'a very good friend'* of hers *'lost his job here'* that she went to the CEO about it. She felt the *'wrong decision was made'*. The CEO said to Jane, *'I actually don't know the real circumstances but*

*I trust my staff, my management staff*'. Even the company's internal processes that have developed as the company grows frustrate Jane as she does not *'understand what happens'* and is not confident that her written requests will be given any priority.

This leaves Jane feeling uncertain, confused, frustrated and alone. Even though she has *'established some great friendships'*, she still feels there isn't *'anyone to actually go to'*. She is unable to talk in confidence with her manager who *'makes the decisions'* relating to her work. She cannot talk with HR. Even though the CEO did concede to arrange for someone to provide her friend with a reference, he supports his management team. This type of experience is pervasive.

To counter this, Jane is giving her manager *'the benefit of the doubt'*. She says it's not that *'I'm never going to tell her anything'*, *'she'll be fine but it's just a matter of time'*. Jane also says she is too *'lazy'* to get ahead, *'chooses to be in Customer Service'* and is aiming to be *'a Mum'*. HR is more difficult for Jane and she prefers to deny their existence. After describing her relational maps, she notices that she hasn't *'got HR on there'*. Jane then says to me, *'I'm quite happy not to... out of mind out of sight'*.

In relation to the internal processes, she says *'you're not going to have those relationships that we originally had'*. Even though *'we are growing, we are going to become a bit more segregated, nothing wrong with that'*. She also acknowledges the need for more processes as the company grows: *'you've got to have that otherwise nobody manages'*.

However she remains unhappy with HR for trying to make the organisation more corporate. This includes trying to force mingling between departments rather than allowing relationships to develop naturally, and imposing values on staff. Jane personalises this to the HR manager and attributes it to her corporate background, she came from a top tier accounting firm.

Jane is forgiving towards her mentor and the executives. In relation to her mentor, Jane says *'people speak so highly of her... I'm so proud 'cause I think "well, that's my friend"... I'm associated with her, you know, and that's really to me a feather in my cap'*. In relation to the executives she feels that they should *'cut out the bullshit that can go with a growing company as fast as we have, or a successful company'*. Then she acknowledges that *'by the same token*

*we were just all given a \$100 gift voucher because we made a profit, you know, a huge profit'.*

#### JANE'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Jane's presentation was an absence of *holding*. She *'doesn't know the boundaries'* and is unable to trust that she will be supported professionally or personally. She experiences an absence of task-related *eye-to-eye validation*, and that even though she is at the *'lower end'* of the organisation, she is unhappy that there is not more recognition for her contribution. It is therefore not surprising that she does not put her *'hand up'* to fulfil her *'potential'* and has effectively abandoned her career ambitions for herself.

Jane's relationship with her manager is, reluctantly, her most important relationship at work. *'She makes the decisions'* for Jane. So while Jane experiences an absence of *holding* and an absence of *attachment* in relation to her manager, what seems to "hold" her is the hope that *'it's just a matter of time'* before their relationship improves. Jane hopes to feel able to trust her and that the relationship will go beyond the superficial *'what we did on the weekend'*.

#### **Jane's friends**

In addition to her appointed leader, Jane drew five people on her current relational map. As shown in Table 17, one is her current partner and the other is her mentor whom she considers a close friend. At work, Jane mostly associates "good enough" task-related *mutuality and resonance* with her partner; and "good enough" *attachment and idealization and identification* with her mentor.

**Table 17: Who was on Jane’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	Absence <i>holding, attachment</i>
Ex-team member	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Partner	Peer	Closer relations	Personal	Strong	“Good enough” <i>passionate experience, mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Mentor	Superior	Close friend	Work and personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>attachment, idealization &amp; identification</i>
Male other team member	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>eye-to-eye validation</i>
Team member	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>eye-to-eye validation, idealization &amp; identification, and task-related mutuality &amp; resonance</i>

### ORGANISATION THREE

Organisation Three is a subsidiary of an international airfreight and logistics organisation. The team works in the inbound calls section of the call centre based in Sydney, Australia. The team members selected for interview are Brooke (high LMX) and Stephan (low LMX).

Brooke describes the culture as having ‘*that whole American ideal of “keep their employees happy and you’ll have happy customers”*’. They are ‘*very supportive and very big on training*’. This includes ‘*orientation*’, ‘*accessible*’ managers, and organising ‘*everything... for the employees, like even just casual Friday*’. It’s ‘*very friendly*’ and ‘*quite easygoing, as long as you get your work done*’. They ‘*monitor everything... but... they have... goals that are reachable*’.

Stephan also describes the culture as ‘*friendly... it’s just a warm feeling. It just feels like my family life at home*’. He says ‘*there are a lot of different cultural backgrounds. Most people that stay... don’t want to move up and move around... there’s not a lot of openings. It’s very hard to move up*’. He says you have ‘*to be on the phone for a certain amount of time per day ... have a call answered and gone by 90 seconds... and get rid of the call as fast as you can... that’s the reason we’re here at the end of every day*’.



The Organisation Contact classified the culture as a task culture (Harrison, 1995). This is consistent with Brooke and Stephan's descriptions and the emphasis on achieving set goals. Their individual case studies follow.

## BROOKE

*'I know where I want to go within the company and I do actually look up to [my manager] as management position. I think she does her job really well and there might be some people who don't really have much direction, but I think for most people, they know where they want to go and the company makes it quite easy to get there'.*

Brooke is a young woman under 25 years old. She was born in Australia and does not consider herself part of an ethnic or minority group. She is relatively new to the organisation and has been there and in her current full-time role for three months. She has a high LMX relationship with her manager (LMX rating = 33 out of a maximum rating of 35). Brooke feels that *'as a manager she's sort of everything you need – she's approachable, reliable and efficient... sort of managed to get all three, like you can talk to [her] as a friend, as a boss, as a colleague'.*

Brooke says she has *'a lot of good friends within each department now... there's quite a few young people and like we're all going out tonight'.* Brooke describes it as *'almost like another group of friends. It's like you've got your old school friends... your friends... your work friends, and some people probably are closer, but in the end, like everyone gets along'.*

## BROOKE'S JOB

Brooke's job is to *'answer calls'* for the Australian subsidiary of an airfreight and logistics company based in Sydney. She spends *'90% of the day on the phone and 10% talking'* with co-workers. *'They monitor everything... like every day we get a stats sheet showing how many calls... average handling time... how much you're available during the day'.* Staff are also rated in terms of *'appropriate dressing... they've got a dress code... no denim, no miniskirts... punctuality'.*

Brooke says *'it's quite easygoing, as long as you get your work done'*. She has found that *'it's all reachable'* and thinks that it's *'all pretty reasonable'*. She said that *'on my second day on the phone everything met target and so I knew that I didn't have the pressure to get there'*. The *'people who don't get the goals will whinge and say it's unfair... the goals are the same for everybody... I'm probably one of the newest people... I'm managing to do it'*. She says *'the people that don't make the stats'* only make themselves *'available 50% or 60% of the day. Obviously you're not going to take as many calls'*.

### **How Brooke came to this job**

Brooke found out about the position through Kevin, a friend who now works in Sales. She *'applied because he... mentioned it'*. Brooke has known Kevin since she *'was about 10 years old'*. *'Since I was this skinny little thing... he watched me get drunk for the first time and he's the one who had to take me home to my Mother when I got drunk... yeah copped it all!'*

In Brooke's *'last job... it was very like don't talk, don't do this, don't do that, you have to be productive... whereas here, like, we'll all sit there and talk, but we all know as soon as the phone rings that's it, conversation's over'*.

When Brooke started she participated in the *'newer'* induction and orientation program. Through this *'you get to know and meet pretty much everyone in the company and... they pretty much explained how the whole company worked and give you a good idea of sort of what you're up for'*.

### **BROOKE'S CAREER AMBITIONS**

Brooke said that *'Customer Service seems to be the bottom. Everyone goes up from Customer Service'*. So when Brooke's manager asked her *'where do you see yourself going?'* Brooke told her *'Sales'*. *'She said "well that's highly, like very, very possible" and she was very supportive... she pretty much told me like how my best way to go about it... she said, "oh, I think you'd be great in Sales"'*.

In addition to her manager's support, Brooke feels *'the company makes it quite easy to get there'* and *'they will offer any jobs internally before they advertise externally so there's a lot of opportunities for movement'*.

#### THE DYNAMICS IN BROOKE'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

Brooke has had a very smooth and successful start in the organisation. She feels safe and secure and trusts that what she needs will be provided. For example, her manager *'sits there with us and I think it makes her a lot more accessible... only like the really big managers... have their little offices'*. This means that when Brooke has a difficult call and she doesn't *'know what to do... the fact that like our manager and... team leader is sitting there, like it just makes it a lot easier'*. The team is also there: *'we know that whoever's not on a call will help us; and if we're really stuck, like someone will just put someone on hold for a moment and say, "Are you alright? What can I do?"'*

Brooke does describe some difficulties. She feels she knows *'how everyone else relates to my job and yeah... it would be nice for someone else to understand how we work here'*. Brooke says *'it's just certain people don't listen', 'a lot of the older staff don't really quite understand what we're coming from'*. She feels helpless with this and says *'what can you say to someone who's been here for 5 or 6 years? You have to go and do an introduction?'* She manages this feeling by reassuring herself that the organisation is addressing this issue with the new induction and orientation program, and that it is *'just certain people'*, not everyone.

There is also difficulty with a co-worker who is not always honest with customers about when their parcels will arrive. He doesn't want to tell them that it is delayed, for example, held up in customs. She says he is always told, *'he'll stop and then we'll get another case and it's like, you're doing it again! ...more than anything it just makes it hard on us'*. Brooke seems to manage this by using it as an example of how not to handle customers. In relation to this example, she says her manager *'always sort of says honesty is the best policy. And it's true, whether they want to hear it or not, it's better just to be honest'*.

#### BROOKE'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Brooke's presentation was "good enough" task-related *holding*. Her manager, her team leader and her team are all *'accessible'* if she receives *'a difficult call'*. This experience buffers her from the difficulties she faces with the relatively few co-workers who, through their attitudes or dishonesty, make *'it hard on us'*. This notion of "us versus the few co-workers", along with her personal relationship with Kevin, contributes to her experience of "good enough" *embeddedness* at work.

Brooke’s relationship with her manager is her most important work relationship. In addition to “good enough” task-related *holding*, the high LMX relationship is characterised by an experience of “good enough” *attachment, idealization and identification* and task-related *idealization and identification*. Brooke feels she her manager is ‘*everything you need*’ and she can talk to her ‘*as a friend, as a boss, as a colleague*’. In this way she is a role model for Brooke. She is not only ‘*very supportive*’ of her desire to go into Sales, she also told her the ‘*best way to go about it*’.

**Brooke’s friends**

In addition to her appointed leader, Brooke drew three people on her current relational map. She also includes three groups – HR, Brokerage and Operations. As shown in Table 18, Kevin is Brooke’s close friend at work. He meets the personal relational needs of *holding, attachment* and *mutuality and resonance*, as well as task-related *mutuality and resonance*.

**Table 18: Who was on Brooke’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friend	Work	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>holding, attachment, idealization &amp; identification, task-related idealization &amp; identification</i>
Team Leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Kevin	Peer	Close friend	Work and personal	Strong	“Good enough” <i>holding, attachment, mutuality &amp; resonance</i> and task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Warehouse manager	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
HR	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Brokerage	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Operations	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>

STEPHAN

*‘Every time I felt like this is boring, I can do this with my eyes closed, if I’m here or not here the company’s still going to run without me, I’d move position. And then for the first six or seven months it’s a new feeling, it’s a new position, you’re learning*

*something new and you think you're finally going to get somewhere and then you get into that pattern again where there's no way up so you move again. So I've just been moving side to side, side to side... getting a new position. The first six or seven months it's great, it's challenging, it's learning something new, but I think I'm running out of positions'.*

Stephan is a young man aged between 25 and 34 years old. He was born in Portugal and considers himself part of an ethnic or minority group. He has been in his current full-time role for over three years and the organisation for seven years. He has a low LMX relationship with his manager (LMX rating = 15 out of a maximum rating of 35). She started in the organisation at the same time as Stephan. He says *'she's a great friend, yeah. Like you couldn't ask for someone as a manager that's closer than that, but an aspect of, she guides you and directs you in the right way, you don't feel, you don't see that'*. He feels *'they do care about you, but they don't really care if you want to be a manager. They're not going to show you do this and do that, and this is where you... they just want you to come in, do your job and get the stats up every day'*.

Even though Stephan says he feels close to her, he tends *'to back up a bit'*. He says that even though *'she hears me... she's not listening'*. In addition, while *'she is my friend... at the same time she's that guy's best friend and that guy's best friend'*. Stephan compares her with three other people he started with seven years ago. Even though they have all *'experienced the same experiences ... in the company... they've seen me go through bad times... and good times'*; unlike his manager, *'they are really my friends'*. A family friend is also employed in the organisation.

Stephan says that while there is now *'nowhere to go and the money's not the best'*, there is *'that security feeling. That feeling that you're coming to work, but it doesn't actually feel like work most of the time, it just feels like a family'*. *'Everyone makes everyone welcome'*. *'They don't just say how are you and then not expect an answer back; they care about the answer'*.

They also help each other out. Stephan says that *'if I have a problem I can go see someone in another department and they will help me straight away because they know that if they come to me for a problem I will help them'*. This extends beyond the workplace *'when you start to see each other after work, like you go out after work, on the weekends, or you go over to each*

*other's house*'. Stephan says this *'happens a lot'* and in different departments too. Stephan also met two girlfriends through work. This includes his current girlfriend who recently moved to another organisation.

#### STEPHAN'S JOB

Stephan works with Brooke in the call centre of an airfreight and logistics company where *'you're supposed to be mostly on the phone... that's the reason we're here at the end of every day'*. He said targets are set such as *'you've got to be on the phone for a certain amount of time per day. You've got to answer the calls within a certain time... you have to have a call answered and gone by 90 seconds so you try and get rid of the call as fast as you can to go for the next call'*.

He says he is *'comfortable'* but would prefer *'where you come in and you get told these are our targets... we have to achieve... come on let's go... There's nothing like that'*. Stephan feels *'too secure and too safe'* in the role to the extent that he's *'got into that stage. It's just so easy that you don't even think twice of what you're doing... I do tend to make a mistake or two... I get told... but I don't feel like next time, when I go to do something, I better watch out'*. He thinks he gets *'away with too much'*. He adds that you don't get *'rewarded'* for your performance. *'If I'm number one or not, or number ten, no-one really cares... I might as well not try and... still get paid the same as the number one... yeah, it demotivates you a lot'*.

#### **How Stephan came to this job**

Stephan started seven years ago in the warehouse, *'the bottom'* of the organisation. In the warehouse *'you're no-one'*, a *'no-hoper'* who is only there *'because you can't get a different job'* and you are *'not going to get anywhere'*. Stephan feels that in the warehouse *'you're just looked upon as the lower part of the company'*. *'The people who don't deserve their commission and don't deserve cold water ... we had to come into the office to get cold water; we didn't have it out the back'* and all this is exacerbated by not being *'dressed in a shirt and tie, you're just in your dirty clothes'*.

At that time, Stephan *'just looked at the office as this big place where it would be hard to get into'*. However, his first manager who *'hired me... he actually believed in me, you could tell that he believed in me and he wanted to give me a chance'*. This manager gave Stephan *'responsibilities'* and guidance. After a couple of years, Stephan was able to get an office

position. He says it was *'better than going to the warehouse. But it wasn't like all the fears that I had that you know, you would never get to a position where these people are. You realise you can get into there and you just slowly learn about the whole company'*.

#### STEPHAN'S CAREER AMBITIONS

Stephan is *'a person that loves to be challenged... I like the rush of let's meet this target, let's meet this cut-off. If I feel like I'm challenged, I feel like I'm fulfilled'*. For Stephan it is important *'to feel like you're contributing to the company like you're... making a difference... like if... you're at home, they're going to feel that you're not here today'*.

He says *'the reason why I would leave the company is because I don't see myself as going up high'*, and in reality it's *'very limited to what you can do'*. *'It's such a small company in Australia'*, *'there's not a lot of openings'* and *'it's very hard to move up'*. Nevertheless, *'every six or seven months I get this thing like, like a sense of hope type thing. Hope that maybe I will get somewhere up or maybe... a position will come up or a managerial job and I can go for it and I will get it'*.

Not only are these higher positions limited, he says *'I can't actually say there's evidence... you have a feeling... it's just favouritism. Like there's a lot of positions where you know that, for example, that person gets along well with the manager and they are pretty close, and I know there's been a few cases where I have a better chance of getting that position, but because a person actually is on better terms with the manager they get the position over me'*.

In describing his moves within the organisation, and in contrast with his first manager, Stephan will *'get some work, get close to the manager and going through the disappointment of... we're not going to help you and basically you're on your own type thing'*. Stephan has now *'given up on everything'* as *'you sort of get tired of trying and getting knocked back'*. *'Not long ago'* Stephan approached a manager about not feeling *'challenged'* and wanting to make *'a difference'*. Stephan thought of this manager as *'a good role model... he started off in the bottom like I did and he's now a big manager'*. However, *'I didn't get an answer or suggestions even of what to do, or maybe you're doing this wrong, or maybe you could do it this way... that was a big disappointment actually... I don't think he's much of a role model'*.

Another reason Stephan hasn't left is because *'the people are great'*. If he went *'to another place you might get more money and then people might not be the best'*. He is also *'so comfortable'* in terms of the work itself and knows that if he goes *'somewhere else'* he is *'not going to get this'*. When thinking about others who have left he says he's *'never really come across anyone... that says they don't like the place'*. They leave *'because it is very limited to what you can do and they don't want to just be here for another five years, six years and realise that they could have done something else'*.

#### THE DYNAMICS IN STEPHAN'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

It seems that the hidden feeling in Stephan's experience of work is that he *'could have done something else'*. His girlfriend tells him *'about the difference between that company and this company. Then you realise, hey, maybe they don't do as much for us as you think'*. He says *'she gets more pay than I do now and she does less hours... they tell her, for example, if there's any position... you want to move into or... if we see it in you that you've got a manager's material thing we'll take you to courses and pay for everything... at the six months she was still training and they took her to seminars related to the job... I was basically in the bottom just for a couple of days and that's it, you're on your own'*.

While Stephan says he does not trust that management will help him, he is still hopeful that he will find a manager who will. He holds his experience with his first manager in mind. That manager was *'probably the best manager I ever had'*. He *'actually cared where your future was going to go. He sat you down a couple of times and said, "okay you're doing this, you're doing that. I see you as one of the people that doesn't just want to come to 9 to 5 and go home and come back. I see you as a person that wants to move up." And then he used to lead me the right way... do this a certain way... don't do that... you could see he had confidence in me'*.

In each new position Stephan works on *'getting close'* to the manager, but each new relationship has consistently failed to measure up to his first experience of a manager in the organisation. He is getting to the point where he is acknowledging that he is *'running out of positions'*. Stephan knows he does not know where he is going wrong and what he needs to do. He needs a manager to *'believe in'* him and to help him get ahead. He has tried being proactive and seeking help without positive results. He now acts out his frustration by *'getting away with too much'* on the job and is disappointed there are no real consequences for his



actions. If there were he would know he mattered and there would be the possibility of learning where he is going wrong. He does not consider that poor performance may further reduce his chances of success. It is more like an attempt to find the help he needs to get ahead.

He seems afraid of starting a job in a new organisation. The potential gains appear to be outweighed by the risk of feeling even more unanchored without the familiarity of the job and the people. In his current role *'we all get along with each other, and we've all known each other quite a while. It's easier to go and ask someone for help because you sort of know them than it is to go up to someone that you don't really talk to that much. You don't know if they're going to help you or if they're going to be rude or not'*. In a new organisation, it may be unbearable for Stephan to consider both the sense of not knowing how to do your job and not knowing how to get ahead. He doubts he will be able to achieve a managerial position in another organisation, let alone the current one.

#### STEPHAN'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Stephan's presentation was an absence of task-related *idealization and identification*. Despite this, it seems that Stephan stays in the organisation because of his experience of "good enough" *embeddedness*. The experience of that *'warm feeling'* where it *'just feels like my family life at home'* may be even more important for Stephan because most of his immediate family lives overseas.

Stephan's most important relationship at work is his relationship with his first manager who is no longer employed by the organisation. Stephan was able to experience "good enough" task-related *idealization and identification* with him. With his current manager with whom he has a low LMX relationship, Stephan not only experiences an absence of task-related *idealization and identification*, but also absences of *holding* and *eye-to-eye validation*, and an excess of task-related *holding*. He feels it is necessary to *'watch out for her'*, that she is not *'going to feel that you're not here today'*, and that the role is *'too secure and too safe'* because he can *'get away with everything'* without her telling him *'not to'*.

#### Stephan's friends

In addition to his appointed leader, Stephan drew six people on his current relational map. As shown in Table 19, one is a friend and four are close friends. Stephan mostly relies on his close friends for "good enough" *mutuality and resonance*.

**Table 19: Who was on Stephan’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work and personal	Slight	Absence of task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification</i> , <i>holding</i> and <i>eye-to-eye validation</i> . Excess task-related <i>holding</i> .
Team Leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Brooke	Peer	Friend	Personal	Slight	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Family friend	Peer	Close friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i> and task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Kevin (friend started with)	Peer	Close friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>attachment</i> and <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Friend started with 1	Peer	Close friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>attachment</i> and task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Friend started with 2	Peer	Close friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>attachment</i> and <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>

## ORGANISATION FOUR

Organisation Four is a diversified financials organisation listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. The team provides Corporate Services such as Accounting, Legal, Company Secretarial and HR. It is based in Melbourne, Australia. The team members selected for interview are Kate (high LMX) and Anna (low LMX).

Kate describes the culture as ‘*corporate... you’re suited up... big hours*’. It’s ‘*hardworking*’, ‘*strict*’ and there is a ‘*hell of a lot of pressure*’. ‘*We’ve gone through a lot of changes in the past three years*’ and ‘*lately*’ there have been ‘*big blowups... it’s normal business and things go wrong and... I hear it all because like, you’ve got the Chairman there, and you’ve got, you know, lawyers everywhere*’. Kate thinks ‘*it varies a lot*’ and that ‘*it would be completely different say, working in admin. downstairs*’. She also thinks what is expected of you varies ‘*depending on who your boss is*’. Kate gets ‘*on very well with*’ her ‘*direct report*’ so, in terms of the strictness for example, she says ‘*it’s certainly not like that for me*’.

Anna also describes the culture as being *'different... within each floor'*. She describes her floor as *'a lot more serious... conservative... be careful on how you come across...you always have to look immaculate'*. It can also be *'a bit intense... almost as though there's been... a big fight'*. Other lower floors have *'a lot more fun... more relaxed and laid back... they have good managers and they can sort of you know muck around with their managers'*. Anna says that while *'it can be a bit much'* and *'tends to get to you'*, you also *'become a bit used to it'*.

The Organisation Contact classified the culture as a role culture (Harrison, 1995). This is consistent with Kate and Anna's descriptions and that they reside in the small senior management group on the highest floor of the building the organisation occupies. Their individual case studies follow.

## KATE

*'It hasn't been normal... we've had massive, massive projects on top of our other jobs... I'm sure [my Manager] and I were ghastly to deal with... I'm sure they were probably sick to death of us... we've probably been far more aggressive than usual. You know what people do when they're under pressure... you're screaming and yelling and demanding things... usually you'd ask and say, "May I?"... Under pressure... you act differently. So I'm sure they were very over us'*

Kate is a young woman aged between 25 and 34 years old. She was born in Australia and does not consider herself part of an ethnic or minority group. She has been in her current role for over a year and in the organisation for three years. She had a good relationship with her previous manager and also has a high LMX relationship with her current manager (LMX rating = 32 out of a maximum rating of 35). In the past 12 months, Kate and her current manager *'worked very closely'* on a *'massive project'*, working *'huge hours together all the time'*. *'We were working weekends... 12, 15 hour days consistently'*.

Kate describes their relationship as *'quite relaxed... different... we're friends as well as we work together... yet I know that I still have to get my work done but... there's not that sort of pressure... to look right, like you're putting in'*. Kate says you *'can just come in and ask her anything'* and she'll *'discuss'* and *'work through'* things with you. She's a *'bit of a mentor'* because *'she's got amazing teaching skills, very patient... you can ask her endless questions'*

*and she won't, you know, get sick of it... I also like the way she, she deals with a lot of difficult circumstances... she's the only executive female executive yet deals with the men so well'. Kate likes that they 'go out socially... for a drink or have dinner' but adds that it is 'not all the time' and 'with other people'.*

In the past year, being so 'busy' made it 'hard' for Kate to 'stop and chat' with her co-workers. This 'annoyed' her. A whole 'week' would go by and she'd realise 'I'd sort of said two words to someone... I'd jokingly say that in the kitchen. Like "Oh my God, I've hardly seen you all week, said two words to you"'. While 'it's a small team' with 'a good team network', Kate and her Manager were 'dead focused on the projects and... weren't team working at all'. She said they were working 'huge hours together all the time, like I was ready to kill her'. She pointed out that it was good timing that the project 'ended... in... December'. It coincided with 'all our social events' and provided an opportunity to reconnect. She said 'everyone was very respectful of what we'd been through and going "Oh God, you must be so pleased it's over and we're glad you're back" sort of thing... so we weren't that bad obviously'. At that time though, Kate said she was 'over it' and felt 'so ready to leave'.

Prior to this Kate worked for a manager who she describes as 'a very gentle person... quite soft' and feels she 'was probably bossier than him'. It was 'all quite friendly'. She 'could always... go in to his office and have a chat, and just talk about other stuff rather than work'. In addition, 'back then it was a much smaller team... we'd go to various things with each other'. One co-worker Kate feels 'pretty close to' has now left although they have 'kept in touch'. They are of 'similar age and... used to jibber about all sorts of things'. They would 'always go out for lunch... She got married the other day and I went to her wedding'.

#### KATE'S JOB

Kate is the Personal Assistant to the Company Secretary. This involves preparing papers for the Board, and assisting with various compliance matters relating to normal business and major organisational projects such as an acquisition and listing on the Australian Stock Exchange.

#### **How Kate came to this job**

Prior to working here, Kate 'hadn't worked in a lot of different organisations... not corporate'. The first of her two jobs in the organisation was as PA to the Legal Counsel.

While in that role she was exposed to the Company Secretarial responsibilities as the co-worker she feels *'pretty close to'* was the PA to the Company Secretary at that time. Kate would help her *'with her overflow'* and, as a result, learnt *'a lot about the regulators... what we had to do and who we had to report to'*.

#### KATE'S CAREER AMBITIONS

Kate says that as the company keeps *'growing'* there are *'so many opportunities here now'*. She has *'learned a hell of a lot'* and the *'little bit of uncertainty there'* is the possibility that they might *'be taken over'* and then *'retrenched'*. She did not specifically mention a role or area she aspired to.

#### THE DYNAMICS IN KATE'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

A dynamic in Kate's experience of work is that she backs down from her position. For example, even though she felt *'overworked'* and that *'it was all hideous'*, she defends against this by saying *'it was a project'* and *'it's not normal'*. Kate admits that *'sometimes I think, "oh, it's not fair. I work all these hours, I'm not getting paid any more"'*. She then softens her position by adding *'but I did get a bonus so I'm happy with that'*. She is so pleased that she *'was rewarded... financially'* and how that *'is unusual in a position like mine'*, that she then says *'it gives you good morale and it makes you want to work harder'*. This serves to further discount her position of being unhappy with the organisation that is *'not... getting more staff'* as the company grows and the *'jobs then get bigger'*.

It appears that the reason she backs down is that she believes that it is better for people to *'cover up what they really think'* at work. *'It will reflect badly on you... it mightn't look good... and if their manager doesn't like them... they won't help them out, they won't progress them'*.

Hence, it is very important for Kate to be positive about those in positions of authority. So even though when *'a Director's in a bad mood... you're like "Oh my God"... just steer clear'*, at the same time, *'the Directors are great and they love me'*. Kate is *'friends'* with her Manager who is also a *'mentor'* for her. At the same time she finds that her manager can *'be a little bit indifferent'*, and when they *'go out socially'* it is *'with other people'*. She *'was ready to kill her'* in relation to the workload but softens this to *'no, just spending so much time together'* and adds that her manager's hours were *'probably worse'*.

Similarly, another female manager in Kate's first year in the organisation was '*a massive presence*' and '*daunting*'. She '*scared others... and brought some people to tears*'. She was '*always nice as pie to your face*' but '*sometimes you think... I'm sure she's backstabbing me*'. For Kate though, she said '*it doesn't matter*'. '*We got to know each other and I think she liked me*'. Perhaps that was because Kate would '*often help her out with a few things*' and Kate acknowledges that this was to '*pacify things*'.

Another dynamic in Kate's experience is that of feeling envious of her co-workers not having the '*massive*' workload. Unlike them, Kate '*didn't have the luxury of taking time off and getting [her] senses back in order*'. As Kate stated, '*they had a much easier year than I did*'. She was anxious she was not coping well as she felt '*overtired, overworked*' and, at times, like she was '*going crazy*'. She was also concerned that she was '*ghastly to deal with*'. It seems that while she was envious of them she did not want to alienate them. She defends against these feelings by saying how she was just '*you know, feel[ing] a bit sorry for myself*', pointed out how they '*welcomed us back... so we weren't that bad obviously*', and how it was '*not a normal year*' and the project had meant she '*couldn't really team work*'.

#### KATE'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Kate's presentation was "good enough" *attachment*, met by her manager with whom she had the most interaction at work over the last year. This focus on one relationship because of work demands resulted in Kate experiencing an absence of *mutuality and resonance* with her co-workers and a concern that her experience of "good enough" *embeddedness* would be comprised. She was relieved to find that this was not the case as her co-workers '*welcomed*' them back.

Kate's relationship with her manager is her most important relationship at work. In addition to "good enough" *attachment*, Kate's needs for "good enough" *idealization and identification*, task-related *idealization and identification*, task-related *mutuality and resonance*, *holding* and task-related *eye-to-eye validation* are also met by her manager. Kate sometimes also feels there is an absence of *mutuality and resonance*. Even though they are '*friends*' they never go out socially alone and she feels her manager is sometimes '*indifferent*' towards her. Yet overall Kate feels her manager likes her and, for Kate, this means she will help and progress her. This occurred in the past year when the work demands were so great that Kate was at risk

of experiencing an absence of *holding*. At these times, Kate successfully approached her manager for additional support. Her hard work was also acknowledged and rewarded financially.

**Kate’s friends**

In addition to her appointed leader, Kate drew two people on her current relational map. As shown in Table 20, they are both superiors with whom she has friendly relations. Kate is the only interview who has no friends on her current relational map apart from her appointed leader.

**Table 20: Who was on Kate’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friend	Work	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>attachment, idealization &amp; identification, task-related idealization &amp; identification, task-related mutuality &amp; resonance, holding and task-related eye-to-eye validation. Absence of mutuality &amp; resonance.</i>
Superior 1 working on project	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Superior 2 working on project	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Board	Superiors	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Share registry	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Call centre	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>

ANNA

*‘It really depends... on... who’s your manager... there’s a particular girl... she’s been nurtured... her senior really, really likes her... and because of that she has been promoted... having someone who’s looking after you and guiding you and also having the ambition um combined... then there are people... they realize that their manager doesn’t quite... treat you the same way and they only speak to you, for instance, if they want you to do a piece of work... you tend to withdraw... you feel uncomfortable... it*

*just kinda grows... if there was an opportunity for promotion they'd overlook you because [it's] like you don't exist'.*

Anna is a young woman aged between 25 and 34 years old. She was born in Australia and does not consider herself part of an ethnic or minority group. She has been in her current role and the organisation for over one year. She has a relatively low LMX relationship with her manager (LMX rating = 26 out of a maximum rating of 35), the lowest in her team.

In describing her relationship with her manager, Anna says there is *'definitely a barrier, like a distance between us... I would have to say strictly a professional... relationship'*. She says that not only with her manager but with a few of *'my seniors... I feel as though they can't relate to me, I can't relate to them... if you're talking about work it's okay. But if you, say you're in the elevator... and you have to talk about something other than work, then it's extremely strained and very uncomfortable'*.

This contrasts with her experience with her first manager in the organisation who is *'really important'* to Anna. She feels *'there was mutual respect there... had a lot of faith in me... helped me... do my best constantly... it was very motivating working under someone like that'*. While this manager has left the organisation, Anna still speaks to her for *'career advice and anything... I might feel uncomfortable asking my current manager... she's there for me... like being a friend... [and] as a manager even though she's no longer my manager'*.

Anna has also made friends with other co-workers and feels *'quite close'* to them. This has surprised her because she did not *'think that you ever really get that close to work people'*. This is because *'you can't pick your work mates, you can pick your friends'*. She says *'it took time to get to know them... taking time to talk to them and finding out things about one another and, you know, sharing personal things. I think that creates a bond and a friendship and trust'*.

She says *'it's nice to be able to walk into work and... see a friendly face and be able to... talk about... your personal life and just get along with people... even though you may not necessarily work closely with them... and if you are in need of a friend at work, you're having a bad day, they're there and you can always go and say "hi" and talk to them'*. She enjoys being able to *'muck around a lot'* with these people even though *'that's just between us. I*



*mean it's not like that with everyone. And that's, that's just quietly in the background... like you might go to the kitchen and... laugh about something. But you would be quick, you know, you'd be quiet, and would, you'd have to be discreet'.*

She thinks that *'there's just a couple of people that... are always really serious and just don't really have good people skills... they give out a vibe... it's like this thing... it can really effect the workplace here and you don't even realize... it kind of catches on... like there's been a big fight'.*

#### ANNA'S JOB

Anna is the Risk and Compliance Officer in the organisation. She describes it as *'a junior level' job.*

#### **How Anna came to this job**

Prior to working in this organisation, Anna worked as a *'grad'* for one of the international top tier accounting firms.

#### ANNA'S CAREER AMBITIONS

Anna thinks that *'because it is a small company... if you've got a good manager, and there are... good people... you can you can progress through the organisation... have good career opportunities'.* Anna understands the value of having a manager *'who almost inspires you'* and *'who is supportive and, um, is giving you the attention that you need and willing to actually teach you and, you know, almost, you know, guide you and toward your goals, and that you know then you would get to where you want to get to'.* They are *'actually the ones that can promote you'.* It is *'like they're the gatekeeper'.*

However, she says *'one of my goals is not to become a manager... first of all, I probably wouldn't be able to become a manager... you need to have the right people batting for you and, um, supporting you, and I don't believe I have that'.* She also says that *'if you're Asian or if you're, you know, like got an ethnic background good luck. You'll probably get retrenched. When you get to management level you'll get retrenched... I've seen it myself'.*

While Anna does not consider herself part of an ethnic or minority group, she does not have *'blonde hair and blue eyes'*, nor does she have *'an English sounding surname'.*

So Anna says she is *'quite happy to, you know, be here and get the experience'*. She feels that if she wants *'to succeed, I know with all with my qualifications and experience, all I'd have to do is just go looking and find another job'*. She does nevertheless acknowledge that *'sometimes you do feel disillusioned and lost, and, um, you may not know exactly where you're headed or what you're doing'*.

#### THE DYNAMICS IN ANNA'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

Anna's hidden feeling seems to be that she is not sure whether she is going to be able to succeed. This leaves her feeling helpless because her success depends on her manager being able to relate to her. Anna is anxious about being *'overlooked'* by her manager and admits that she does feel *'disillusioned'* sometimes. She is concerned that she will have to become *'very competitive... just to get ahead'* and just to get *'the manager's attention'*. This is a dilemma for Anna. Being *'competitive'* means being *'quick to put... other[s] down and just very bitchy'*. Being *'career driven'* means being *'not balanced... just too eager to please the manager... they're not genuine... you don't feel comfortable being around them'*.

Anna defends against these feelings. She says she is *'overlooked'* because she is *'quieter'* and her manager is not *'able to relate'* to her. She also says her manager *'kind of puts [her] off'* and she does *'not want to ever be like'* her. While she does want *'to become a manager'*, she defends against becoming more career driven in this organisation. Even if she did become a manager here, she *'would probably be retrenched'* given her apparent *'ethnic background'*. Further, she says all she needs to do is *'find another job'* to succeed. For now, her defence is that she is *'happy'* with the experience she is gaining.

#### ANNA'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Anna's presentation was an absence of task-related *idealization and identification*. Even though Anna is ambitious, her goal is *'not to become a manager'* in this organisation.

Anna's relationship with her manager is her most important relationship at work as she recognises the importance of having *'the right people batting for you'*. Yet there is *'definitely a barrier'* there. In addition to the absence of task-related *idealization and identification* and *mutuality and resonance*, the low LMX relationship is also characterised by an absence of

*eye-to-eye validation*. As she says, it can feel like ‘*you don’t exist*’. There is also an absence of *idealization and identification*, as she does not hold her manager in high regard.

**Anna’s friends**

In addition to her appointed leader, Anna drew eight people on her current relational map. As shown in Table 21, two had become friends, three close friends and one an almost best friend. While she is gaining ‘*the experience*’, Anna is able to turn to her friends with whom she experiences “good enough” *attachment and mutuality and resonance* for when she needs ‘*a friendly face*’. When she needs ‘*career advice*’ or to talk about something she is ‘*uncomfortable*’ talking with her current manager about, she turns to her first manager with whom she also experiences “good enough” *attachment* as well as task-related *eye-to-eye validation*.

**Table 21: Who was on Anna’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	Absence task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification, mutuality &amp; resonance, eye-to-eye validation, idealization &amp; identification</i>
Team member	Peer	Almost best friend	Work and personal	Strong	“Good enough” <i>attachment and mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
HR	Peer	Friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>attachment and mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
HR	Peer	Close friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>attachment and mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Kate	Peer	Friendly relations	Personal	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Other team member	Peer	Close friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>attachment and mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
New team member	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Ex-first team member	Peer	Close friend	Personal	Moderate	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
First manager	Superior	Friend	Work and personal	Strong	“Good enough” <i>attachment, task-related eye-to-eye validation</i>

ORGANISATION FIVE

Organisation Five provides electric utilities and has an international parent. The team provides Tax Accounting services for the organisation based in Melbourne, Australia. The

team members selected for interview are Charles (high LMX) and Natalie (low LMX). They comprised the pilot interviews for this study.

Charles describes the organisation as comprising a number of people who came from the old energy-based Government organisations that were privatised. As a result, he says *'there's a lot of people in the organisation that seem to have got their roles because of time spent, not necessarily skills'*. In some cases people have not been *'sacked because the redundancy payout was going to be too much'* and *'they'll just develop a work around'*. *'The place works... it just doesn't work the way it should, and it doesn't work properly'*. This also applies to *'important information... [that] doesn't necessarily get to where it needs to be'*. Hence there is a need to rely on the *'formal'* as well as *'informal networks'*. Nevertheless, Charles still says *'it's a good environment'*.

Natalie's experience of the organisation is that it has a task focus. This is consistent with her personal concern for being *'thorough'* and taking *'the time to get things right'*. She says *'we're not here working 9 'til 5. We're working, you know, to get the work done'*. She describes supporting HR who may give a *'cash bonus'* and not *'realise that it's costing the company more'* than its value. She works out *'the best way to pay'* *'termination payments'*. She *'sends [Internal Audit] off to check that everybody's doing the same thing'* in relation to, for example, how *'car benefits were all calculated'*.

The Organisation Contact classified the culture as mainly a task culture, with some aspects of a role culture, even fewer of a power culture, and not a person culture (Harrison, 1995). This is consistent with Charles and Natalie's descriptions. Their individual case studies follow.

## CHARLES

*'I get the buzz out of getting the right advice or getting the right thing, not necessarily the touchy feeling type stuff. I mean, you know, I'm quite laidback and I understand, you know, you've got to feel part of the team and stuff. But at the end of the day, its like, you know, give the right advice'*.

Charles is a young man aged between 25 and 34 years old. He was born in Australia and considers himself part of an ethnic or minority group. He has been in his current role and the

organisation for over a year. He has a moderate LMX relationship with his manager (LMX rating = 25 out of a maximum rating of 35), the highest LMX rating for his team.

Charles says he gets *'along fine'* with his manager. The relationship is important because he *'clearly significantly impacts on well, one, what you do, and you know job satisfaction etc. etc. I would have thought that he was probably the biggest influence at work'*. He says there are *'real issues'* there *'in relation to sharing'* information and that *'it doesn't necessarily get to where it needs to be'*. He says he does *'get a bit cheesed off. But that's why you have the relationship with the other people, because they'll tell you'*. He also says his manager is *'aware of it'*, is *'working on it'* and it is *'sort of getting better'*.

Charles says the relationships with the two other members in his team were *'sorted, maybe not the first month but in the first couple of months, you know, after we started...everybody basically knows what they are doing and is fairly comfortable with each other'*.

His co-worker Natalie is at the same level. He says they *'work really well'* together. He suggests that it is *'because we are very different people. She's the touchy feely one'*. She's also *'really good at what she does'*. *'Information is something that really grates her too'* and *'once somebody becomes aware of something... like on a Thursday night or a Wednesday night, just go to the pub across the road. "Look this is what I'm doing, what are you doing?"'*. He likes how their relationship is *'a bit transparent. If you are not being right or you're not being honest about it, or whatever, you know, she'll call you on it'*. He says they *'get along great. It was her birthday on the weekend, and we went out on a barbie'*.

He sits next to another co-worker who *'does a fair bit of the mechanical stuff'* in the team. He says *'if and when she needs a hand... we'll pitch in and help her out... even though that's not our role... as a team that's what we do'*. He knows he *'can frustrate her sometimes because... if... something is not right, I don't care how much is not right, it's just not right. Whereas [she]'s a lot more "look, it's close enough so it'll do"'*. At those times *'it doesn't work sensationally'*. However, he says that *'most of the time we get along fairly well'*. Because she *'literally sits next to me... there's a bit of horse play that goes on there'*. In addition, *'if I want to dump or she wants to dump or whatever, you know, we can do that you know, without necessarily everybody else hearing or knowing'*.

In terms of other relationships, Charles said that in his *'first year... there was a fair bit of let's build the relationships and get to know... the people that I need to know'*. Now *'the relationships are established and strong enough that they can sort of just sit there on its own with a care and maintenance type thing rather than a building type one'*. *'They're comfortable coming to me and they do on a regular basis. I'm comfortable that if I need to know something I can speak to one of them'*.

He does get frustrated with some people at work who are not as focused on task achievement. He observes that there are *'a lot of people in the organisation that seem to have got their roles because of time spent, not necessarily skills'*. He says some people say *'if you want me to do it, get my job description changed'*. He specifically mentions one person *'who got there because of time, very important role. Thought they were going to get sacked about three years ago so stopped caring. Stopped doing their job. Didn't get sacked because the redundancy payout was going to be too much. So he's been around for three years getting an exorbitant salary and they've actually built reporting channels around that person. So that person now has a key role, sorry key title, good pay etc. but doesn't actually do anything'*. Charles says this *'really frustrates'* him *'because I do my job, somebody else does their job and look, the place works because of the alternate, it just doesn't work the way it should and it doesn't work properly'*.

#### CHARLES'S JOB

Charles is a *'tax advisor'*. He is in a team of four that comprises his manager, another tax advisor, Natalie, at the same level as himself, and a junior tax accountant. He says there is *'a fairly flat structure'* and *'a fair bit of overlap'* between himself and the other tax advisor. While they have their different roles and areas they look after, they are *'pretty much interchangeable'*. From the organisation's perspective, Charles believes that *'one tax person is like another tax person'*.

Most of the *'work is actually project management'* and there is a *'need to be careful... that we don't try and take over a process... the trading guys are trying to organise a deal... the really easy thing would be "well OK, this is the way it is structured and we are not taking anything else", and the deal falls over. Well that's not in anyone's interest'*. *'At end of the day if we weren't there... the company'd still keep going. The worst thing that would probably happen is that you would pay more tax. So if we weren't there, nothing. Our job is to make things*

*happen smoother, minimise your tax, structure things that you know, do the right thing. Now to do that you rely on, because all our clients as such, are internal, and you rely on them.... you've got to do the right thing by X'.*

Charles says *'our biggest challenge is to move the perception of the tax group'* as it has only been in existence for about *'three and a half years. Before that they had a tax manager, everything was done external... nothing was done in-house... now... there's the skills there, we need to build relationships inside to make sure that everybody brings stuff to us... that's in the firm's interests'*.

### **How Charles came to this job**

Charles and his current manager worked together *'at the same level'* when they both worked as chartered accountants for a top tier international accounting firm. He said it got to the point where he had *'had enough of that. I quite literally came in one day and thought, "no, I don't want to do this anymore" and quit 20 minutes later'*. At that time he *'went off to South Africa for a couple of weeks and organised the [current] job whilst I was over there'*.

Charles has had a varied background. He has *'been a sparky, I've run my own business, I've been a manager of a pet food place, I did seven years or whatever at a chartered accounting firm and now I've been here for a couple of years'*.

### CHARLES'S CAREER AMBITIONS

Charles says that in Australia, *'tax is a fairly small group... there's a fair bit of you've met with that person or you've worked with that person'*. He feels that *'if this place got sold tomorrow and I had to go and work somewhere else'* it would not be difficult because he has the experience and he *'know[s] these people'* within his profession.

Charles says he is *'not overly stressed'* if his manager's job came up and he *'didn't get it or somebody external'* did. The possibility that Natalie might get it was not considered. However he did say *'it's not like I've got to get Jim's job or got to get him out of there'*. He says he's *'clearly not career driven. It's more the work that I'm happy with rather than aiming for a position. So as long as the work goes out and given I can control that'* that's more important to him.

It is also important for Charles to *'really enjoy what I do and that's the only reason I do it... money is important but as long as you have enough... I could not imagine doing something that I didn't like doing unless I had absolutely no other choice'*. However, Charles does not have the choice of not working. He says that while *'work's work... at the end of the day that's not what you're around for... it's the stuff outside work... most people [if] they had the choice they wouldn't work, they would do something else'*. Charles did not indicate what his "something else" would be.

#### THE DYNAMICS IN CHARLES'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

What stood out with Charles was that he finds feelings difficult and simply says *'they are not my comfort zone'*. He talks about his relationships as being important for doing his job well rather than anything more personal or meaningful. While he does *'build pretty good relationships with people'*, he says he does not get *'off on that sort of stuff'*. It is not possible to ascertain what may underlie his anxiety to acknowledge the value of relationships from the interview data, and more than likely it belongs outside the scope of this thesis.

Nevertheless, during the interview and through talking about his relationships, he shifted to a position of acknowledging their value. This value was feeling *'well and truly part of the tax group'* for example. That is, and from this interview, it became apparent that he values the sense of belonging he experiences. He also realises that he does like his work acknowledged even though he is not entirely comfortable with it. As he says, *'I guess you like somebody to know that you did it, but you don't want somebody telling everybody you did it. OK?... Look if [my manager] or [CFO] or whoever, knows that I did it, and knows it was good job, that's the bit I'm happy with. I don't need them to come in and tell me I did a good job or, well actually, I'll put up with that. But I don't want an email saying you know, that was a good job or whatever... that's bragging and I don't want to do that'*. Later in the interview he seemed more comfortable with being acknowledged. When I asked him if *'anyone made you feel particularly good'*, he responded by referring to emails from America acknowledging his contribution. The *'email... will say [X]'s idea or [Y]'s idea or the Australian guys or [my] idea, and I guess that makes you feel part of the team. It may well be, look that, that email happens to go to the Chairman of the Board or whatever'*.



#### CHARLES'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Charles's presentation was task-related *mutuality and resonance*. He values that he has "good enough" task-related *mutuality and resonance* with Natalie and that they '*work really well*' together. In contrast, he experiences an absence of task-related *mutuality and resonance* with his manager who is his most important relationship at work and his '*biggest influence*'.

Even though they '*get along*' and have a high LMX relationship, Charles's primary concern is having the information he needs to do his job well. His manager falls short in this area and his manager is '*aware of*' and '*working on*' this. Charles has the least positive relationship with his manager of all the high LMX participants. This is consistent with him having the lowest high LMX rating, which is in fact equal to or lower than the LMX ratings for two low LMX participants (Stephan and Anna).

Charles also experiences "good enough" *embeddedness* as he feels '*well and truly part of the tax group*', and "good enough" task-related *eye-to-eye validation* in the organisation more broadly with emails from America acknowledging his work. These aspects do not compensate for his experience with his manager but they do help improve his overall experience at work.

#### **Charles's friends**

In addition to his appointed leader, Charles drew six individuals and five groups on his current relational map. As shown in Table 22, one is a friend and two are close friends. Charles relies on his friend for "good enough" *mutuality and resonance*; and his close friends for different task-related needs – *holding* and *mutuality and resonance* respectively.

**Table 22: Who was on Charles’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Slight	Absence task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Natalie	Peer	Close friend	Work	Moderate	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Team member	Subordinate	Friend	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
External advisor	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Colleague in another area	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Colleague in another area	Peer	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
External mentor	Peer	Close friend	Work	Strong	“Good enough” task related <i>holding</i>
Two international colleagues	Superiors	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” task related <i>eye-to-eye validation and task-related mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Group advisors	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Group HR/Training	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Group Treasury	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Group EDB Finance	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	“Good enough” <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>

NATALIE

*‘Yesterday... [the Chief Financial Officer]... came around and said “happy birthday... for Wednesday” and I said “actually it was Sunday”... he goes “oh, you know, ra, ra, ra” and... I said “oh yeah, you know, it’s hard being 33 now” and he goes “oh, you’re on the aged list”, and I said “yeah I’m 33” and he goes “you’re only 18 months younger than me”... I’m sitting there, I’m going “yep, you did not think that I was even close to 33”... so I’m sitting there and I’m going “hmmm”. It’s like, you know, and he just sort of slipped away and said “oh, 40’s a long time off” and I went “yeah, yeah, yeah, ha, ha, ha”, and I’m thinking it’s not that far’.*

Natalie is a young 33-year-old woman. She was born in Australia and does not consider herself part of an ethnic or minority group. She has been in her current role and the organisation for over three years. She has a low LMX relationship with her manager (LMX rating = 21 out of a maximum rating of 35).

When she first started, her current manager had not yet been promoted. They joined the organisation at the same time. He was part of her team. He was the Senior Tax Advisor, Natalie was the Advisor and there was another more junior staff member. They all reported to the same manager who Natalie did not have a good relationship with either. She says *'he was just a loser'* and that the team *'used to call him a car salesman... I think he was a bit shonky'*. He *'would go out for long lunches and come back drunk'*. *'Just technically, he wasn't very good. He would never deliver'*. In addition, *'he wasn't well respected in the company'*.

Her current manager *'was great then'*. He was *'your normal colleague... you respected his opinion... you'd chat... all three of us would go out for a drink'*. When he became Tax Manager *'he slowly turned into, not shonky, but secretive, playing against people... he's changed'*. Natalie says *'it just annoys us... because... he's not good at delegating down'*. *'He wants to be in with all the execs'* and wants *'somebody to recommend him because he wants to go places'*. But he *'should be managing the whole tax function and pushing the whole account'*.

Natalie works *'really well'* with Charles. She likes how they mutually support each other and that *'when you have a week off... I'm not going to get 15 calls because there's no-one else'*. She says *'he's not the touchy feely person of the group'* and *'has got no tact whatsoever'*. *'He's quite a big guy... he can be a bit overpowering'*. She said she *'gave him a discussion yesterday and I said, "mate, when you're talking to us don't say it's wrong. Say what have you done... can you explain it to me?"'* The aim is *'to make people comfortable with you so when they've got a problem they'll come to you'*.

Natalie describes the junior member of the team as *'one of the most beautiful people I've ever met, like, personally'*. However, *'she's not the most... motivated person in the world... she doesn't give you 110%, she gives like 90%'*. This *'puts a bit of stress on [Charles] and me that shouldn't be there. We're sort of going, well, she doesn't do it, whose going to get on with it?'* This contrasts with who she replaced whom Natalie is *'still friends'* with now. Natalie likes how this previous co-worker *'really fixed up a lot of things'* and that they have *'the same type doggies... Old English Sheepdogs'*.

Natalie has good relationships with the different groups she comes into contact with in the organisation. She describes them as *'pleasant... and helpful'*, a *'really nice bunch of people'*. However she thinks her *'biggest problem is, especially the CFO, [Certified Financial Office people] is a bit of a boys club... I'm not a feminist by a long stretch of the imagination, but yeah sometimes it just gets a bit annoying that there's so many boys... they all sit there and talk about footy, and I can talk about footy with the best of them, but... like whatever'*.

#### NATALIE'S JOB

Natalie is a tax advisor. Her job is concerned with the tax implications for the retail energy side of the business. In contrast, Charles's job focuses on the merchant energy side, the poles and wires.

#### **How Natalie came to this job**

Prior to this role Natalie was working in Sydney for a chartered accounting firm where they wanted her *'to become a partner'*. Natalie and the partner she reported to complemented each other. As she says, *'I was very good with the clients, so he'd send me out to the clients, but he'd like just sit there and write and I like to review, so... we changed the way that a partner and a manager worked together, like I reviewed his work rather than him reviewing my work. It was all very weird, but we worked really well together'*. She *'left there'* because she wanted to come *'back to Melbourne'*.

When her co-worker was promoted to manager and her other co-worker *'went on maternity leave'* they were short staffed. Even though Natalie recognises the need to be *'proactive... and sort of help [your]self'*, she found herself *'sitting, rocking away... put on ten kilos... when you're sitting at a desk all day that's what happens and you don't look after yourself'*. She said *'they finally decided, yeah, Natalie needs a hand'*. Charles then joined the team.

#### NATALIE'S CAREER AMBITIONS

Like her current manager, Natalie also wants *'to go places'*. To help realise her ambitions, Natalie *'started the social club... with [her] friend in Internal Audit'*. She says that they thought *'if we're going to get anywhere in this company, you've got to meet other people and have contacts... about 30%'* of the organisation are now members.

However, if her manager's job became available, it would mean competing with Charles '*for the same job*'. While they each have different strengths, she does not think she'd '*get [the] job*'. She feels she '*could still be sitting here in three years time going "yeah, I'm still the tax advisor"*'. This thought appears to deflate her as she then seems to lose her confidence by saying that she is '*a bit complacent sometimes with, you know, where I'm going*'.

#### THE DYNAMICS IN NATALIE'S EXPERIENCE OF WORK

Natalie's hidden feeling seems to relate to not feeling accepted and respected for who she is and this limits her career prospects. She fears she will be overlooked and will not '*go places*', even though she knows that '*in the company itself, [she's] pretty highly regarded*'. It feels personal rather than professional.

She feels that '*people assume [she is] younger*' than she is. They therefore also assume that she has '*so much life left to lead*' that they ignore her and '*don't worry about what she's got to say*'.

Being divorced and now single also presents its challenges. She described a supposed '*thank you*' that '*really pisses [her] off*'. *The team "went to the corporate box... [Charles] and I weren't asked to invite anyone because we're single"*. The two other team members invited their partners (her manager is married and the junior colleague is '*getting married in four weeks' time*'). Charles and Natalie were asked to invite a client. Natalie said her manager '*could have just said, "do you want to bring a friend?"*' It was '*like we're the dead woods. And then they make fun of us because [they] reckon that we're having a bit of a fling*'.

Being female is another challenge. She feels it is a '*boys club*' at the senior level to which she aspires. Yet she does not '*want to become somebody you're not just to fit in*'. As an example, she described a dinner where she was the only female on the table as '*painful... you don't want to sit there like a little wallflower... you've got to be able to converse with them... it's very, very hard... if there had of been one more female it would have been fine*'.

In deciding what the team will do for Christmas, she was hoping to '*think outside the square rather than going to a restaurant and getting ourselves written off for the afternoon*'. Even Charles was not supportive of her in this regard. She was thinking like a '*massage*' because it '*is normally a bit unisex*'. Yet again she feels like she is being overlooked.

As a defence, she says just being herself limits her scope for advancement. She says you '*just want to be your own person*'. She does not want to be put '*in that same bucket*' as those who are '*getting married and having kids*' to belong. It is therefore not surprising that she says she becomes '*a bit complacent*' in relation to her career. It is also not surprising that she describes the only person who is '*close to a role model*' for her is a woman who '*made the move from Finance to HR*' and '*doesn't let anyone tread on her*'. It seems she does feel "trodden on" because, as she says in frustration of her personal needs once again not being listened to, '*see, I do have issues!*'

Another defence to explain her delayed career progress is that her manager does not support her. She says he is preoccupied with ensuring his own career advances and this ends up being at her own expense, and at the expense of the team.

#### NATALIE'S RELATIONAL NEEDS

The prominent relational need in Natalie's presentation was an absence of *eye-to-eye validation*. This feeling of not being accepted lead to an absence of task-related *idealization and identification*. She fears she will be '*sitting here in three years time*' doing the same job. This feeling of being stuck is exacerbated by the absence of *embeddedness* she feels with the '*boys club*' at the more senior levels of the organisation to which she aspires.

Natalie's relationship with her manager is her most important relationship at work. This low LMX relationship, like Charles's relationship with this manager, is characterised by an absence of task-related *mutuality and resonance*. For Natalie, however, it is also characterised by an absence of task-related *idealization and identification* and *eye-to-eye validation*.

#### **Natalie's friends**

In addition to her appointed leader, Natalie drew two people on her current relational map. She also included two groups – HR and the Social Club. As shown in Table 23, Charles is her only individual friend who she mostly relies on for "good enough" task-related *mutuality and resonance*. While Natalie also has friends in the Social Club through which she feels "good enough" *eye-to-eye validation* and *embeddedness*, they do not compensate for the absence of these relational needs she experiences through her formal role.

**Table 23: Who was on Natalie’s current relational map and the nature of the relational bond.**

Who	Relational bond				
	Basis of ascription	Closeness	Invested resources	Attachment	Reward dependability
Appointed leader	Superior	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	Absence <i>eye-to-eye validation</i> , task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i> and task-related <i>idealization &amp; identification</i>
Charles	Peer	Friend	Work	Moderate	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
Team member	Subordinate	Friendly relations	Work	Not significant	Absence task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i>
HR	Peers	Friendly relations	Work	Moderate	“Good enough” task-related <i>mutuality &amp; resonance</i> and task-related <i>eye-to-eye validation</i>
Social Club	Peers	Friend	Work	Slight	“Good enough” <i>eye-to-eye validation, embeddedness</i>

## SUMMARY

Through the application of Malan’s triangle of conflict, Bion’s selected fact and Josselson’s relational needs, these case studies illustrate the dynamic and complex nature of how individuals’ perceive and experience their relationships at work. Overall, the results highlight that the most important relationship at work for these participants is with their appointed leader. This is illustrated in Table 24. It shows that the prominent relational need for each participant is more likely to be associated with the appointed leader than anyone else at work, regardless of whether this need is met or not.

The one exception is with Ella for whom the absence of mutuality and resonance in relation to her co-workers is prominent. Nevertheless, in the interview with Ella it was evident that her most important relationship at work is with her appointed leader. It is possible the absence of mutuality and resonance is prominent for Ella because she is already in a high LMX relationship with her manager, and like her low LMX counterparts, what is prominent for her is what was once present and is now missing.

**Table 24: Current prominent relational need, the extent to which it is met and by whom for each participant.**

Current prominent relational need	Extent met	Participant	LMX rating	By whom
Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>	Absence	Brandon	Low	Current manager
		Stephan	Low	Current manager
		Anna	Low	Current manager
	Good enough	George	High	Current manager
Task-related <i>holding</i>	Good enough	Brooke	High	Current manager and co-workers
Task-related <i>mutuality and resonance</i>	Absence	Charles	High	Current manager
<i>Holding</i>	Absence	Jane	Low	Current manager and organisation
<i>Attachment</i>	Good enough	Kate	High	Current manager
<i>Eye-to-eye validation</i>	Absence	Natalie	Low	Current manager and more senior managers
<i>Mutuality and resonance</i>	Absence	Ella	High	Co-workers

The subjective nature of this most important relationship between the participants and their appointed leaders can be summarised by the individual combinations of personal and task-related relational needs that are met for the participants through this relationship. These combinations of relational needs capture the unique nature of the social bonds that develop and provide insight into the subjective experience of the relationship and its affective quality for the participants.

Table 25 highlights the individual and complex nature of each relationship. Each participant associates a different combination of relational needs with his/her appointed leader. Further, there is a non-linear relationship between LMX quality and the extent to which the relational needs are met. In these case studies, only high LMX participants experienced their relational needs being met to a “good enough” extent by their appointed leader. Conversely, only the low LMX participants were consistent in not having their relational needs met to a “good enough” extent. Nevertheless, it is apparent that being in a high LMX relationship does not guarantee that the relational needs one is seeking from the relationship will be sufficiently met. Three of the five high LMX participants experienced either an absence or excess of a relational need with their appointed leader.



**Table 25: The relational needs met by the current appointed leader for each participant.**

Participant	LMX rating	Extent met	Relational needs met by current appointed leader
Ella	High	Good enough	<i>Holding</i> Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>
		Excess	<i>Mutuality and resonance</i> Task-related <i>eye-to-eye validation</i>
Brandon	Low	Absence	<i>Attachment</i> Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>
George	High	Good enough	<i>Holding</i> Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>
Jane	Low	Absence	<i>Holding</i> <i>Attachment</i>
Brooke	High	Good enough	Task-related <i>holding</i> <i>Attachment</i> <i>Idealization and identification</i> Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>
Stephan	Low	Absence	<i>Holding</i> <i>Eye-to-eye validation</i> Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>
		Excess	Task-related <i>holding</i>
Kate	High	Good enough	<i>Holding</i> <i>Attachment</i> Task-related <i>eye-to-eye validation</i> Task-related <i>mutuality and resonance</i> <i>Idealization and identification</i> Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>
			Absence
Anna	Low	Absence	<i>Eye-to-eye validation</i> <i>Idealization and identification</i> Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i> <i>Mutuality and resonance</i>
Charles	High	Absence	Task-related <i>mutuality and resonance</i>
Natalie	Low	Absence	<i>Eye-to-eye validation</i> Task-related <i>mutuality and resonance</i>
			Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>

Table 26 highlights the range of different relational needs met for the participants through their relationship with the appointed leader. This includes *holding*, *attachment*, *eye-to-eye validation*, *mutuality and resonance*, and *idealization and identification* – whether task-related and/or personal. The only relational needs not associated with the appointed leader in these case studies are *tending* and *passionate experience*. These relational needs were present in the interviews and met by others at work.

Table 26 shows the importance of task-related *idealization and identification*. It is the relational need most likely to be associated with the appointed leader, for both high and low LMX participants. This is consistent with issues relating to career progress being most keenly

felt during the interviews, particularly for the low LMX participants for whom this relational need was absent and more likely to be prominent.

Table 26 also shows the importance of the personal relational needs, especially those associated with a sense of psychological safety – *holding* and *attachment*. These relational needs are the next most likely to be associated with the appointed leader.

**Table 26: Relational needs met by the current appointed leader for each participant.**

Relational needs met by current appointed leader	Extent met	Participant	LMX rating
Task-related <i>idealization and identification</i>	Good enough	Ella	High
		George	High
		Brooke	High
		Kate	High
	Absence	Brandon	Low
		Stephan	Low
		Anna	Low
		Natalie	Low
<i>Holding</i>	Good enough	George	High
		Ella	High
		Kate	High
	Absence	Jane	Low
		Stephan	Low
<i>Attachment</i>	Good enough	Brooke	High
		Kate	High
	Absence	Jane	Low
		Brandon	Low
<i>Eye-to-eye validation</i>	Absence	Stephan	Low
		Natalie	Low
		Anna	Low
<i>Idealization and identification</i>	Good enough	Kate	High
		Brooke	High
	Absence	Anna	Low
<i>Mutuality and resonance</i>	Absence	Kate	High
		Anna	Low
	Excess	Ella	High
Task-related <i>mutuality and resonance</i>	Good Enough	Kate	High
	Absence	Charles	High
		Natalie	Low
Task-related <i>holding</i>	Good enough	Brooke	High
	Excess	Stephan	Low
Task-related <i>eye-to-eye validation</i>	Good Enough	Kate	High
	Excess	Ella	High

When drawing and describing their current relational maps, all participants except Kate mention at least one person who is not their appointed leader with whom they have developed

some kind of friendship. That is, a relationship that could be described as closer than merely 'friendly relations'. Table 27 shows that the closeness of these relationships is mainly as a 'friend' or 'close friend'. The table highlights that low LMX participants have more friends at work than their high LMX counterparts. This is consistent with the finding by Odden & Sias (1997). They found that employees are more likely to form more intimate relationships with their co-workers when they perceive their supervisor to be unsupportive, unfair, untrustworthy, and unwilling to provide recognition of accomplishments.

For these low LMX participants, the investment in these relationships is more likely to be related to the personal relationship than the work-based role relatedness. Additionally, the relationship is most likely to be characterised by a moderate level of attachment. In contrast, the basis of the investment in the relationship is similarly likely to be either the personal relationship or role relatedness for the high LMX participants. These relationships are similarly likely to be characterised by either a moderate or strong level of attachment.

**Table 27: Friends on the participants’ current relational maps and the nature of the relational bonds.**

	Basis of ascription	Closeness of Friend				Investment		Attachment			
		Friend	Close friend	Almost best friend	Closer relationship	Work	Personal	No significant attachment	Slight	Moderate	Strong
<b>High LMX Participants</b>											
Ella	Peer	x				x			x		
	Peer			x			x				x
George	Superior	x				x				x	
	Superior		x			x	x				x
	Peer		x				x			x	
	Peer			x		x	x				x
Brooke	Peer		x			x	x				x
Charles	Superior		x			x					x
	Peer		x			x				x	
	Subord.	x				x		x			
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>n=10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Low LMX Participants</b>											
Brandon	Ex-mgr.		x			x					x
	Peer	x				x				x	
	Peer	x					x			x	
Jane	Superior		x			x	x			x	
	Peer				x		x				x
Stephan	Peer	x					x			x	
	Peer	x					x			x	
	Peer		x				x			x	
	Peer		x				x			x	
	Peer		x				x			x	
Anna	Ex-mgr.	x				x	x				x
	Peer	x					x			x	
	Peer		x				x			x	
	Peer		x				x			x	
	Peer		x				x			x	
	Peer			x		x	x				x
Natalie	Peer	x				x				x	
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>n=17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>

Table 28 highlights the importance of friends for meeting the relational needs of low LMX participants. The needs more commonly met through these relationships are *mutuality and resonance* and *attachment*. All the needs met through these relationships are met to a “good enough” extent.

**Table 28: Relational needs met by friends on the current relational maps.**

Relational need	Extent met	Mentions		
		Total	High LMX	Low LMX
<i>Mutuality and resonance</i>	Good enough	17	4	13
<i>Attachment</i>	Good enough	12	2	10
<i>Task-related mutuality and resonance</i>	Good enough	8	5	3
<i>Task-related idealization and identification</i>	Good enough	3	-	3
<i>Task-related holding</i>	Good enough	2	2	-
<i>Holding</i>	Good enough	1	1	-
<i>Idealization and identification</i>	Good enough	1	-	1
<i>Passionate experience</i>	Good enough	1	-	1
		<b>45</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>31</b>

The implications of these findings for the experience of work are discussed next.

# .9.

## DIGNITY AT WORK

*'To man it is allowed to be whatever he chooses to be!'* (Pico della Mirandola, [1486] 1956, Oration on the Dignity of Man).

The research and analysis of the relational experience of work brought to the fore the importance of the ordinary and pervasive experience of compromise for a job and a career, and the need for dignity and hope in the face of such compromise for well-being and job performance. This chapter discusses dignity. Hope is discussed in Chapter 10.

There are very few contemporary studies that directly address dignity at work (Bolton, 2007a). The concept 'tends to be disguised under headings such as citizenship, satisfaction, mutuality, pride in work, responsible autonomy and a secure sense of self' (Bolton, 2007a, pix). Further, current concerns focus on workplace bullying and harassment even though there are a 'whole range of circumstances which support or tend to undermine employees' dignity' (Sayer, 2007a, p565) that warrant consideration.

Perhaps this is because dignity is an elusive subject and dignity at work is difficult to define (Bolton, 2007a). It is commonly referred to as 'the quality of being worthy or honourable' (O.E.D.) achieved through both the inherent dignity in being human and earning it through action (Hodson, 2001). Yet, as Bolton (2007b) argues, when 'exchanging labour for a wage, the definitions become much less clear' (p7).

On the one hand, the very nature of contemporary industrial organisations has long been recognised as making dignified employment difficult to achieve (Sayer, 2007b). Bolton

(2007b) draws on the founding fathers of the sociology of work to illustrate this point: ‘Marx’ focus on alienation and capitalism as a threat to our ‘species being’, Durkheim’s concern that the relentless drive towards economic efficiency leads to a state of *anomie* (normlessness) and Weber’s pathos for the individual trapped in excessive bureaucratic rationality’ (p3). As Sayer (2007a) elucidates, ‘by definition, employees are hired as a means to their employers’ ends, not out of a sense of benevolence or respect. Equally, members of divisions of labour are means to each other’s ends. Both employees and those with whom we do business may also be substitutable by others’ (p569). Employment is instrumental and unequal in nature.

On the other hand, ‘there is a fundamental dignity in labour’ (Bolton, 2007b, p7). Through labour, the dignity of being self-reliant and socially useful can be achieved (Sennett & Cobb, 1973). Undertaking work one considers meaningful is also a major source of dignity (Hodson, 2001). Further, as Sayer (2007a) argues, ‘it is at least possible—and common—also to treat others in these instrumental economic contexts in ways which signal a non-instrumental valuation of them as persons in their own right, and hence as having dignity: ‘Pleasantries’ are not trivial’ (p569).

Bolton (2007b) suggests that dignity at work can be more clearly explored if viewed as multi-dimensional. That is, that the experience of dignity relies on both ‘the material conditions of ‘decent work’ *and* the support of human ties that generate respect’ (Bolton, 2007b, p1). It is both a subjective experience and a social experience rooted in a moral economy (Bolton, 2007b; Sayer, 2007b). In other words, there is *dignity in work* and *dignity at work*, and both are necessary.

*Dignity in work* depends on the material conditions of ‘decent work’ – objective factors such as ‘equality of opportunity, collective and individual voice, safe and healthy working conditions, secure terms of employment and just rewards’ (Bolton, 2007b, p8). *Dignity at work* is achieved through ‘interesting and meaningful work with a degree of responsible autonomy and recognised social esteem and respect’ (Bolton, 2007b, p8).

Sayer (2007a) discusses how dignity is both a matter of relations of self to others and of self to self. Claims to dignity and self-respect can only be achieved through having those claims recognised and respected by others. Hence ‘dignified relations involve respect both for others’

autonomy and their dependence on others, not taking advantage of their vulnerability' (Sayer, 2007a, p570).

Rayner (2007) concurs that the experience of dignity is complex. She argues that our experience at work is variegated. It is possible to experience dignity in relation to some aspects of work, indignity in others, and also a neutral state where neither is experienced. This means that 'different experiences within a variegated reality may tradeoff against each other so that a positive or negative experience offsets the effect of other experiences' (Rayner, 2007, p176). An experience of dignity or indignity may also result in what Rayner (2007) refers to as contagion. This is when the initial experience produces dynamics that affect other experiences. She cites an example of a gay man's reticence to reveal his sexuality at work and his subsequent avoidance of informal social interactions that then contaminate his relationships at work beyond the initial issue of sexuality.

Such individual dynamics of dignity were apparent in the case studies of the current research. That such individual dynamics of dignity has multiple sources adds to the complexity of the concept of dignity.

## SOURCES OF DIGNITY

Dignity can be derived from, and preserved through, multiple sources; and different authors adopt their own focus. For instance, Hodson (2001) in one of the rare and isolated texts to directly address dignity at work, discusses four ways that dignity is denied and four ways through which it is preserved. According to Hodson (2001), it is denied through mismanagement and abuse, overwork, constraints on autonomy and contradictions of participation. It is preserved through '*resistance, citizenship, the pursuit of meaning, and social relations at work*' (Hodson, 2001, p17). Sayer (2007a) broadens the focus of sources of dignity and emphasizes 'not only autonomy, self-reliance and resistance, but seriousness and the need for recognition and trust' (p566).

Different authors have different views on what is a source of dignity and what is independent from dignity. For example, Sayer (2007a) discusses the limits of dignity in that 'people need their dignity, but they also need much more, for example, a decent standard of living, security, scope for developing and using their abilities, enjoyment and friendships, some of which they



may find at work' (p578). In contrast, others view what Sayer refers to as being different from dignity as sources of dignity (eg. Hodson, 2001; Hogan, 2007).

Hogan (2007) describes how 'in 2003, the incoming Royal Mail chairman Allan Leighton put 'Dignity at work' at the forefront of Royal Mail's commercial business strategy' (p230).

Through his analysis of the Royal Mail's bullying and harassment database he suggests that the asymmetries of perceived power can be turned around to an expression of dignity at work such as:

- 'to be valued;
- to be listened to;
- to be respected;
- to be treated fairly;
- to get recognition for achievement; and
- to take pride in work.

One can extend these further into even more positive sets of opportunities for people to make choices and so to find deeper meaning in life:

- the opportunity to achieve;
- the opportunity to speak their mind; and
- the opportunity to grow' (p232).

In the case studies and consistent with these authors, there are examples of a range of sources of dignity and indignity. The most poignant relate to the opportunity to pursue personal career aspirations, resulting in the most affectively dominant content (Kernberg, 1997) concerning the experience of dignity or indignity at work. As an example, for George the opportunity is a source of dignity: *'I was really grateful that I was sort of given the opportunity to, to sort of aspire inside the team... you know that there is a goal that you can get to'*. In contrast, for Stephan it is a source of indignity: *'you sort of get tired of trying and getting knocked back; or seeing other people get the positions that you deserve, and you know you're better than them, that type of thing. So you sort of, like, give up in a way... and you just come in and do your work every day'*.

The importance of the opportunity to pursue personal career aspirations for dignity at work is further supported in the case studies by the importance of the task-related sub-dimension of the relational need *idealization and identification*. *Idealization and identification* refers to the feeling of having someone to look up to, such as a role model giving you something to strive for and showing you what is possible for yourself (Josselson, 1992). The task-related sub-dimension refers to ambition specifically in relation to work and career, rather than the personal qualities of someone you admire. This relational need is the prominent relational need for four of the participants, and is the most commonly mentioned relational need, being mentioned by eight. It is also the relational need the participants most often mention in relation to their appointed leader, the most important relationship at work for these participants.

Consistent with this finding, Hodson (2001) highlights the significance of the opportunity to pursue one's own goals for dignity at work. He suggests that most social science theories of the workplace do not sufficiently address worker agency, that is, they do not regard workers as 'active on their own terms and are motivated by their own agendas' (p239). It is through agency, 'the active and creative performance of assigned roles in ways that give meaning and content to those roles beyond what is institutionally scripted' (Hodson, 2001, p16), that workers are able to find dignity, even under difficult and challenging circumstances. Yet 'the recognition of workers' autonomous behaviours is typically limited either to a condemnation of footdragging (for those with a management viewpoint) or a glorification of resistance (for those with a more radical viewpoint)' (p239).

According to Hodson (2001), there are serious implications for organisations not giving worker agency its due. Following Drucker (1993) and Pfeffer (1998), he argues that 'unrealized human potential is the greatest impediment to organizational advancement' (p238). Hence, enabling employees to accomplish their own goals is essential if organisations are to reach their highest possible productivity (Hodson, 2001). Yet being able to provide opportunities for individuals to pursue their own career aspirations is necessarily limited in organisations.

## LIMITS TO THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE PERSONAL CAREER ASPIRATIONS

Whether an individual has the opportunity to pursue his/her own career aspirations in an organisation will depend on the fit between the individual's needs and competencies and the organisation's needs (Dawis, 2005; Gunz, 1989a, 1989b). An organisation's needs are determined, in part, by the pyramidal, hierarchical structure typical of most organisations. This means that there are fewer and fewer positions available as one advances up the career ladder. At the same time and as found in the case studies, the choices available to the individual is 'limited by the way in which they have been evaluated by their superiors, in the sense that only those who are well regarded will be offered the jobs which go with a successful career' (Gunz, 1989b, p82).

What constitutes a successful career in one organisation will be different in another (Schein, 1986). According to Gunz (1989a), careers are usefully conceptualised from both the organisations' and individuals' perspectives. From the organisations' perspectives, careers relate to the process of the firm renewing itself by ensuring positions are filled. From the individual perspective, there are different points of view ranging from the development of the person (the subjective career) to the actual positions individuals occupy (the objective career).

In large organisations, it is not possible to identify with any accuracy one person's contribution to overall goals (Gunz, 1989b). This is because it is not clear what the 'correct' measures of contribution should be. Additionally, tasks are interdependent and people work together to achieve the overall goals. Offe (1976) considers this problem and concludes that in large organisations, 'rewards presumably go instead to people conforming with organisational norms' (cited in Gunz, 1989b, p36). This is why 'effective management' is defined differently in different organisations and there is potential circularity in the way individuals are picked for promotion. 'As there is difficulty in evaluating effective individual performance, ideas about what constitutes good performance evolve and are reinforced as people conforming to those ideas are continuously promoted and this further reinforces the dominant image of effective management in the organisation' (Pizer, 1995, p23). In this way, even though the organisation can be considered an open system (von Bertalanffy, 1968), the renewal of managerial structures within it is a closed loop (Gunz, 1989b).

In talking with managers, Gunz (1989a) observes that they find it difficult to define effective management, and easy to identify the effective subordinate. As he says:

‘People know whom they admire as good managers, but find it hard to be specific about why. If asked to identify their best subordinates they rarely have any trouble, and if they are then asked to list what the subordinates in question do to make them stand out they tend to focus on two factors, both related to the manager. Either the individual is ‘reliable’ (he goes away and gets on with the job without bothering me, and comes back with the kind of result which I would have achieved if I had done it) or he is a ‘complement’ (he complements my weaknesses)’ (Gunz, 1989a, p232).

This means that the opportunity to be ‘successful’ in a particular organisation is necessarily limited to those considered by their superior as ‘reliable’ or ‘complementary’ to themselves. It is because of the privilege of their position, their power and inherent authority, that managers are able to adopt this rather ego-centric stance. This will affect an individuals’ experience of dignity at work, regardless of their own career aspirations. Career is a social construct.

There are many theories of career development and occupational choice and convergence is unlikely (Brown, 2002). To overcome ‘the jungle of competing theoretical models and perspectives’ (Gunz, 1989b, p74) and to link individual career motivations more closely with organisational-level perspectives, Gunz (1989b) considers an individuals’ orientation to their career at any given time. He argues that ‘anyone thinking in career terms is implicitly looking for two kinds of reward from their present job: the immediate rewards to do with pay and other perks, and the deferred rewards to do with their future in the company, which is what I call here future orientation’ (p74). According to Gunz (1989a), a person is either building, searching or subsisting in relation to their career, depending on whether they are future-oriented and whether they are deviant with respect to the dominant career model in the organisation.

An individual who is ‘building’ his/her career is both future-oriented and non-deviant. That is, he/she is following the organisation’s dominant career model and is probably on a successful career path. An individual who is ‘searching’ is also future-oriented but deviant. That is, he/she has abandoned the dominant career model of the organisation and is searching for something closer to what he/she wants to do. An individual who is ‘subsisting’ is not future-oriented although he/she may or may not be deviant. Here the individual has either abandoned

the dominant career model or has been abandoned by the organisation and the job is simply necessary for survival.

An individual will experience dignity at work in relation to pursuing personal career aspirations when his/her opportunities to build, search or subsist match his/her career aspirations at the time. Conversely, a mismatch may be a source of indignity such as when an individual wants to build and the only options available are to search or subsist. The experience of dignity or indignity resulting from the match or mismatch between an individual's orientation to his/her career and the opportunities provided by the organisation can be further understood by adapting the biological metaphor of symbiosis to the workplace (Bion, 1970). This metaphor has been used previously for understanding the types of associations that can develop between an individual and an organisation in relation to careers (Pizer, 1995).

Symbiosis refers to the different types of relationships that develop between two dissimilar organisms that live together. The relationship 'may be beneficial to both (mutualism and symbiosis), beneficial to one without effect on the other (commensalism), beneficial to one and detrimental to the other (parasitism), detrimental to the first without any effect on the other (amensalism), or detrimental to both (synnecrosis)' (The Free Dictionary, 2008).

Each type of relationship according to the biological metaphor of symbiosis may develop whether an individual's orientation to his/her career is to build, search or subsist. It depends on the situation and how it is perceived. Using a parasitic relationship as an example, a 'builder' might be developing his/her career at the expense of the organisation, such as those individuals involved in the collapse of Enron Corporation. A 'searcher' may be using his/her time in the organisation to develop his/her skills at the expense of the organisation by not fully contributing to the organisation. An individual who is subsisting because they have been abandoned by the organisation may be contributing but at the expense of his/her own career and subsequent personal costs such as a loss of self-worth. If an individual is subsisting because they have abandoned the dominant career model, then this may also be at the expense of the organisation by not fully contributing in a way the organisation values.

The case studies are presented below with a focus on dignity being preserved or denied through the opportunity (or denial of opportunity) to pursue personal career aspirations, using

Gunz's (1989a, 1989b) model of career orientation and the biological metaphor of symbiosis as conceptual frameworks.

## THE CASE STUDIES

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The dynamics of dignity in each case study is presented below. They are presented according to whether their experience of work is dignified and the extent to which they must trade-off indignity to achieve dignity at work. There are essentially two groups: five of the case studies find the overall experience of work as dignified and five do not.

The first five case studies presented – George, Brooke, Charles, Kate and Ella – all experience work as dignified. These participants are all in high quality relationships with their appointed leader, and as will be shown, have either a 'building', 'searching' or 'subsisting' orientation to their career and a symbiotic relationship with their organisation.

The second five case studies presented – Anna, Brandon, Jane, Natalie and Stephan – find it difficult to experience work as dignified. These participants are all in low quality relationships with their manager, are denied the opportunity to build their career, and as such, are either in a parasitic, amensal or commensal relationship with their organisation. There are no examples of synnecrosis. Even though the relationship with their organisation is detrimental for these participants, they all perform their role sufficiently well that the organisation is able to benefit from their work.

### GEORGE

Overall, George's experience of work is dignified. As he says: *'it's a matter of, you know, giving respect and getting it back, and I've never been disrespected here'*. It is significant for George that he was asked where he wanted to go career-wise within the organisation. As a result of this he went to night school and subsequently feels rewarded with the opportunity to *'aspire inside the team'* and supported in pursuing his *'own direction'*. He is also grateful to a co-worker who initially helped him raise his standard and reach his goal of achieving a certain level at the time.

There are many other sources of dignity at work for George. For example, he appreciates being trusted to use his '*own conscience*' to get results, there is no-one '*riding*' him. He has developed friends at work, and some have become more important to him than he ever anticipated. He feels good about helping out a single Mum co-worker voluntarily by driving her home from work so she has more time with her child, an example of organisational citizenship behaviour (Organ, 1997).

The only source of indignity mentioned by George was in the first three months of working in the organisation. He was '*getting yelled at*' for making mistakes when he was learning the job and felt he was '*getting crap thrown my way*'. He says they have better training programs now and thinks they are more forgiving than they were back then. At the time George was able to trade-off this indignity. He '*swallowed it*' because he wanted a 9-5 job and didn't want to go back to being in bands.

George has the opportunity to pursue his own career aspirations, enabling him to maintain his dignity in relation to his career. He is in the unique situation of both building his career by following the normative career model of the organisation within both Customer Service and the Design Team, as well as searching in that he is working out what he wants to do by being able to '*mix it up*' for now. This is possible as the organisation is growing rapidly and able to accommodate George. It is a symbiotic relationship.

## BROOKE

Overall, Brooke's experience of work is also dignified. Like George, she was asked about her career aspirations within her organisation. She says her manager is very encouraging of her wanting to move into Sales and told her the best way to go about it. Her manager had come from Sales into the current position and her close friend at work, Kevin, currently works there. In addition, Brooke feels that the organisation makes it quite easy to get where you want to go through advertising positions internally and providing a lot of opportunities for movement.

There are a number of other sources of dignity at work for Brooke. She experiences the organisation as well-managed – all the targets she is asked to achieve are '*all pretty reasonable*'; supportive – the manager is accessible and sits with them which makes it easier

when there's a difficult call, and the team is also there; trusting – they are free to '*sit there and talk*' until the phone rings, unlike in her last job; and even though she's only been there three months, she feels she has '*a lot of good friends in each department now*'.

There are a few co-workers who make it hard on her to do her work through their attitudes or dishonesty. She seems to trade-off any associated indignity by using it as an example of what not to do and knowing that the organisation is aware of the problems and attempting to address them.

Brooke is building her career in the organisation and following the normative career model. It is a symbiotic relationship.

## CHARLES

Overall, Charles's experience of work is dignified although he finds it difficult to trade-off his sources of indignity in the current workplace. Charles is '*not career driven*' in the sense of achieving a particular position, it is enjoying what he does that matters to him. Currently Charles does enjoy his work. He is, for the most part, able to do his job well and to control his own work. These are his most important sources of dignity at work. At the same time, Charles knows he would be a candidate if his manager's position became available. Another source of dignity for Charles is the good working relationships he has developed, especially within his own team. While not easy for Charles to admit, it is also a source of dignity for him when more senior organisational members acknowledge his good work.

The difficulty for Charles is that he feels the organisation is not working the way it should, and not working properly. An example he cites is his having to build '*reporting channels*' around a certain person who should no longer be working there but is too expensive to be made redundant. His manager also risks compromising Charles's dignity by not sharing the information needed to do the work properly. These threats to Charles's dignity are difficult for him to reconcile. He is able to tolerate it because the '*place works because of the alternate*'. In addition, his manager is aware and working on sharing information more, and it is '*sort of getting better*'.



Charles is subsisting in the organisation as he is not aiming for a particular position. Yet, from the organisation's perspective, he is building his career in that the dominant career model is available to him. The relationship is symbiotic and works well for both Charles and the organisation. When Charles does his job well the organisation runs smoother, tax is minimised and deals are structured the right way.

## KATE

Overall, Kate's experience of work is dignified although she found being '*overworked*' this past year a challenge to her dignity. Kate is in an administration role and did not mention aspiring to any particular role or area. At the same time, she feels there are many more opportunities available now that the organisation has grown.

Kate's main source of dignity at work is her relationship with her manager. Kate feels the relationship is '*different*' as it's '*quite relaxed*' and she considers they are '*friends as well*'. She appreciates how she can '*ask her anything*' and that it will be discussed and worked through. She feels taken seriously. It is also a source of dignity for Kate that her efforts over the past year were recognised by receiving a financial bonus, which is unusual at her level. Kate finds being able to work well with her manager and other senior staff as well as feeling liked by them a source of dignity. She recalls how, through her own efforts, she was able to '*pacify things*' with a '*daunting*' senior manager who had brought other staff members to tears. She has a sense of her own agency.

Kate's sources of indignity over the past year were considerable. Notably, she felt overworked and under enormous pressure. The indignity came about, mainly through her response to this stress, and also through the organisation not hiring more staff even though her job was now bigger. In relation to her response, Kate found herself being '*more aggressive than usual*', she rarely found herself stopping and chatting with co-workers, and she felt envious of them as they did not have to work so hard. Kate has been able to trade-off these indignities. She argues that it was not a normal year, it was a project that has now ended, and her co-workers have welcomed her back.

This is the first corporate Kate has worked for. As she is in an administrative role, she is unable to follow the normative career model and can do no more than subsist. Nevertheless,

the relationship is symbiotic and she sees more opportunities for herself as the organisation grows.

## ELLA

Overall, it is as though Ella has made a deal with herself in relation to her dignity. Her key source of indignity is finding herself working in a call centre and being associated with the transient entry-level people who work there. To maintain her dignity she differentiates herself from most call centre workers. She points out that she is only there while studying for a marketing degree at university, that she has flexible hours and leave, she is totally self-managed rather than micro-managed and there is scope for her to move up. Ironically, she met her current flatmate through work and has made three other good friends who are now friends outside of work.

Ella also maintains her dignity by ensuring she does her job well as evidenced by receiving the best bonus each year and being handpicked for roles, and through developing good relationships with the people in her team. There are considerable challenges to this source of dignity. She finds herself thinking of '*a filmy soapy bubble*' around her to insulate herself from all the gossip that distracts her team from achieving their targets. She has a constant battle with her manager who wants more of a friendship while Ella wants a manager. It results in a less professional relationship and is less effective in getting the job done. There has also been poor management of problem co-workers that make it difficult for Ella to do her best.

Because Ella feels she is getting what she currently wants from work, she is able to trade-off the indignities she experiences while she studies. She is able to hide how she really feels with little difficulty as she feels it is necessary to appear '*positive, polite, professional at all times*'. Further, she knows that such compromises are necessary if she is to continue to enjoy the benefits she receives.

While Ella is career oriented and is aiming to work in a professional marketing role, she does not see herself achieving her career aspirations with her current employer. She says she is not really interested in the industry and call centres and wants a change. From Ella's perspective she is subsisting in the organisation while she studies. Yet, from the organisation's

perspective she is building and following the normative career model. It is a symbiotic relationship.

## ANNA

Overall, it is a challenge for Anna to experience work as dignified. She does find dignity in her relationship with her first manager who had faith in her and helped her do her best. Anna keeps in contact with this manager who has since left the firm, and continues to seek her advice and support. She has made friends with some of her co-workers who she appreciates and enjoys. Generally Anna believes there are good people in the organisation and good career opportunities are available, just not for her.

The main source of indignity at work for Anna is that she won't *'be able to become a manager'* in the organisation. She says this is because she does not have *'the right people batting for'* her. It is also because she is perceived as being from an ethnic or minority group when she does not consider herself part of one. She believes this would result in retrenchment if she reached management. Personally she feels she is too quiet and not sufficiently competitive to get ahead. Together, this means the normative career model is not available to Anna in this organisation.

Anna attempts to trade-off this indignity by saying she is happy to gain the experience. She says that if she wants to succeed she just has to go looking and get another job. Yet this is a poor substitute for dignity. As she also says, she does sometimes feel *'disillusioned and lost'*, and does not know exactly where she's headed or what she's doing.

Anna is subsisting in the organisation when she'd rather be building. She felt more able to build when reporting to her first manager, albeit still not up to management level. It appears that Anna has been able to make this inherently parasitic relationship more commensal in nature through acknowledging that she must leave the organisation in order to realise her career ambitions.

## BRANDON

Overall, Brandon is struggling to experience work as dignified. Now that he has moved from the general call centre, Brandon is able to find more dignity. This is mainly achieved through the structure of the work. He now has a consistent roster and this means he is able to maintain his lifestyle outside of work consistently. He is no longer plugged into the phone the whole time and this means he is able to talk and laugh with colleagues during work time, and develop better friendships at work. He also finds the culture supportive with everyone looking out for everyone else in terms of the work itself.

Brandon continues to find dignity in the opportunities the organisation provides. These include roles to strive for as well as secondments, formal training, and opportunities to transfer interstate. He says one of the managers' roles is to see you develop your career, not keep you in their team. If not for his first manager, Brandon would not have received the opportunities he has in the organisation thus far.

At the same time, there are indignities that Brandon finds difficult to trade-off. A major source of indignity is that he feels *'he lost track of how work should be'* as a result of working in the general call centre where *'the human aspect'* is missing. While the new area is a significant improvement, he wonders whether he could do even better for himself, particularly as he fears this new area might become like the general call centre. He struggles to trade-off the indignities he fears he will re-experience. He attempts to do so by identifying with management and understand from their perspective the need to make unpopular decisions such as removing financial incentives and the pool table in the break room. As he says, it's for the *'bigger picture'* of how *'this unit needs to be'*. He also reminds himself of how it is not uncommon for people stay for a number of years in this new area because it is a good place to work.

The difficulty for Brandon is that, apart from the social aspect, he does not really like it in the new area that much. The work itself is not a source of dignity as he finds it monotonous and the targets too easy. Brandon is ambitious and wants to become a manager. Yet, currently he does not know how to achieve this in the organisation or how the lateral move into this new area will have affected his career chances. He also does not know where he stands with his manager who he feels dependent on to foster his career for him.

It is not surprising that Brandon *'was a lot more positive'* when he *'first started'*. He is currently subsisting in the organisation when he'd rather be building. He is not sure he'll be able to build in this organisation anymore. Further, he is currently doing nothing about it because he does not know what to do. He feels stagnant. Brandon cannot trade-off this indignity in relation to his career because it would mean giving up on the possibility of a future with more money and more security. On the face of it, this is a parasitic relationship where Brandon is denied the opportunity to achieve his own goals while the organisation benefits from his efforts. Brandon defends against this experience through believing there is potential to become closer to his manager. If this can be achieved, then the opportunity to pursue his career aspirations in the organisation may still be possible.

## JANE

Overall, Jane also struggles to experience work as dignified. Even though her role *'is naturally perceived at the lower end of the spectrum'* and she feels it is not recognised enough, she does find dignity in not having someone watch her every move, no *'Big Brother so to speak'*. She appreciates that she feels she could *'quite happily go out for a drink with anyone'* from work. It is also a source of dignity for Jane that a highly regarded senior executive is her mentor and friend who has seen potential in her, even though she seems to have given up on her for now.

At the same time, the main source of indignity for Jane is feeling there isn't *'anyone to actually go to'* in relation to problems that arise. She does not trust that she can speak to her manager in confidence. She feels unable to speak to HR without fear after being *'pulled aside'* after speaking up. The CEO supports his management team over her.

Jane is able to trade-off much of this indignity. In relation to her manager, she says *'it's just a matter of time'* before the relationship improves and they'll be able to go beyond *'what we did on the weekend'*. She has given her *'the benefit of the doubt'*. Nevertheless, the difficulty with her manager has had serious consequences for her work, resulting in limited opportunities. As she says, when they *'know that someone's not happy in what they're doing they'll somehow find a position for them, which, you know, would never happen to me'*. Even though Jane feels as though she has *'hit a brick wall'* and wonders why she does not put her hand up for a

management position, she trades this off by saying she '*chooses to be in Customer Service*', is '*lazy*' and wants to be '*a Mum*'.

Jane is also able to trade-off not being able to go to the CEO. While he supports his management team, he did arrange a reference for a friend she thought was dismissed unfairly when she approached him about it. She also benefits from the organisation's success, such as staff receiving a \$100 gift voucher after announcing a huge profit. She just wishes they would '*cut out the bullshit*'. For example, the senior executives have huge new offices while everyone else is '*higgledy piggledy*'.

Yet she is unable to reconcile being unable to '*speak without fear*' to HR. It is a stated organisational value and she has discovered that it is not a theory-in-use (Argyris, 1999). Jane does not know what is really acceptable anymore, what is real and what is a '*façade*'. She does not '*know the boundaries*'. She does not know '*how far*' she can go before it comes '*back to bite you*'. Jane, like Brandon, is doing nothing about this and does not know what could be done. She prefers to keep HR '*out of sight*' and '*out of mind*'.

Jane is subsisting in the organisation. While she does wonder why she is not building a career for herself, she has reoriented her ambitions to staying in Customer Service and being '*a Mum*'. By doing so, Jane has abandoned the dominant career model of the organisation, even though she appears to have done this in response to feeling abandoned by the organisation. On balance, and with this reframing, Jane is able to have a more commensal than parasitic relationship with the organisation.

## NATALIE

Overall, Natalie's experience of work is not dignified. She does find dignity in the work and doing what is right and fair in relation to tax for staff and the organisation. She knows she is '*pretty highly regarded*' in the organisation. She also finds dignity in relationships with colleagues. She says people are mainly '*pleasant... and helpful*' and '*really nice*'. She works '*really well*' with Charles and maintains contact with a previous colleague. She also started the social club at work with a friend.

The main source of indignity at work for Natalie is that she feels the opportunity to pursue her own career aspirations in the organisation are limited, and it is for personal rather than professional reasons. She feels she is overlooked because she is female – the senior level to which she aspires is a *'boys club'*; she is divorced, childless and currently single – she feels like a *'dead wood'* and not treated as well as those in relationships and with children; she looks younger than she is – and feels senior managers overlook her as she has *'so much life to lead'*, as well as knowing she is not as senior as some at the same age. She also felt overlooked before Charles was hired when they were short staffed. Natalie was left to carry the load of two people and put on 10 kilos herself.

Natalie is unable to trade-off this indignity. She attempts to minimise it by saying that she becomes a bit complacent in relation to her career and that her career progress is delayed because her manager is preoccupied with his own career. She has also attempted to overcome it through the social club, acknowledging that if you're *'going to get anywhere in this company, you've got to meet other people and have contacts'*. Yet overall, she feels abandoned by the organisation and fears she will be sitting there in the same job in three years time. Natalie is subsisting and it is a parasitic relationship.

## STEPHAN

Overall, Stephan's experience of work is not dignified. He finds dignity in his social relationships at work where *'it just feels like a family'* and people *'care about'* and help each other. He also holds on to the dignity he felt with his first manager who has since left the organisation but *'believed in'* him and gave him *'a chance'*. This manager helped Stephan move out of the warehouse into the call centre.

Working in the warehouse was not dignified for Stephan. He says it is *'the bottom'* of the organisation where *'you're no-one'*. He felt they were treated as though they did not even *'deserve cold water'*. He says *'we had to come into the office to get cold water; we didn't have it out the back'* and, to add to the humiliation, they were identifiable by not being *'dressed in a shirt and tie'* like the office workers, *'you're just in your dirty clothes'*.

Now that Stephan is in the office, he is unable to find dignity in his current work. He says it is *'just so easy'*. It is *'too secure and too safe'* to the extent that he feels he gets *'away with too*

*much*' and there are no real consequences for making *'a mistake or two'*. There is also no difference in rewards if you are *'number one... or number ten'*. Stephan wants to be challenged, to contribute and to do his best. He wants to *'make a difference'*.

Stephan is also ambitious and wants to go *'up high'* in the organisation. Yet he has been moving *'side to side'* without success. He has attempted to overcome the indignity of having the opportunity to achieve his career aspirations thwarted. He tries getting *'close to the manager'* and even recently approached a *'big manager'* who he considered a *'role model'* for help. But he always ends up disappointed as he discovers they are not *'going to help'* him get ahead. He says he is getting *'tired of trying and getting knocked back'*. He has been in the organisation for seven years. He thinks there is some *'favouritism'*. He doesn't trust his current manager because he notices how she is everyone's *'best friend'*. He feels she hears but she does not listen. Overall, he believes *'they do care about you, but they don't really care if you want to be a manager. They're not going to show you do this and do that, and this is where you... they just want you to come in, do your job and get the stats up every day'*.

Stephan attempts to trade-off these considerable indignities. He says that even though there are not many openings to move up, *'every six or seven months'* he gets *'a sense of hope... that maybe I will get somewhere... a position will come up... and I will get it'*. He values the family feeling at work and likes how comfortable he feels. He does not want to face that he has effectively been abandoned by the organisation.

Stephan is subsisting in the organisation when he wants to be building and it is an amensal relationship. From Stephan's perspective, it makes no difference to the organisation whether he is there or not. If there were real consequences for making mistakes, or performing as well as he could, then he would know that he mattered.

## SUMMARY OF THE CASE STUDIES

Table 29 summarizes the case studies. The first five participants all enjoy a high quality relationship with their manager, a match between their current and preferred career orientation, and a symbiotic relationship between themselves and their respective organisations. In contrast, the second five participants have a low quality relationship with



their manager, a mismatch between their current and preferred career orientation, and are unable to enjoy a symbiotic relationship with their respective organisations.

**Table 29: The quality of the relationship with the appointed leader, current and preferred career orientation, and the nature of the relationship between the individual and organisation for each participant.**

Participant	Quality of relationship with appointed leader (LMX)	Current career orientation	Preferred career orientation	Relationship between the individual and organisation
George	High	Building and searching	Building and searching	Symbiotic
Brooke	High	Building	Building	Symbiotic
Charles	High	Subsisting	Subsisting	Symbiotic
Kate	High	Subsisting	Subsisting	Symbiotic
Ella	High	Subsisting	Subsisting	Symbiotic
Anna	Low	Subsisting	Building	More commensal than parasitic
Brandon	Low	Subsisting	Building	Parasitic, possibly symbiotic
Jane	Low	Subsisting	Building	More commensal than parasitic
Natalie	Low	Subsisting	Building	Parasitic
Stephan	Low	Subsisting	Building	Amensal

The case studies highlight the importance of the opportunity to pursue personal career aspirations for dignity at work. For these participants, denial of this opportunity results in an indignity that is not possible to trade-off. Despite the indignity, not one of the five participants in this predicament is actively looking for employment elsewhere, nor considering starting to look. Brandon eloquently and bluntly describes the state they find themselves in when he says, *‘personally, I’m sort of just stagnant at the moment’*.

There have been unsuccessful attempts to trade-off this indignity. Stephan and Natalie previously tried to overcome the problem through the sentient system without success. Stephan tried getting *‘close to the manager’* and Natalie started the social club. They no longer know what to do as their strategies have failed. Brandon holds on to the possibility that his relationship with his manager can still improve. His current strategy is to wait. Jane is also waiting for the time when things improve with her manager. But she sidesteps the absence of the opportunity to pursue her own career aspirations altogether by re-orienting herself to a future of motherhood. Anna adopts the most effective approach in relation to her career by

focusing on the task rather than sentient system. She says she is staying to gain the experience.

It is understandable that these participants mainly attempt to overcome this indignity through the sentient rather than task system. There is no indication that their performance is unacceptable, even for Stephan who feels he gets away with making mistakes. In contrast, their performance may even be of a high standard, such as with Brandon who achieved *'the highest incentives'* in the first month. These participants are all relatively young and early in their career. It is unlikely that they have reached their full potential.

Further, there have been times when they have known the dignity of having the opportunity to pursue personal career aspirations. The difference they identify between then and now is in how they are perceived by their manager at the time. For example, Anna and Stephan were able to build their careers in their current organisations when reporting to different managers. Anna said her first manager *'had a lot of faith in me... helped me... do my best constantly... it was very motivating working under someone like that'*. Similarly, Stephan said of his first manager: *'he believed in me and he wanted to give me a chance'*. Natalie was being groomed for partnership when previously employed in a different organisation. She says she *'worked really well'* with her previous manager, a partner. Together they *'changed the way that a partner and a manager worked together'* because of their complementary skills. Now in this new organisation, she fears she will be in the same position in three years time going nowhere. Hence, achieving the dignity of the opportunity to pursue one's own personal career aspirations depends not only on your actions (Hodson, 2001), but also on your actions being recognised by someone in a position to provide those opportunities. In the workplace, this usually rests with the appointed leader (Renwick & MacNeil, 2002).

This highlights the inter-subjective nature of dignity and that recognition is instrumental for achieving dignity (cf. Sayer, 2007a). Kompridis (2008) argues that struggles for recognition and therefore dignity are *'at the same time struggles over what it means to recognize and be recognized'* (p277). He considers recognition as defined by Fraser and Honneth (2003): as a matter of justice and as a matter of identity.

Kompridis (2008) discusses how Nancy Fraser views recognition *'as instrumental to acquiring full status as a full partner in social interaction'* (p278). Individuals and groups who

are not a full partner are subjected to misrecognition and status subordination such as through being treated ‘as inferior, excluded, wholly other, or simply invisible’ (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p29). Hence, for Fraser recognition is a matter of justice, and, I argue, dignity. Redress from misrecognition is restoration of status as a full partner in interaction. In this study, for example, Anna and Stephan both experience moments of feeling invisible. Anna says ‘*if there was an opportunity for promotion they’d overlook you because [it’s] like you don’t exist*’. Stephan is not sure that ‘*they’re going to feel that you’re not here today*’. Jane and Brandon are hoping for restoration of status even though they are currently excluded. Natalie feels inferior and that she is seen as one of ‘*the dead woods*’.

In contrast, the other participants do enjoy the status of full partners in interaction. That is, both partners are individual subjects with their own centre of experience and recognised by each other as such (Benjamin, 1988). Such mutual relations are difficult to sustain. Even though we may wish to negate the other through our own assertion as we do not wish to give up our omnipotence (Benjamin, 1995), at the same time it is necessary that the other survive so we may be recognised. This is the paradoxical tension between dependence and independence. As Benjamin (1988) states:

‘at the very moment of realizing our own independence, we are dependent on another to recognize it. At the very moment we come to understand the meaning of “I, myself,” we are forced to see the limitations of that self. At the moment when we understand that separate minds can share the same state, we also realize that these minds can disagree’ (Benjamin, 1988, p33).

Mutual relations then are characterised by ‘the capacity to manage the essential conflict between self and other so that “I am not like you” is able to exist alongside, in tension with, “I am like you”’. This holding of both in mind creates a relational space within which aggression associated with assertion, and other emotion, may be symbolised and contained. However, because of the demands of this holding, it is inevitable that mutual relations rupture’ (Harding, 2007, p48). Benjamin (1995) argues that what matters is not the inevitable breakdown in mutual relations but the ability to restore or repair them.

Kate’s relationship with her manager is an example of mutual relations. She recognises that her manager’s hours were ‘*probably worse*’ than hers. She also knows that if she asserts herself, her subjectivity will be recognised by her manager who can also hold her own

subjectivity and survive the interaction. As she says, she '*can just come in and ask her anything*' and at times she was even '*ready to kill her*' (assertion). Yet Kate knows that her manager will always '*discuss*' it (recognition) and '*work through*' it through (survive) with her.

In the workplace, as Orange (2008) highlights for psychoanalysis as well as parent-child interactions, it is important to acknowledge the mutuality of participation in the search for contact and understanding *and* the asymmetry of roles. As Orange (2008) states, 'I believe this asymmetry, present in both parental and therapeutic relationships, together with the presumed relative maturity of the parent or analyst, means that any recognition processes must remain profoundly lopsided for a long time, and that we should not expect otherwise. Indeed, I think that in most instances, looking to our patients or our children for their recognition of us as subjects is a serious misunderstanding' (p184).

Ella's experience highlights the importance of lopsided recognition processes in leader-member relations at work. It seems that Ella's manager is looking to her for recognition and tries to transform their relationship into a friendship. For Ella, this compromises her experience of herself as a professional and efficient worker. While Ella maintains her manager's dignity and the benefits she receives by being her friend at work, privately she is in a '*constant battle*' to bring the relationship '*back a bit*' so as to limit the friendship.

Another example of the importance of lopsided recognition processes is when George and Brooke were '*welcomed*' (Orange, 2008) by their managers to pursue their careers in their organisation. The welcome came in the form of being asked by their respective managers about their career aspirations within the organisation during the early days of their employment. They were the only ones to mention being asked this question. It was a significant moment for them both, followed by support and guidance in achieving their particular individual goals. This experience seems to demonstrate that they were recognised by their manager, and therefore the organisation, as someone who can '*move up*' before they had even earned or deserved such recognition through their performance.

Orange (2008) highlights the significance of being welcomed in psychoanalysis and as being '*recognised-as*' something. She cites Winnicott's '*use of an object*' where it is important that the patient learns to risk him/herself with others (assertion) rather than protect them from

something. An important way the analyst facilitates the patient in doing this is by welcoming him or her each session, regardless of the possible relentless treatment, as well as surviving and refraining from retaliation. Orange (2008) also discusses the importance of being recognised as both a conversation-partner and as a very particular other. It involves more than having what is familiar recognized again, rather it involves knowing more than is already familiar. For both George and Brooke, they learned that they had the opportunity to achieve their career aspirations and build their career within their current organisation, and that the relationship was symbiotic.

Kompridis (2008) also discusses how Alex Honneth views recognition ‘as instrumental to individual self-realization’ (p278). It is a matter of identity. According to Honneth, ‘we need multiple kinds of recognition – respect in the political sphere, esteem in the social sphere, and care in the intimate sphere. Lacking these interlocking experiences of recognition, we cannot achieve full ‘self-realization’: we cannot become who we want to be, cannot realize the kind of life we want for ourselves. For Honneth, the harm done by non-recognition and misrecognition is the worst form of social injustice’ (p278). From this perspective, redress can be achieved through repairing distorted subjectivities or damaged identities. This view of recognition is also evident in the case studies, exemplified by the opportunity or denial of opportunity to pursue personal career aspirations. To trade-off such an indignity arising out of misrecognition is to collude with the injustice and deny one’s self the possibility of self-realization. It is therefore comforting that such an indignity was not possible to trade-off in this study.

Kompridis (2008) argues that Honneth’s view exaggerates the need for recognition to find our own agency and voice: it ‘*underdetermines* our identities and our sense of ourselves as agents’ (p283). He cites Hegel’s analysis of the master-slave dialectic whereby ‘for the slave, the mastery of the more powerful one provides containment within which the self can be freed’ (Harding, 2007, p49). Within this dialectic, over time and through gaining skills as a result of working for the master, the slave is able to exercise newly won agency and achieve a new self-understanding under conditions of inequality and misrecognition. As he says, ‘it was the denial of due recognition and the ensuing epistemological crisis that forced the ‘slave’ to reconceive and transform his basic self-understanding’ (p283). For example, Anna reconceives herself as being happy to stay to get the experience rather than aim to become a manager.

Yet, as Harding (2007) points out, recognition gained through the complementary relations of the master-slave dialectic 'is a compromised form of recognition. The master-slave dialectic does not hold fully within it the self-affirming characteristics of mutual recognition because there is always the backward and forward move between non-recognition and dismissal *of* the slave and resistance and the need for recognition *from* the slave. Relational space becomes saturated with persecutory anxiety. This stunts emotional growth, creativity and agency' (p49). For example, even though Anna says all she needs to do is '*find another job*' to succeed, in reality she does sometimes feel '*disillusioned and lost*' and does not know where she's headed or what she's doing.

Kompridis (2008) further argues that misrecognition may not be a form of injustice with the intention of maintaining domination. It is also possible that a challenge to our claim for recognition is to initiate a change in self-understanding and in our relation to one another. It may be to facilitate learning. This further suggests that the difficulty may not reside with misrecognition by an external agent but with internal impediments to our own agency. This possibility was considered in this study and it may apply, at least to some extent. At the same time and as stated earlier, these participants are all relatively young and early in their career. It is unlikely that they have reached their full potential. It is more likely that external impediments are limiting their development.

Hogan (2007) argues that it is in the provision of opportunities such as to achieve and to grow that there is the possibility of 'moving away from the old 'master-servant' model of the employment relationship, where the role of the servant is to comply with the ascribed commercial wisdom of the master; and towards the idea of the 'servant-leader', where the role of the leader is to provide opportunity for the employee to be successful' (Hogan, 2007, p232). This notion again highlights the importance of lopsided recognition processes in leader-member relations at work. The servant-leader is akin to the analyst being available for whatever the patient needs in the context of mutual rather than complementary relations.

According to the literature on servant-leadership, for managers who adopt this style of leadership, it is a moral imperative that leaders help followers (and other stakeholders) grow, develop and prosper (Mayer, Bardes & Piccolo, 2008). It is the role of the servant-leader to 'first make sure that other people's highest priority *needs* are being served' (Greenleaf, 1970,

p4). This is not a capitulation to demand; rather it is recognition by the leader of the member's limitations and abilities (Harding, 2007). Mayer, Bardes & Piccolo (2008) recently conducted a study that demonstrates that servant-leaders do help satisfy follower needs, specifically the needs for relatedness, competence and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Implicit in this research, is that the servant-leader is competent, although in practice this cannot be assumed.

Hodson (2007) concludes from a recent empirical study of dignity that management competence exerts the strongest positive influence on dignity at work. He defines management competence from a socio-technical perspective. That is, management competence 'includes the provision and maintenance of a coherent organisation of production as well as support and recognition for employees' rights and interests' (Hodson, 2007, p110). This includes recognition of employees' personal career aspirations.

An important outcome for organisations is that need satisfaction, including the need for relatedness, has been associated with job performance (Baard, Deci & Ryan, 2004). Interestingly, for individuals, satisfying their need for dignity at work through the opportunity to pursue career aspirations does not mean that one is thriving in one's career. In the positive organisational psychology literature, thriving at work is defined as 'the psychological state where individuals experience both a sense of vitality and a sense of learning at work' (Spreitzer & Sutcliffe, 2007, p75). According to Spreitzer and Sutcliffe (2007), it is a continuum where people are more or less thriving at any point in time and experience a range of thriving experiences, rather than simply thriving or not.

The opportunity to pursue career aspirations is an opportunity to thrive at work. Those who are actively and intentionally taking up this opportunity in their current organisation and supported in doing so are most able to experience thriving in relation to their career. In this study, this is the privilege of those who are building their career. While experiencing dignity through having the opportunity to pursue one's career aspirations does not necessarily mean thriving in one's career, experiencing dignity in this way does offer career-related hope. This is discussed next.

## SUMMARY

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This chapter illustrates the importance of dignity for a positive experience of work. It demonstrates that there are multiple ways that dignity can be denied and preserved, and that each participant attempts to trade-off his/her particular experiences of indignity in an attempt to experience work as dignified overall.

It is apparent that there is one indignity that cannot be traded-off. It is the indignity of being denied the opportunity to pursue one's own career aspirations. This source of dignity, the freedom of being able to 'fashion yourself into whatever form you choose' (Pico della Mirandola, [1486] 1956) is a fundamental human dignity.

In this research the five participants denied this dignity are all relatively young and early in their career. It is unlikely that they have reached their full potential. Hence, to have this opportunity denied is experienced as a social injustice and it is a matter of identity. It is the worst kind of misrecognition in the workplace because it denies the individual the possibility of becoming who he or she wants to be in the organisational context. It is this form of misrecognition with which these participants are unable to collude and satisfactorily resolve. As such, they are unable to find and bring their best selves to the workplace.

Theoretically, the recognition they seek can be provided by anyone in the organisation in a position to provide opportunities to achieve and to grow. In this research, as is typically found in organisations, it is their appointed leader who is in such a position, and whose recognition therefore matters. Positive leader-member relations are therefore critical for experiencing work as dignified overall.

The research indicates that these positive leader-member relations take a particular form. For these participants, it is characterised by mutual participation in interaction, where there is contact and understanding with their appointed leader, and at the same time, the asymmetry of power and authority inherent in their respective roles is acknowledged. This means that recognition between the leader and member is lopsided, with the leader not seeking recognition by his/her member. Rather the leader is akin to a servant-leader whose role is to



help his/her members meet their needs to grow, develop and prosper within the boundaries of each members' limitations and abilities and organisational opportunities.

It is notable that only two participants are thriving in their career, and that what distinguishes these participants is their experience of being welcomed to pursue their careers in their organisation. This welcome came in the form of being asked by their respective appointed leaders about their career aspirations within the organisation during the early days of their employment, before they had earned or deserved such recognition through their performance. The welcome was followed by support and guidance in achieving their individual goals. The other participants who also enjoy positive relations with their appointed leader are not thriving in their career. But with the knowledge that they have the opportunity to pursue their career aspirations even if they are not doing so, they are, like their thriving counterparts, able to enjoy the experience of career-related hope.

# . 10.

## CAREER-RELATED HOPE

*“Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow them”* (Louisa May Alcott).

*“Hope is the worst of evils, for it prolongs the torments of man”* (Friedrich Nietzsche).

### HOPE THEORY

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As illustrated by the quotes above, hope has different meanings and has been viewed as both a positive and a negative human attribute throughout history (Luthans & Jenson, 2002). More recently within the domain of positive psychology, hope is viewed as a positive psychological capacity (Dutton & Sonenshein, 2009). Within this field Snyder’s (1994) hope theory is the most widely recognised approach. In this theory, it is assumed that ‘human actions are goal directed’ (Snyder, 2002, p250) and hope is conceptualised as a conscious, cognitive, motivational process (Shorey, Snyder, Rand, Hockmeyer & Feldman, 2002).

Snyder (2002) specifically defines hope as ‘the perceived capability to derive pathways to desired goals, and motivate oneself via agency thinking to use those pathways’ (p249). In other words, hope is a combination of both “way power” (pathways/ how to get there) and “willpower” (agency/ will to get there) towards one’s goals (Luthans, 2002). It is ‘a future-

oriented concept in that a positive future is being made more likely by goal-directed thoughts and actions occurring in the present moment' (Shorey, et al., 2002, p326). This definition of hope is different from common usage. It is more than "hoping for the best".

Snyder and his colleagues have spent over a decade refining the theory. It now has a solid theoretical foundation, is operationally defined, and there are valid measures for the assessment of both state and trait hope (Peterson & Luthans, 2003). It is acknowledged that hope theory has similarities with other constructs such as goal-setting theory (Lee, Locke & Latham, 1989; Locke & Latham, 1990), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and optimism (Scheier & Carver, 1985; Seligman, 1998). Snyder (2002) argues that some similarities are important for convergent validity and this has been demonstrated in several empirical studies. At the same time, these same studies have shown that hope theory is sufficiently different from these theories to support discriminant validity (see Snyder, 2002 for a detailed discussion). For example, 'hope has been found to predict subjective well-being even after controlling for the variance due to self-efficacy and optimism' (Shorey et al., 2002, p325). It has also been found to predict subjective well-being after controlling for parenting style, attachment and social support (Shorey, Snyder, Yang, & Lewin, 2003). It is a different psychological process (Juntunen & Wettersten, 2006). Peterson and Luthans (2003) suggest that the uniqueness of hope theory lies in its equal emphasis on both pathways and agency, and how they operate in a combined, iterative way.

The case studies illustrate that, as with hope theory, career-related hope involves the combination of both pathways and agency thinking (Pizer & Härtel, 2006). For example, Ella says: *'So I mean for me, I can move up to the next level [goal] without any hassles, and it just depends on whether you see that that's a possibility [pathways] and take steps towards it [agency], or you just sort of sit back and decide that's a little too hard'*.

The case studies also illustrate the state-like nature of hope. When Anna was working in a previous organisation and in a positive relationship with her manager she was hopeful about her career: *'If you had someone who would look after you, and um batted for you, and would put you on jobs, and you, you know, the sky was the limit'*. In her current workplace with her current manager, Anna's career-related hope has diminished. As she now says: *'I'm not here you know to with the intention of becoming you know a senior or a manager. I know that'll never happen'*. The result of this loss of hope is that she sometimes feels *'disillusioned and*

*lost*' and, as she says, you no longer know '*exactly where you're headed or what you're doing*'.

Luthans and Jensen (2002) argue that hope as a state-like construct is important for human resource development at work. This is because it is possible to build an individual's level of hope by building on their pathways and agency thinking (Snyder, Sympson, Ybasco, Borders, Babyak & Higgins, 1996). At work this 'may then ultimately result in enhanced individual and organizational performance' (Luthans & Jensen, 2002, p307). Indeed, preliminary empirical research indicates a positive relationship at the individual level between hope levels and performance at work (Luthans & Jensen, 2002; Peterson & Byron, 2008); and at the organisational level, it has been found to have a positive relationship with financial success (Adams, Snyder, Rand, King, Sigmon & Pulvers, 2003). Yet, as Anna's experience illustrates, as a state-like quality, hope at work can also be diminished.

#### THE BENEFITS OF HIGH HOPE

Across numerous studies Snyder and his colleagues have found that higher hope is consistently related to better outcomes. This has been found in the areas of academia, athletics, physical health, psychological adjustment, psychotherapy, and more recently, in the workplace. According to the research, people with high hope have clearer goals, are more decisive and certain about their pathways, and are more able to come up with plausible alternatives than people low in hope (Snyder, 2002).

According to Shorey et al (2002), 'one of the hallmarks of the high- as compared to low-hope persons is that because of their previous experiences of success, failure or lack of success are not perceived as major threats. Also, failures do not translate into lowered self-worth for high hoppers; instead, in such instances, they adaptively conclude that they have not adopted the right strategies to attain their goals' (Shorey et al., 2002, p329). This is not the same as false hope. The research also shows that people with high hope are more likely to be able to see and face reality. They 'do not persevere in pursuing untenable goals, but instead disengage and regoal when emotional feedback or contradictory environmental inputs indicate that positive outcomes are no longer probable' (Shorey et al., 2002, p328).

Furthermore, hope theory research consistently shows that high hope people are able to select good routes to their goals at normal times, and especially at times of high stress or when goals are threatened (Snyder, 2002). An experience of loss does not inevitably dash hope in high-hope people. One source of their resilience is the ability to develop ‘innovative strategies for overcoming the adversities that they are encountering’ (Shorey et al., 2002, p328).

Conversely, ‘low-hope people become confused, avoidant and ineffective in finding routes to their goals during normal or impeded situations’ (Snyder, 2002, p268).

Snyder (2002) has found that the strongest correlation with the hope scale to date is with a measure of self-actualization. He argues that the best way to attain such optimal functioning is for businesses to assign people to activities that match their strengths rather than try and fix weaknesses. This will increase the likelihood of experiencing the joys associated with successfully attaining a pursued goal.

These benefits of high hope and the disadvantages of low hope are evident in the case studies. They are discussed next.

## CAREER-RELATED HOPE AND THE CASE STUDIES

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The research reported here indicates a strong link between career-related hope, dignity at work and positive work relations with the direct leader/manager.

Five participants – Anna, Brandon, Jane, Natalie and Stephan – have low career-related hope. They do not experience both agency and pathways thinking in relation to their career in their current organisation. This is to be expected given that this group are denied the dignity of the opportunity to pursue their personal career aspirations in their current workplace. The pathways that would enable them to build their career are unavailable to them.

In contrast, George, Brooke, Charles, Kate and Ella do have the pathways available to them to pursue their career aspirations. Hence they are able to experience career-related hope in their current workplace. It is not possible to determine from the data whether these five participants generate good goals for themselves in the face of adversity as hope theory suggests. What is

evident is that, in the face of adversity, these participants focus on the task, perform to the best of their ability and are rewarded for their effort.

For example, it was initially *'tough'* for George and he *'wanted to resign'*. He says the reason he *'swallowed'* the difficulties was because he wanted the job for the hours it provided. It was at this time that a more senior co-worker began to help him develop. As a result he achieved his goals and hasn't looked back. As he says of the more senior co-worker: *'he made me raise my standard, you know, whether, whether I wanted to or not, and my standard raised 'cause I wanted to get to a certain level and, and I, I guess I didn't want to disappoint him, with all the work that he put it in'*.

Ella says that *'whatever job I do, I want to do it well, even if I'm cleaning streets'*. The barriers to her success – the *'constant battle'* with her manager who wants more of a friendship, the gossip and talk distracting her team from their goals, the other retention specialist whose work she has to fix up – do not distract Ella from her goals. She remains focused and enjoys flexible hours and leave, the highest performance ratings and bonus each year, and perceives that she has better job opportunities than most.

Kate was *'overworked'* in the past year and feels that she would have been *'ghastly to deal with'*. Yet she and her manager remained *'dead focused on the projects'*. Ultimately, Kate's efforts were recognized and she *'was rewarded... financially'*, something that *'is unusual'* for someone in the position of Personal Assistant.

In contrast, Stephan is an example of someone who perseveres despite contradictory evidence. He says that *'every six or seven months'* he gets *'a sense of hope... that maybe I will get somewhere... a position will come up... and I will get it'*. It is a false hope. He has been with the organisation for seven years and says that he has *'just been moving side to side, side to side'* and not up the hierarchy into a managerial job. While he says he is getting *'tired of trying and getting knocked back'* for more senior positions, at the same time, he seems afraid to move to another organisation and leave behind the security of the familiar. He has not changed his strategy. He is an example of someone low in hope, unable to find pathways to achieve his career-related goals and without a sense of agency that he will be able to achieve them on his own.

Natalie is an example of someone who could be considered innovative in her strategy of starting the social club in response to recognising that if she's *'going to get anywhere in this company, you've got to meet other people and have contacts'*. Yet it has not helped her realise her career-related ambitions. She has lost her sense of agency and has neither developed alternative pathways nor re-goaled. Instead, like Stephan, she remains where she is and fears *'sitting here in three years time'* in the same role.

Anna has faced the reality of her situation and knows she will not be able to become a manager in her current organisation. She says that if she wants *'to succeed, I know with all with my qualifications and experience, all I'd have to do is just go looking and find another job'*. Yet she is not yet looking for another job and admits she loses focus. Her career-related hope has diminished.

While Jane feels she could reach management she wonders why she does not put her *'hand up'*. She appears confused about why this is the case. On the one hand she says she is lazy. On the other hand, she feels that she has *'hit a brick wall'* in relation to her career and that there is *'favoritism'* and she is not a favorite. While she says her mentor was *'always pushing me... seeing... my potential'*, Jane thinks *'she's given up now'*. It appears that Jane has also given up on herself. She has lost hope in relation to her career. In an attempt to counter this loss, Jane has re-goaled and is hoping to be *'a Mum'... 'one day'*. She is avoiding her career altogether.

Currently, Brandon is *'not actually sure what direction... to go in'*. While he feels there is *'scope'* to further his career in the organisation, he is not sure how taking a *'lateral step... to this position'* will affect his *'chances of progression'*. He is *'sort of just stagnant at the moment'*, with an absence of pathways and agency thinking.

These five participants are low in hope. They remain in their low hope situation despite contradictory evidence. They have not received rewards like their high hope counterparts that informs them that their strategy is working. Possible explanations for their career-related inertia, in addition to the individual dynamics discussed in Chapter 8, are self-regulation failure and their belief about the role of trust in hope, especially trust in their manager.

## SELF-REGULATION FAILURE

Vohs and Schmeichel (2002) suggest that self-regulation is a process underlying hopeful thinking that is under-utilised in hope theory; and that self-regulation failure may partially explain the difference between those high and low in hope. They argue that 'hopeful thinking requires self-regulatory resources and that hopeless thinking reflects a lack of available regulatory resources' (p320). Self-regulation 'refers to the process by which people initiate, adjust, interrupt, terminate, or otherwise alter actions to promote attainment of personal goals, plans or standards' (Heatherton & Baumeister, 1996, p91).

Self-regulation failure is typically the result of under-regulation or misregulation (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996). Under-regulation is 'a failure to exert self-control; often, the person does not bother or does not manage to control the self. In contrast, misregulation involves the exertion of control over oneself, but this control is done in a misguided or counterproductive fashion, and so the desired result is not achieved' (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996, p91). Based on these findings, Vohs and Schmeichel (2002) argue that high hope people are high in trait self-control, and are more likely to be aware of their self-regulatory abilities and expend these limited resources judiciously.

Dozens of studies have shown that this intrapsychic mechanism is a limited resource by showing that using self-regulation resources on an initial task impairs performance on a subsequent task (Vohs & Schmeichel, 2002). While this is not a permanent state of affairs, it takes time to renew self-regulation resources (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996). In terms of hope theory, Vohs and Schmeichel (2002) suggest that hopeful thinking is effortful and more difficult for those low in hope as they have fewer available self-regulatory resources.

One of the reasons that those low in hope are also low in self-regulatory resources is because of their need to expend these resources to control their negative affect as a result of goal-related setbacks. Additional effort is also required to resume efforts towards their goal. In contrast, high hope people are not distracted in this way and have more self-regulatory resources available for goal pursuit. It is therefore to be expected that people low in hope will generate fewer goal pathways and have lower agency thinking than people with high hope as hope theory indicates.



The notion of self-regulation does not take into consideration the emotional aspect of learning. Negative affect may come about through a goal-related setback based in reality, but it may also come about through the emotional pain of learning and developing. Cummins (2000) draws on Bion's (1962a) notion of anti-development and an attempt to not know one's own mind resulting in a failure to learn from experience. She discusses how significant learning is 'a threatening attack which mobilises powerful desires to not learn and not to change' (Cummins, 2000, p4).

#### THE ROLE OF TRUST

Tennen, Affleck and Tennen (2002) argue that trust is the foundation of hope, and that 'hope is more than the will and the ways: it also requires a sense of trust that the world makes sense' (p312). They cite leading thinkers such as Erikson (1950) and Lasch (1991) to support their argument. For example, Erikson (1950) argues that a "basic sense of trust" is the source of hope. Lasch (1991) asserts that '[h]ope ... demands a conviction ... that the underlying order of things is not flouted with impunity. Hope implies a deep-seated trust in life' (pp80-81). However, Snyder and colleagues argue that the role of trust in hope is 'not just trust in the availability of other people (Snyder, 1996), but more centrally, it is trust in the reliability of self-initiated cause-and-effect relationships' (Shorey, et al., 2002, p323).

In the case studies, Anna is an example of someone for who trust in hope at work is trust in the availability of a manager to facilitate your career, and she experiences the vulnerability and dependence that this evokes. This is evident in her belief that '*if you've got a good manager... you can, you can progress through the organisation*'. This is because a good manager, such as Anna's first manager in the organisation, is someone '*who almost inspires you*' and '*who is supportive and, um, is giving you the attention that you need and willing to actually teach you and, you know, almost, you know, guide you and toward your goals, and that you know then you would get to where you want to get to*'. They are '*actually the ones that can promote you*'. It is '*like they're the gatekeeper*'.

In contrast, Ella manages her relationship with her manager. It is a self-initiated cause-and-effect relationship that seems more instrumental in nature than the close "trusting" reliance described by Anna. Ella acknowledges that she has a better relationship than most with her manager and how important that is. Similar to Anna, she says it '*plays a huge part... if you have a manager that you like and that you can get along with, and that maybe can help to see*

*the good qualities in you and areas for development*'. She adds: *'they look after your interests and help with your career progression. And they look after all of your leave, and bonuses... they single-handedly write down how you rated for the year so you can only get \$500, or you can get \$6000 every twelve months, and that sort of thing'*.

While Anna's first manager has left the organisation, she still speaks to her for *'career advice and anything... I might feel uncomfortable asking my current manager... she's there for me... like being a friend... [and] as a manager even though she's no longer my manager'*. Ella's first manager, with whom she had an even better relationship than her current manager, has moved departments and is no longer relevant to Ella. She did not include her on her current relational space map. In relation to her current manager, she says that while she gets *'along well with my manager, um, I don't see her outside of work and I wouldn't want to... the relationship's not that much of a click'*. As a result, *'it's bit of a constant battle'* for Ella as her manager *'tries to take it to more of a friendship level and I sort of try and bring it back a bit'*. Ella says she does not *'have a manager any more... [she's] got a friend'*, *'it's not as professional'* and *'not as effective... in... getting the job done'*.

In terms of hope theory, the different experiences of Anna and Ella and their relationships with their respective appointed leaders help explain why Anna is low, and Ella is high, in career-related hope. Both Anna and Ella need their manager to help them in their career. For Anna, career-related hope is based in trust in her manager and depends on the quality of that relationship. For Ella, career-related hope is based in trust in herself and in her ability to manage the relationship with her manager for her own ends. Hence for Ella, the relationship with her manager is primarily based on role relatedness, and is akin to an encounter with its focus on activities. For Anna, the relationship with her (first) manager is more of a blend of role relatedness and a personal relationship, and more akin to a social relationship with its focus on identities (McCall, 1970b). Anna's relationship with her current manager is limited to role relatedness and encounters. Yet, unlike Ella, Anna's personal relationship with this manager is strained. Her inability to manage this aspect of the relationship well interferes with their role relations.

The role of trust in hope highlights its interpersonal nature, and that it is influenced by the context. This is discussed next.

## CAREER-RELATED HOPE IN CONTEXT

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Aspinwall and Leaf (2002) specifically criticise hope theory for its emphasis on individual agency and problems that are amenable to personal control, and its relative neglect of the context and the interpersonal aspects of hope. As a response to this criticism, Snyder and his colleagues point out that the theory explicitly emphasises that ‘hope develops in the context of a secure and supportive caregiver relationship in which children are taught to think hopefully’ (Shorey et al., 2002, p323), and that throughout life, hope involves interpersonal transactions. After all, ‘the loss of hope typically involves other people’ (Snyder, 2002, p263). What appears to be underemphasized in hope theory is ways in which the context, and the interpersonal context in particular, facilitates or diminishes hope.

## CAREER-RELATED HOPE AND THE INTERPERSONAL CONTEXT

Snyder et al. (2002) suggest that hope may be facilitated or impeded by others, as seeking goals almost always occurs in a social context and therefore relies on one’s interpersonal connections. At work leaders are critical for employee goal attainment (Glassman & McAfee, 1992) and hope has been a central theme in most leadership models (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004). Yet ‘little is known about the processes by which leaders influence hope in their followers’ (Avolio et al., 2004, p808).

In their model of authentic leadership, Avolio et al. (2004) propose ‘for authentic leaders to have the greatest impact on followers’ hope, such leaders must identify with their followers as followers should with the leader and share their goals with them’ (Avolio et al., 2004, p. 809). Josselson (1992) similarly points to the importance of (idealization and) identification as a process important for hope and the possibility of a better self. In order to meet this need, a “good enough” connection with the manager is necessary. If not and this need is suppressed, then disillusionment or purposelessness will be evident; if overused, slavish devotion results.

In the case studies, different ways that appointed leaders help or hinder career-related hopeful thought processes are apparent. These are discussed next.

## THE CASE STUDIES AND CAREER-RELATED HOPE IN THE RELATIONAL CONTEXT

Across the case studies, examples are provided on how career-related hopeful thinking is facilitated or diminished by the relational context. Participants primarily spoke about their appointed leader when talking about career-related hope. However other organisational members also contribute to their hopeful thought processes.

### **Pathways thinking**

As the examples below show, pathways thinking is facilitated through (a) being shown a pathway, (b) being provided with a pathway, and (c) being given advice on how to progress along a pathway (Pizer & Härtel, 2006).

When Brandon first started in the organisation he was shown a pathway by a colleague who worked hard and was promoted to team leader. Brandon thought: *“oh yeah, that’s cool, that can be done”. And you know, that was quite ... motivational’.*

George was asked by his manager what pathway he wanted to pursue and was provided with that pathway. George started in Customer Service and went to night school to study web-based design. Currently he is able to pursue his *‘own direction’*. He mixes it up between his Customer Service role as well as being *‘the backup person’* for the production team, with the support of both his manager and the manager of the Design Team.

Brooke was also asked what pathway she wanted to pursue. Her manager provided her with advice on how to progress along that pathway. As Brooke said when she told her manager she wanted to go to Sales: *‘She said “well that’s highly, like very, very possible.” And she was very supportive... she pretty much told me like how my best way to go about it’.*

Stephan was also given advice on how to progress along a pathway and given pathways. His first manager with whom he had a high quality relationship said: *‘I don’t see you as someone who just wants to come in and just do this for the next 20 years. I see someone that wants to come in and move up. So you do it this way, do this, this way, and he sent me places’.*

In contrast, the case studies illustrate that without a high quality relationship with one’s appointed leader, it is possible to experience (a) a pathway being cut off, (b) progress along a pathway slowed down, or (c) loss of a pathway altogether (Pizer & Härtel, 2006).

Stephan, who has been unable to establish a high quality relationship with any manager since his first manager, feels his pathways are cut off. As he says: *'There's been a few cases where I have a better chance of getting that position, but because a person actually is on better terms with the manager, they get the position over me'*. Jane observes how pathways are slowed down for those who do not *'get along very well with the manager'*, such as herself. These people are *'the ones who they don't look after really, who are equally as talented... it takes them a lot longer to get where they should be'*. Anna experiences the loss or lack of a pathway. As she says: *'if you're one of those people that managers are overlooking, even though you do have the capacity to do a really good job, then you can't really further your career in that particular environment'*.

### **Agency thinking**

The case studies also illustrate the role of the relational context in influencing agency thinking and the motivation to use pathways.

For example, George speaks of a more senior co-worker who helped him early in his career in the organisation: *'He made me raise my standard, you know, whether, whether I wanted to or not, and my standard raised 'cause I wanted to get to a certain level and, and I, I guess I didn't want to disappoint him, with all the work that he put it in'*.

Anna describes the influence of her high quality relationship with her previous manager: *'She was probably someone who I think had a lot of faith in me and as a result it helped me. It was um, it helped me do my best constantly and I think it was very motivating working under someone like that'*. This contrasts with the influence of the low quality relationship she now has with her current manager: *'like I said, you need to have the right people batting for you, and um supporting you, and I don't believe I have that. So it's not even a goal of mine to be a manager'*.

Like Anna, Stephan contrasts his previous high quality relationship with his first manager with the low quality relationships he has subsequently experienced. He feels his first manager *'actually cared where your future was going to go'* and he *'could see he had confidence in me'*. Now Stephan experiences work as *'disappointing, yep ... you come to the point where you sort of give up and you know you're just here, but you're not going to get anywhere'*.

## CAREER-RELATED HOPE AND THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Chartrand and Cheng (2002) point out that ‘recent research has generated an extensive amount of evidence that goal pursuit sometimes occurs outside of one’s awareness, intent, and even control’ (p291). They elaborate: ‘there is now substantial support for the notion that the environment can automatically activate goals, which leads individuals to pursue these goals without our conscious awareness or intent. Clearly, then, self-reflective thought and “conscious will” are not prerequisites for the activation and pursuit of goals’ (Chartrand & Cheng, 2002, p291-292). Snyder and colleagues suggest that such automatic processes are most likely adaptive in simple situations requiring single-stage strategies to achieve simple goals. Nevertheless, they indicate that ‘the investigation of non-conscious goal pursuits could be an interesting line of research for hope theory, particularly as it relates to change and the therapeutic process’ (Shorey et al., 2002, p324).

In the workplace, the pursuit of a career tends to be taken for granted; and may be a non-conscious goal. This can be understood as resulting from the ‘broad (albeit uneven) shift in social values from “ascription” in feudal societies to “achievement” in meritocratic societies’ (Collinson, 2006, p182). In a meritocratic society, paid employment is a potential source of a valued identity (Collinson, 2003). In particular, in today’s organisations, ‘respect is conditional upon “success” and where individuals feel compelled to validate themselves as objects in comparison with others’ (Collinson, 2003, p531). ‘We are, not what we are, but what we make of ourselves’ (Giddens, 1991, p75). Hence a successful career relative to others is an important goal to be achieved. This is why ‘the job, or perhaps even more aptly, the career, becomes a focal point for many life goals, and the loss of such work also threatens one’s identity’ (Snyder, 2002, p264).

The pursuit of a career also suits organisational ends. For example, Grey (1994) adopts the view of the career as a project of the self and shows how it acts as a labour process discipline. Aspiring individuals conform to organisational requirements and treat organisational and personal relations as a means to the end of career progress (Collinson, 2006). In this way, individuals contribute to the organisations success that could not have been created simply through deployment of disciplinary power (Grey, 1994).

None of the participants question the pursuit of a career as an important goal to be achieved. It is something they all perceive as a worthwhile and meaningful goal. This is unsurprising given that the majority of organisations in this study were identified as having a task culture, where 'achievement of a superordinate goal is the highest value' (Harrison, 1995, p154). In such a culture, at the individual level such a goal includes career success within the organisation.

Nevertheless, a lack of current success in pursuing their own career aspirations has resulted in Jane, Brandon and Stephan questioning their career-related goals. Jane is valuing motherhood more highly than a career. Brandon and Stephan question the effort required to achieve their goals given the relative comfort of their position. Hence, social forces as well as individual desires and the perceived chance of fulfilling those desires influence the extent to which a career is pursued.

In the case studies, there are examples of other more conscious ways in which the organisational context also influences career-related hope.

#### THE CASE STUDIES AND CAREER-RELATED HOPE IN THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The other ways in which the organisational context influences career-related hope includes the size of the organisation, organisational success, organisational systems to support career development and job design.

#### **Organisation size**

Brandon observes that because it is '*such a big organisation*', there are more pathways available. It means that '*there's always something um to strive for in terms of job opportunities*' and there is the additional possibility of interstate transfers. As he says, '*it's pretty flexible even state wise you know. You've got Queensland and New South Wales, um Adelaide and all of that. So if you want to move state, you know that you've at least got a job elsewhere*'.

Similarly, Stephan comments that the small size of his organisation limits the availability of pathways. He says it is '*very limited to what you can do*'. '*It's such a small company in Australia*', '*there's not a lot of openings*' and '*it's very hard to move up*'.

### **Organisational success**

Related to organisational size, Kate comments on how the organisation's success and recent growth has increased the pathways available. She says, *'I don't know how everyone thinks, but I would imagine they should only see opportunities... just with us growing so much'*.

George also has the benefit of more pathways available because of his organisation's success and rapid growth. It is one of the factors that enable him to *'mix it up'* for now, working in both Customer Service and the Design Team.

In contrast, Jane who works with George finds the rapid growth has limited her sense of agency. It was a much smaller organisation when Jane first started. Now *'there are a lot of processes involved'* when she would rather *'just walk up'* to someone, in IT for example, and say *'Hey, can you help me with this?'* But she has to *'have a request sent through'* and then not know *'when it's going to get back to you'*.

### **Organisational systems to support career development**

Brooke comments that in her organisation *'most people they know where they want to go and the company makes it quite easy to get there'* by offering pathways. For example, they *'offer any jobs internally before they advertise externally, so there's a lot of opportunities for movement'*.

Ella and Brandon also comment on their organisation's *'my career website... where you've got all the internal jobs advertised, and um, things on how to interview preparation and all of that kind of stuff'*. Their organisation also offers training and mentoring opportunities as well as secondments to other areas. Hence, their organisation offers both pathways and ways to enhance one's skills and, therefore, agency.

### **Job design**

Brandon mentions how one of the managers' roles in his organisation *'is to, to see you develop, you know, your career... not... keep you in their team'*. A career is possible in a call centre. In fact, in each of the call centres included in this study, jobs are designed so that there are layered hierarchies within the call centre itself. For example, while Ella and Brandon both report to the Team Leader, Ella is in the more senior role of Retention Specialist.



Consistent with this study, recent research has demonstrated the value of supervisory layers in call centres as it provides career growth opportunities to valued employees and reduces turnover (Bozionelos, 2008, citing Moss, Salzman & Tilly, 2008).

### **Other contextual factors**

One contextual factor mentioned by three participants is that the organisation makes it too safe and comfortable and this reduces their hopeful thinking because it induces complacency. For example, Ella says *'it's all too easy, and you know, pay comes every fortnight and it's all very safe and cushy and very protected from the rest of the world, very insular sort of environment'*. Similarly, Brandon says that a *'drawback for someone wanting to move up'* like himself is that *'it's pretty comfortable... you're paid all right'* and, compared with his previous role, it's *'like a walk in the park'*. So for the moment, Brandon asks himself: for *'a couple of grand more... do I want to, you know?'* Stephan says he hasn't left because *'the people are great'*. If he went *'to another place you might get more money and then people might not be the best'*. He is *'so comfortable'* and thinks that if he goes *'somewhere else'* he is *'not going to get this'*.

Charles finds hope, particularly pathways thinking, through his professional context. He says that in Australia, *'tax is a fairly small group... there's a fair bit of "you've met with that person" or "you've worked with that person"'*. He feels that *'if this place got sold tomorrow and I had to go and work somewhere else'* it would not be difficult because he has the experience and he *'know[s] these people'* within his profession.

Personal attributes also contribute to hopeful thinking, depending on the extent to which they are valued by the organisation. For instance, Natalie believes that being female, single and looking young restricts the pathways available to her in a culture where she perceives being male, married, and experienced are valued. Ella thinks that *'there's probably not a huge opportunity for people to move up the ladder here unless they've maybe got a degree'*. That Ella is studying for a degree enhances her sense of agency and her perception that she will have more pathways available to her compared with the majority of call centre workers.

## AN ALTERNATIVE TO CAREER-RELATED HOPE

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One problem with the meritocratic ideals of contemporary culture and organisations is that it can produce “a doubt about the self” and a preoccupation with reconstructing a dignified identity in conditions of its erosion’ (Collinson, 2006, p182). Perhaps this is why those with low career-related hope become distracted from their career-related goals. Empirical research has shown that ‘threats to the self-image can automatically trigger self-esteem maintenance goals’ (Chartrand & Cheng, 2002, p291). For example, the case studies illustrate that those lower in career-related hope have more friends at work. They need to feel good somewhere.

Another problem is that ‘prevailing notions of individual entitlement to the fruits of one’s own superior labor meant that one owe[s] no duty or obligation to those who ha[ve]n’t succeeded’ (Deneen, 2004, p27). As discussed in the previous chapter, not everyone has access to the same career opportunities, regardless of ability. Yet the organisation owes no duty or obligation to those it has abandoned.

Snyder’s hope theory appears to be grounded in the assumption that the more we achieve our goals, the better things are bound to become. Striving for career success may be an example of ‘worship at the altar of progress’ (Elshtain, 1999, p538). Yet, as Lasch insists, ‘much of what makes up “the texture of daily life” is an “experience of loss and defeat”’ (cited in Elshtain, 1999, p532).

Discussing Lasch’s views on the importance of limits, Elshtain (1999) points out that hope ‘can emerge only within an awareness of limits’ (p232) and this includes ‘a recognition of human vulnerability and finiteness as well’ (p232). Intersubjective theory similarly suggests that ‘what we acknowledge, in relation to the other, is not primarily the other’s identity or status, but rather our own intersubjective vulnerability’ (Orange, 2008, p183). McCullough (2002) wonders whether an important difference between low and high hope people is that high hope people experience the pursuit of goals as bringing meaning and purpose to their lives, regardless of whether the goals are reached. He suggests that high hope people have a mindful awareness, with goals perceived as challenges to be savored rather than perceived as threats to be endured (McCullough, 2002). Hence, these authors call into question ‘the rhetoric of coping, which privileges agency and goal pursuit’ (Sundararajan, 2008).

Sundararajan (2008) offers the Buddhist notion of emptiness as an alternative to hope as a response to the vicissitudes of life. To illustrate this, she contrasts Snyder's hope theory with passages from *Cai-gen Tan*, a book of aphorisms written in the 16<sup>th</sup> century that is influential to this day in Chinese pop psychology/philosophy. She points out that despite positive psychology's claim of scientific neutrality, hope theory has a moral map that privileges man manipulating his environment for his own purposes. A different moral map is found in *Cai-gen Tan*. It is concerned with changing the self and 'extols mastery within and denigrates mastery without' (p657).

This requires a second-order awareness, or an 'experience plus an additional experience of that experience' (Zelazo, 1996, cited in Sundararajan, 2008, p659). For example, in hope theory, emotions 'reflect responses to perceptions about how one is doing (or has done) in goal pursuit activities' (Snyder, 2002, p252). That is, positive emotions are associated with successful goal pursuit and enhanced hope and negative emotions with unsuccessful goal pursuit and diminished hope. According to Sundararajan (2008), 'this formulation is applicable only to emotion as first-order concern/commentary' (p661). At the level of second-order commentaries, we reflect and comment on our own experience, and can thereby recode experience by the moral map. So while hope theory predicts that a setback in pursuing a goal will decrease well-being, in *Cai-gen Tan*, 'frustration is good for you and gratification of desires rots like opium' (Sundararajan, 2008, p662). Furthermore, success is neither necessarily positive, nor failure negative. They are two sides of the same coin to be kept in balance and proportion. This is because according to *Cai-gen Tan*, 'an extreme engenders its opposite' (Sundararajan, 2008, p662).

Sundararajan (2008) illustrates that 'the Buddhist notion of emptiness can recode experience to allow for a paradoxical combination of opposite emotional intent – savoring of loss and bereavement – an interdigitation of the positive emotion of contemplative appreciation (savoring), on the one hand, and the negative emotion of grief and sorrow, on the other' (p669). Sundararajan (2008) argues that this is a 'creative response to severe loss, failure, and frustration, a response in terms of acceptance, but not resignation; letting be, but not giving up; savoring rather than coping' (p669-670).

It is apparent that none of the participants low in hope has found solace in the Buddhist notion of emptiness. It is counter-culture after all. This has individual and organisational consequences. At the individual level it results in a reduced sense of agency, reduced well-being and reduced personal resources available for task performance.

# . 11 .

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I review the results of the research. I address the contribution the thesis has made to understanding the relational experience of work and consider its limitations and the implications for future research.

### CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH

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This research responds to the call for a greater understanding of relationships in organisational studies (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). It is a study of relational experience at work, investigating the intrapersonal experience of interpersonal relationships in the organisational context.

### MODIFYING JOSSELYN'S MODEL FOR THE WORKPLACE

As discussed in Chapter 2, currently there is an absence of theory in the field of relationship science that integrates motivational and emotional factors as well as the cognitive processes that are more commonly researched (Aron & Aron, 1995). It is a vast and complex field with a tendency to be researched using quantitative methods, with a large number of participants and a small number of variables (Bradbury, 2002). Bradbury (2002) calls for methods that enable the richness of relationships to be explored. Berscheid (1999) advocates for research that addresses the context or system within which the relationship occurs.

I argue that Josselson's (1992) multidimensional model of relatedness provides a useful method, framework and a language for exploring the richness of relational experience in context. The model, described in Chapter 3, is concerned with the intrapersonal experience of interpersonal relationships. It was developed using a series of in-depth interviews incorporating a relational space mapping technique. This approach is primarily individualistic in orientation and does not go as far as Berscheid (1999) recommends. Nevertheless, it highlights the importance of an individuals' own relational context by taking into consideration all the people that matter to a person.

The model considers the motivational aspects of a relationship in that it focuses on what we want and need from others. The assumption is that the eight relational needs that Josselson (1992) identifies as characterising adult life are basic and drive the need to connect.

The model also considers the emotional aspects of a relationship in that it includes the different affective consequences of each relational need being met or not. These affective consequences are, in essence, the emotional rewards and disappointments of a relationship based on Josselson's (1992) model.

The research initially assesses the applicability of Josselson's (1992) multidimensional model of relatedness for the workplace. In Josselson's (1992) study, work relationships were only investigated when a participant included someone from work into their broader relational world. It was not known whether the model would be useful in its current form in the workplace.

After consideration of the appropriate methodology for this type of research in Chapter 5 and the selection of participants in Chapter 6, Chapter 7 presents the evaluation of Josselson's model. This study comprised a series of in-depth interviews that includes the relational space mapping technique used by Josselson. It found support for the application of Josselson's multidimensional model of relationships to the workplace, modified to include the task system. The model as originally described by Josselson comprises eight relational needs:

- *Holding* or feeling safe, secure and grounded.
- *Attachment* or the emotional bond between people.
- *Passionate experience* or the intense feeling experience most commonly found in love relationships.

- *Eye-to-eye validation* or feeling recognized by another for who you are and such mirroring helps you know who you are.
- *Idealization and identification* or feeling you have a role model that gives you something to strive for or shows you what is possible for your self.
- *Mutuality and resonance* or feeling experience shared.
- *Embeddedness* or feeling one belongs to a social group.
- *Tending (care)* or the feeling of caring for and looking after another.

The modified model extends five of the relational needs – *holding, passionate experience, eye-to-eye validation, idealization and identification, and mutuality and resonance* – to incorporate the findings that participants also had these needs in relation to the task itself, not simply other role-holders. This modified model is then used as an analytic tool when re-analysing the in-depth interviews as a series of case studies in Chapter 8.

The application of the modified model in this way suggests that the most important work role related relationship in the organisational context for these participants is with their appointed leader. This is evidenced by the prominent relational need for each participant being more likely to be associated with the appointed leader than anyone else at work, regardless of whether this need is met or not. This is consistent with LMX research (leader-member exchange theory) whereby the relationship an employee has with his/her leader is considered to provide ‘a lens through which the entire work experience is viewed’ (Gerstner & Day, 1997, p840).

The modified model also demonstrates the individual and complex nature of each leader-member relationship. Each participant associates a different combination of relational needs with his/her appointed leader. It also highlights the range of relational needs that may be met through this relationship. The only relational needs not associated with the appointed leader in these case studies are *tending* and *passionate experience*. These relational needs were present in the interviews and met by others at work. It is anticipated that these relational needs would be found to be associated with the appointed leader if further research were conducted on a larger scale.

Using the modified model as an analytic tool also shows the importance of task-related *idealization and identification*. It is the relational need most likely to be associated with the appointed leader, for both high and low LMX participants. This finding is consistent with issues relating to career progress being most keenly felt during the interviews, particularly for

the low LMX participants for who this relational need was absent and more likely to be prominent. It is argued that this need is highlighted over and above the others in the organisational context, partly because the organisations in this study are predominantly characterised as achievement cultures (Harrison, 1972). More fundamentally, it is argued that the pursuit of a career is a taken-for-granted assumption in a meritocratic society. A successful career relative to others is an important goal to be achieved, and career progress is evidence of growth and development of the self in the workplace.

Overall, the extent to which the unique combinations of relational needs are met provides insight into the subjective experience and affective quality of these relationships for these participants. In particular, it is evident that the participants experience feelings of disillusionment and purposeless as predicted by the model in the absence of task-related *idealization and identification*. Similarly, as predicted, feelings of hope for one's future growth and development at work as evidenced by anticipated career progress are evident when this need is sufficiently met.

In these case studies, only high LMX participants experience their relational needs being met to a "good enough" extent by their appointed leader. Conversely, only the low LMX participants were consistent in not having their relational needs met to a "good enough" extent. These low LMX participants have more friends at work who matter to them than their high LMX counterparts. I argue that these friends serve to buffer against the negative experience of the low LMX relationship. These friends mainly meet these participants' need for *mutuality and resonance* and *attachment* at work. They are unable to meet the same needs that the leader can provide given their ascribed role and authority, such as the provision of career developing work assignments. Friends are therefore no substitute for a high quality leader-member relationship when it comes to career progression.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that being in a high LMX relationship does not guarantee that the relational needs one is seeking from the relationship will be sufficiently met. Three of the five high LMX participants experience either an absence or excess of a relational need with their appointed leader. A high quality LMX relationship does not mean that the relationship is without its problems. There will be both rewards and disappointments.



This supports Fairhurst's (2001) argument that conceptualising LMX development as a unidirectional and cumulative process characterised by increasing closeness, relational stability and transformation beyond self-interests underplays the experience of LMX. Work relationships are like any form of personal relationship. They do not have a natural tendency to be conducted successfully (Bradbury, 2002). Compromise is inevitable. As discussed in Chapter 9, this is because mutual relations are difficult to sustain (Benjamin, 1988) and any recognition gained through the complementary relations of the master-slave dialectic 'is a compromised form of recognition' (Harding, 2007).

Josselson's (1992) model modified for the workplace provides insight into the realities of working life, the rewards and disappointments, using a relational lens. This is the intent of the thesis. One limitation of this model is that the emphasis is on what is observable and knowable at a conscious level rather than the underlying and unconscious aspects that may give rise to such phenomena. In reality, relational experience is dynamic and may be hidden and unconscious. Furthermore, as described in Chapter 4, what is unique to these relationships is their organisational context. To achieve the intent of the thesis, to describe the realities of working life through the intrapersonal experience of interpersonal relationships in the organisational context, requires that these aspects of relational experience are taken into account more fully than Josselson's (1992) model modified for the workplace enables.

## THE REALITIES OF WORKING LIFE

Re-analysing the in-depth interviews as a series of case studies in Chapter 8 highlights the unique and particular reality of relational experience at work for each participant. I use Malan's (1985) triangle of conflict and Bion's (1970) selected fact as analytic tools to uncover the dynamic and hidden aspects of their relational experience. I consider what is dominant, what most gains my attention, what seems to be most important to the participants and most keenly felt.

Malan (1985) is concerned with the unconscious, inner mechanisms of intrapersonal experience. He views these inner mechanisms 'in terms of (a) the devices adopted for avoiding mental pain, conflict, or unacceptable feelings (the *defence*); (b) the feared consequences of expressing these hidden feelings (the *anxiety*); and (c) the nature of the *hidden feelings* themselves. This is the '*triangle of conflict*' (Malan, 1985, p15). In Malan's

triangle of conflict, Bion's (1970) selected fact is akin to the hidden feeling around which the anxieties and defences are organised. Once identified, all other information that has been collected seems to fall into place around it (Kernberg, 1997).

Analysing the data in this way brought to the fore the importance of the ordinary and pervasive experience of compromise for a job and a career, and the need for dignity and hope in the face of such compromise for well-being and job performance.

#### DIGNITY

In Chapter 9, I discuss the importance of dignity for a positive experience of work. The chapter demonstrates that there are multiple ways that dignity can be denied and preserved, and that each participant attempts to trade-off his/her particular experience of indignity in an attempt to experience work as dignified overall.

It is apparent that the one indignity that cannot be traded-off is the indignity of being denied the opportunity to pursue one's own career aspirations. This source of dignity, the freedom of being able to 'fashion yourself into whatever form you choose' (Pico della Mirandola, [1486] 1956) is a fundamental human dignity.

In this research the five participants denied this dignity each have a poor quality relationship with their current appointed leader relative to other team members. Their performance is rated as satisfactory or better. They are all relatively young and early in their career. It is unlikely that they have reached their full potential. Hence, to have this opportunity denied is experienced as a social injustice and it is a matter of identity. It is the worst kind of misrecognition in the workplace because it denies the individual the possibility of becoming who he or she wants to be in the organisational context. It is this form of misrecognition with which these participants are unable to collude and satisfactorily resolve. As such, they are unable to find and bring their best selves to the workplace.

Theoretically, the recognition they seek can be provided by anyone in the organisation in a position to provide opportunities to achieve and to grow. In this research, as is typically found in organisations, it is their appointed leader who is in such a position, and whose recognition therefore matters. Positive leader-member relations are therefore critical for experiencing work as dignified overall.

The research indicates that these positive leader-member relations take a particular form. For these participants, it is characterised by mutual participation in interaction, where there is contact and understanding with their appointed leader, and at the same time, the asymmetry of power and authority inherent in their respective roles is acknowledged. This means that recognition between the leader and member is lopsided, with the leader not seeking recognition by his/her member. Rather the leader is akin to a servant-leader whose role is to help his/her members meet their needs to grow, develop and prosper within the boundaries of each members' limitations and abilities and organisational opportunities.

It is notable that only two participants are thriving in their career, and that what distinguishes these participants is their experience of being welcomed to pursue their careers in their organisation. This welcome came in the form of being asked by their respective appointed leaders about their career aspirations within the organisation during the early days of their employment, before they had earned or deserved such recognition through their performance. The welcome was followed by support and guidance in achieving their individual goals. They want, and are able, to build their career from within their current role and organisation. The other participants who also enjoy positive relations with their appointed leader are not thriving in their career. But with the knowledge that they have the opportunity to pursue their career aspirations even if they are not doing so, they are, like their thriving counterparts, able to enjoy the experience of career-related hope.

#### CAREER-RELATED HOPE

The value of career-related hope for a positive experience of work is discussed in Chapter 10. Hope is defined according to Snyder's (1994) hope theory where human action is considered to be goal directed and hope is a conscious, cognitive, motivational process. According to this theory, hope is a combination of both "way power" (pathways/ how to get there) and "willpower" (agency/ will to get there) towards one's goals (Luthans, 2002). It is 'a future-oriented concept in that a positive future is being made more likely by goal-directed thoughts and actions occurring in the present moment' (Shorey, et al., 2002, p326). This definition of hope is different from common usage. It is more than "hoping for the best".

In this chapter I illustrate that career-related hope also comprises both pathways and agency thinking. I suggest that the role of the context in facilitating or diminishing hope, while

acknowledged, is underemphasized in hope theory. In terms of the interpersonal context, I discuss the different ways that appointed leaders help or hinder career-related hopeful thought processes in their members in this research. This includes facilitating pathways thinking through (a) showing members a pathway, (b) providing them with a pathway, and (c) giving them advice on how to progress along a pathway (Pizer & Härtel, 2006). Conversely, they may (a) cut off their members' pathway, (b) slow down their progress along a pathway, or (c) not provide access to a pathway at all (Pizer & Härtel, 2006). Similarly, leaders influence their members' agency thinking and the motivation to use pathways. I also discuss ways in which the broader organisational context facilitates or diminishes career-related hope in this research.

The five participants in this research who have low career-related hope each have a low quality relationship with their appointed leader. Their low hope is to be expected given that they are denied the dignity of the opportunity to pursue their personal career aspirations in their current workplace. The pathways that would enable them to build their career are unavailable to them. Yet they remain in their low hope situation despite contradictory evidence. In addition to the individual dynamics discussed in Chapter 8, possible explanations for this are considered.

One possible explanation is that those low in hope are also low in self-regulatory resources. These participants need to expend these limited resources to control their negative affect as a result of goal-related setbacks. Additional effort is also required to resume efforts towards their goal. They experience a reduced sense of agency, reduced well-being and reduced personal resources available for task performance. In contrast, high hope people are not distracted in this way and have more self-regulatory resources available for goal pursuit.

Another possible explanation is the finding that those low in hope have a different understanding of the role of trust in hope than their high hope counterparts. All participants need their appointed leader to help them in their career. For those low in career-related hope, their hope is based in the trust of their appointed leader to facilitate their career, and experience the vulnerability and dependence that this evokes. In contrast, those high in career-related hope trust in themselves and in their ability to manage the relationship with their leader for their own ends.

As discussed at the beginning of this thesis, working life, even for those with “successful” careers, comprises both rewards and disappointments (Leavitt, 2007). This thesis argues that relationships at work, and especially the leader-member relationship, are central to those rewards and disappointments.

The reality is that ‘like aspiring actors, the great mass of aspiring managers will doubtless live out less heroic and perhaps less fulfilling careers’ (Leavitt, 2007, p261). The focus in this thesis is on the experience of a job and a career. It shows that it is not always possible to achieve one’s career-related goals. This reality comes about because of the omnipresence of multi-tiered, pyramidal hierarchies (Leavitt, 2007) where the opportunities decline as one advances up the hierarchy. It may also come about because of a poor fit between the individual’s needs and competencies and the organisation’s needs. Yet in this thesis, where the participants are all aged under 35 and at a relatively early stage in their working life, it was found that this reality is more likely to come about for individuals because they have a poor quality relationship with their appointed leader.

## LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

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A limitation of this research is the sample used for the in-depth interviews. It is relatively small in size, comprising ten participants, from five different organisations. These participants are of a similar age and career stage, and the majority work in a call-centre in an achievement-oriented organisation. An avenue for future research is to therefore replicate the study and confirm the results with a different and larger sample.

The sample was also limited to the two people in a given team with the highest and lowest LMX ratings with their appointed leader. Future research could explore the impact of a relatively moderate LMX rating on the experience of work.

It is unknown the extent to which the results of this study can be generalised. It is possible that different relational needs will be more likely to be prominent at different ages and career stages and for different occupations in different organisational contexts. The leader-member relationship may or may not be most important under these different circumstances. Such issues could also be addressed in the future.

Just as the sample influenced the findings, so did my role as the researcher. The research is subjective in nature. Another researcher conducting the same research may have different results because what is revealed depends on the nature of the relationship that develops (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). The research is also limited by my research skills and my ability to facilitate the participants to elicit the elusive phenomena of their inner relational experience to me, a stranger. It may be helpful in future research to not limit the research to a single interview, but repeated interviews over time, so that the researcher-researched relationship has time to develop.

Conducting the research over time would also enable further exploration of the career-related inertia of those low in career-related hope. How long do they remain in their low-hope situation? What enables them to either improve their current circumstances or move on? What are the challenges in maintaining a high quality leader-member relationship over time?

A difficulty in conducting this research is in relation to Josselson's (1992) multidimensional model of relatedness modified for the workplace. Josselson (2003) herself acknowledges that the dimensions 'interact and intersect in as yet unexplicated ways' (p205). This presented a challenge to validity. Furthermore, while the focus came to be on task-related *idealisation and identification*, to what extent does the opportunity to pursue one's career aspirations within the organisation also contribute to a sense of *embeddedness* or *validation*? To what extent does knowing one has a place in the organisation in the future also preserve the need for *holding* at work? As discussed earlier in the thesis, the risk of not sufficiently understanding how the dimensions overlap and interpenetrate is, potentially, confusion and a difficulty in differentiating between them. A promising avenue for future research is to begin to articulate the relationships between the dimensions more clearly.

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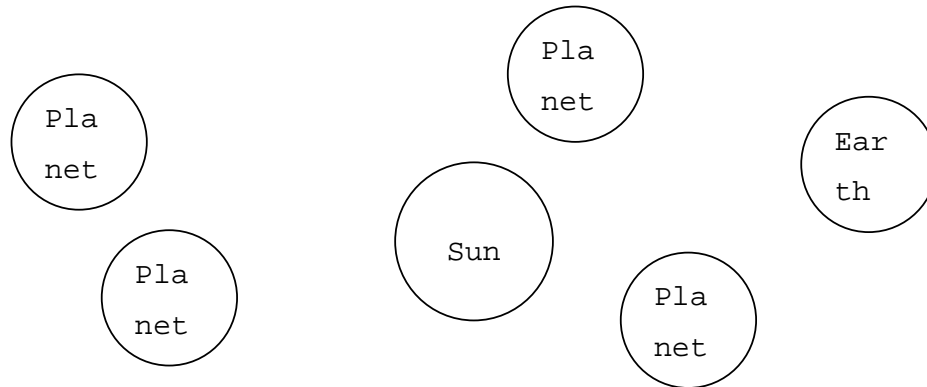
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# **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A: RELATIONAL MAPS

You might remember that when you were in school, you used to see diagrams of the planets that looked like this (draw a fresh one).



I'm going to ask you to make similar diagrams about your workplace, only instead of putting the sun in the middle; I want you to put yourself there. Around yourself, I want you to arrange the people who were important to you at that time. By *important*, I mean people who were in your mind, whom you would have been thinking about. So the distance from you on the page that you put the important people in your life should reflect their inner presence for you rather than who was physically there, how far away they worked, or similar factors.

What you will end up with is a diagram that looks like the planet scheme, all with circles. Please label each circle with the name of the person who belongs there.

There are two additional kinds of circles that you might find yourself wanting to draw. One is a 'dotted circle' to indicate someone who mattered a lot to you at that time of your life in relation to work but who was not there at all as a physical presence. This might be someone whom you talked to in your head or thought about a lot even though you had no real interaction with him or her at that time.

Another kind of circle you might like to draw is the group circle. This you might draw to indicate people who were important as a group but didn't really matter as individuals. This might be needed if, for example, you want to indicate the importance of the HR Department, a project team, the social club, or something like that.

I would like you to do two drawings, one after [chosen time period] of being in the organisation and one for as it is now. They will go better if you think of yourself at the particular times rather than trying to do the months in between.

## APPENDIX B: BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

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### Organisational Cultural Orientation to Emotion

The PhD is investigating a newly proposed emotional dimension of organisational culture and developing metrics for its measurement.

Emotions in the workplace is shaping up to be one of the principal areas of development in management thought and practice for the next decade, and how an organisation’s culture contributes to employees’ emotional experience and expression at work has important implications for individual and organisational development and performance.

The PhD comprises two main studies:

1. Refining the framework for measuring an organisation’s orientation to emotion (the current study); and
2. Developing and validating the measure.

#### Study 1 (the current study)

I am inviting two teams of employees in five different organisations to participate in Study 1.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Time Requirement</b>
Completion of a confidential questionnaire	Each team member	Feedback of results	5 minutes
Participation in a confidential in-depth interview	2 team members per organisation (both from the same team)	\$20 donation to charity of their choice; increased self-awareness; feedback of results	1.5 hours

#### Feedback Options

At a minimum I will provide all participants with a written summary of the results, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of individual participants and organisations is maintained.

If interested, I can also present the results to research participants in a workshop format. The workshop could include an introduction to emotions in the workplace and then the results would be presented, including how they fit in and contribute to the field, and their implications in practice.

The results will be in two parts:

- The questionnaire - this is based on leader member exchange theory and the written summary will briefly (and as simply as possible) describe the theory and it’s implications showing your organisation’s results and the total results for all organisations as a point of comparison.
- The in-depth interviews – results will be presented as a total for all organisations given the small number of participants.

### Organizing the Study

I am seeking a representative from each organisation to assist with the study.

Task	Time Requirement
<p>Meeting with organisational representative involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team selection and support in obtaining approval from the Team Leaders to conduct the study</li> <li>• Providing contact details for each team member (so that I can send them the questionnaire and feedback).</li> <li>• Advice on aspects of the project, including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ pre-survey communications e.g. a letter from a senior organisational member supporting the study</li> <li>○ the classification items in the questionnaire e.g. level in organisation</li> <li>○ survey format, that is, via email or hard copy</li> <li>○ the wording of the explanatory letter to be sent to participants, (it's prepared, just in case you don't like anything I've written)</li> <li>○ feedback of results.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Selecting from one of four short paragraphs the one that best describes the culture of your organisation (this is indicative only and will assist in interpreting the results).</li> </ul>	<p>30-40 minutes</p>

Most of the assistance required will be completed in the initial meeting. Any additional time will depend on the support required for obtaining approval from Team Leaders and the nature of the pre-survey communications.

### Team Selection

Ideally, the two teams selected will comprise:

- approximately 10 employees
- both men and women
- employees who have been in the job for at least two years
- employees who can articulate and reflect on different patterns of work relationships
- employees in roles with a wide range of connections to maximize the possibility of different emotional experiences with a range of people (either internal or external to the organisation).

Note that these are ideals for team selection, not prerequisites.

P.S. I'm currently enrolled at Monash University, Department of Management, Faculty of Business and Economics. I will be transferring to Deakin University next year some time as my supervisor has recently been appointed to a research chair position there (i.e. professor).

## APPENDIX C: INITIAL EXPLANATORY LETTERS

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Monash Letterhead

Date

Dear

I am writing to request your participation in leading edge PhD research in the Department of Management at Monash University, which is developing new metrics for measuring organisational cultural orientation to emotion. Emotions in the workplace is shaping up to be one of the principal areas of development in management thought and practice for the next decade, and how an organisation's culture contributes to employees' emotional experience and expression at work has important implications for individual and organisational development and performance. I am inviting two teams of employees in four different organisations to participate. Your participation is voluntary and will involve completing a 5-10 minute questionnaire on-line.

Some of the benefits we expect to flow to your organisation from participation include:

- Having a say in developing a tool likely to be widely adopted to assess organisational orientation to emotion.
- Improving understanding of emotions in organisations.
- Obtaining data to facilitate:
  - maximizing the possibility of positive emotional experiences occurring at work; and
  - minimizing the possibility of negative emotional experiences.

After completion of the initial questionnaire, two employees will then be selected from one of the teams in each organisation for a follow-up interview. If you are selected for the interview stage of the research, Michelle Pizer, a PhD candidate working under the supervision of Associate Professor Charmine Härtel, will conduct the interview, will contact you in due course.

When you receive the on-line survey, you will notice a number in the top right hand corner of the survey. This is so that we can identify who to contact for the follow-up interviews. Please be assured that the number is for this purpose only, and that the researchers will not individually identify you or your organisation at any time in the data analysis or presentation of results. If you have any concerns about this, please feel free to call me at the number below.

I hope you will respond positively to this request. I will be posting the findings of this research on the web and will advise you of the address when it becomes available.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Pizer  
PhD Candidate  
Department of Management  
Monash University  
Phone: 0421 041 521  
Email: michelle.pizer@buseco.monash.edu.au

Monash Letterhead

Date

Dear

Thank you for completing the on-line survey as part of the leading edge PhD research in the Department of Management at Monash University, regarding the development of new metrics for measuring organisational cultural orientation to emotion. I am now writing to invite you to participate in the follow-up interview. Your participation is voluntary and will involve meeting with Michelle Pizer, a PhD candidate working under the supervision of Associate Professor Charmine Härtel, for up to two hours, at a time and place convenient to you.

The interview will involve asking you about work relationships and your emotional experiences at work. Please be assured that the interview will be completely confidential and the researchers will not individually identify you or your organisation at any time in the data analysis or presentation of results. You will also have the opportunity to edit the interview transcript.

Some of the benefits we expect to flow to your organisation from participation include:

- Having a say in developing a tool likely to be widely adopted to assess organisational orientation to emotion.
- Improving understanding of emotions in organisations.
- Obtaining data to facilitate:
  - maximizing the possibility of positive emotional experiences occurring at work; and
  - minimizing the possibility of negative emotional experiences occurring at work.

Individually, there is the potential to heighten your level of self-awareness – a key component of emotional intelligence – through discussing and thinking about your own work relationships and emotional experiences at work.

It is possible that some people could find talking about their work relationships and emotional experiences at work upsetting. Michelle Pizer is a practising psychologist trained to identify and manage such situations, and can refer you for appropriate counseling support if required. Please be advised that as a psychologist registered in Victoria, Michelle is required to report any risk of harm to yourself or others that, whilst highly unlikely, could arise during the interview.

I hope you will respond positively to this request and to thank you for your participation in the interview, we will make a donation of \$20 to a charity of your choice. I will be posting the findings of this research on the web and will advise you of the address when it becomes available.

If you have any queries or concerns about any aspect of this research, please feel free to call me at the number below. You can also complain about the study if you don't like something about it. To complain about the study, you need to phone 9905 2052. You can then ask to speak to the secretary of the Human Ethics Committee and tell him or her that the number of the project is \_\_\_\_\_. You could also write to the secretary. That person's address is:

The Secretary  
The Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans  
PO Box No 3A  
Monash University, Victoria 3800  
Telephone + 61 3 9905 2052 Fax + 61 3 9905 1420 Email: SCERH@adm.monash.edu.au

I will be calling you shortly to arrange the interview and look forward to your participation.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Pizer  
PhD Candidate  
Department of Management, Monash University  
Phone: 0421 041 521 Email: michelle.pizer@buseco.monash.edu.au



## APPENDIX D: HARRISON'S FOUR CULTURAL TYPES

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### **Your Organisation's Culture**

Which of the following best describes the culture of your organisation?

#### **Culture 1**

- People who do well in the organisation are shrewd and competitive with a strong drive for power.
- The basis of assigning tasks is the personal needs and judgment of those in authority.
- Competition is for personal power and advantage.
- Decisions are made by the person with the higher power and authority.

#### **Culture 2**

- People who do well in the organisation are conscientious and responsible with a strong sense of loyalty to the organisation.
- The basis of assigning tasks is the formal divisions of functions and responsibilities in the system.
- Competition is for high status positions in the formal system.
- Decisions are made by the person whose job description carries the responsibility.

#### **Culture 3**

- People who do well in the organisation are technically competent and effective, with a strong sense of loyalty to the organisation.
- The basis of assigning tasks is the resource and expertise requirement of the job to be done.
- Competition is for excellence of contribution to the task.
- Decisions are made by the persons with most knowledge and expertise about the problem.

#### **Culture 4**

- People who do well in the organisation are effective and competent in personal relationships, with a strong commitment to the growth and development of people.
- The basis of assigning tasks is the personal wishes and needs for learning and growth of the individual organisation members.
- Competition is for attention to one's own personal needs.
- Decisions are made by the persons most personally involved and affected by the outcome.

## APPENDIX E: THANKYOU LETTER

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[Letterhead]

[Date]

Dear [Name],

Happy New Year and thanks again for participating in the PhD project.

As promised, enclosed is a letter acknowledging the donation of \$20 made on your behalf to the [Charity] for your participation.

I'll be in contact again when I have feedback on the findings of the study. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or queries.

Kind regards,

Michelle Pizer  
PhD Candidate  
Phone: 0421 041 521  
Email: [mpizer@netspace.net.au](mailto:mpizer@netspace.net.au)

APPENDIX F: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

**Organisational Cultural Orientation to Emotion**

Please circle the number corresponding to your answer.

1. Do you know where you stand with your manager ... do you usually know how satisfied your manager is with what you do?

1	2	3	4	5
Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Very Often

2. How well does your manager understand your job problems and needs?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at Bit	A Little	A Fair Amount	Quite a Bit	A Great Deal

3. How well does your manager recognize your potential?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All	A Little	Moderately	Mostly	Fully

4. Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your manager would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?

1	2	3	4	5
None	Small	Moderate	High	Very High

5. Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority your manager has, what are the chances that he/she would “bail you out”, at his/her expense?

1	2	3	4	5
None	Small	Moderate	High	Very High

6. I have enough confidence in my manager that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so?

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your manager?

1	2	3	4	5
Extremely Ineffective	Worse than Average	Average	Better than Average	Extremely Effective

Finally some questions to help us classify your responses:

8. Which department do you currently work in?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What is your job title?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. How long have you been in your current position?

< 1 year .....	1	3 to < 5 years.....	5
1 to < 2 years .....	2	5 to <10 years.....	6
2 to < 3 years .....	3	10+ years.....	7

11. Are you employed on a full-time basis, whether contract or permanent?

Yes ..... 1  
No ..... 2

12. Overall, how long have you been employed at this organisation?

< 1 year .....	1	3 to < 5 years.....	5
1 to < 2 years .....	2	5 to <10 years.....	6
2 to < 3 years .....	3	10+ years.....	7

13. What is your age in years?

Less than 25 years.....	1	45 – 54 years .....	5
25 – 34 years.....	2	55+ years.....	6
35 – 44 years.....	3		

14. In which country were you born?

Australia.....1  
Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_ .....2

15. Do you consider yourself part of an ethnic or minority group?

Yes (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_ .....1  
No .....2

16. Are you male or female?

Male ..... 1  
Female ..... 2

**Thank you for your participation.**

APPENDIX G: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

**Descriptives**

Statistics	N	
	Valid	Missing
LMX score	91	0
Q10. Time in position	91	0
Q11. Full time	91	0
Q12. Time in organisation	91	0
Q13. Age	91	0
Q14. Country	91	0
Q15. Ethnic	91	0
Q16. Sex	91	0
Hi/Lo LMX	91	0
Selected=1 (FILTER)	91	0
Country (Aus/Other)	91	0

LMX score		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15	3	3.30	3.30	3.30
	17	2	2.20	2.20	5.49
	18	4	4.40	4.40	9.89
	19	2	2.20	2.20	12.09
	20	2	2.20	2.20	14.29
	21	6	6.59	6.59	20.88
	22	3	3.30	3.30	24.18
	23	6	6.59	6.59	30.77
	24	9	9.89	9.89	40.66
	25	5	5.49	5.49	46.15
	26	4	4.40	4.40	50.55
	27	6	6.59	6.59	57.14
	28	7	7.69	7.69	64.84
	29	5	5.49	5.49	70.33
	30	3	3.30	3.30	73.63
31	8	8.79	8.79	82.42	
32	5	5.49	5.49	87.91	
33	5	5.49	5.49	93.41	
34	3	3.30	3.30	96.70	
35	3	3.30	3.30	100	
Total		91	100	100	

LMX score * High LMX Cross tabulation				
Count		High LMX		Total
LMX score		Low LMX	High LXM	Low LMX
	15	3	0	3
	17	2	0	2
	18	4	0	4
	19	2	0	2
	20	2	0	2
	21	6	0	6
	22	3	0	3
	23	6	0	6
	24	9	0	9
	25	0	5	5
	26	0	4	4
	27	0	6	6
	28	0	7	7
	29	0	5	5
	30	0	3	3
	31	0	8	8
	32	0	5	5
	33	0	5	5
	34	0	3	3
	35	0	3	3
Total		37	54	91

High LMX		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low LMX	37	40.66	40.66	40.66
	High LXM	54	59.34	59.34	100
	Total	91	100	100	

Q10. Time in position		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<1 year	38	41.76	41.76	41.76
	1<2 years	25	27.47	27.47	69.23
	2<3 years	8	8.79	8.79	78.02
	3<5 years	14	15.38	15.38	93.41
	5<10 years	6	6.59	6.59	100
	Total	91	100	100	

Q11. Full time		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	87	95.604	95.604	95.604
	No	4	4.396	4.396	100
	Total	91	100	100	

Q12. Time in organisation		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<1 year	19	20.88	20.88	20.88
	1<2 years	26	28.57	28.57	49.45
	2<3 years	12	13.19	13.19	62.64
	3<5 years	20	21.98	21.98	84.62
	5<10 years	13	14.29	14.29	98.90
	10+ years	1	1.10	1.10	100
	Total	91	100	100	

Q13. Age		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<25 year	16	17.58	17.58	17.58
	25<34 years	61	67.03	67.03	84.62
	35<44 years	9	9.89	9.89	94.51
	45<54 years	2	2.20	2.20	96.70
	55+ years	3	3.30	3.30	100
	Total	91	100	100	

Q14. Country		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Australia	63	69.23	69.23	69.23
	Malta	2	2.20	2.20	71.43
	NZ	7	7.69	7.69	79.12
	Israel	1	1.10	1.10	80.22
	Malaysia	1	1.10	1.10	81.32
	England	2	2.20	2.20	83.52
	Zimbabwe	2	2.20	2.20	85.71
	Portugal	1	1.10	1.10	86.81
	South Pacific	1	1.10	1.10	87.91
	Indonesia	2	2.20	2.20	90.11
	Fiji	2	2.20	2.20	92.31
	Philippines	1	1.10	1.10	93.41
	Brazil	1	1.10	1.10	94.51
	Sri Lanka	2	2.20	2.20	96.70
	El Salvador	1	1.10	1.10	97.80
	Hong Kong	1	1.10	1.10	98.90
	Ireland	1	1.10	1.10	100
	Total	91	100	100	
	Country (Aus/Other)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Australia	63	69.23	69.23	69.23
	Other	28	30.77	30.77	100
	Total	91	100	100	

Q15. Ethnic		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	17.58	17.58	17.58
	No	75	82.42	82.42	100
	Total	91	100	100	

Q16. Sex					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	31	34.07	34.07	34.07
	Female	60	65.93	65.93	100
	Total	91	100	100	

Selected=1 (FILTER)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not Selected	81	89.01	89.01	89.01
	Selected	10	10.99	10.99	100
	Total	91	100	100	

**Tests x LMX**

Q11. Full time * High LMX					
Crosstab				High LMX	Total
Q11. Full time	Yes			Low LMX	High LMX
		Count		36	51
Expected Count		35.37	51.63	87	
Std. Residual		0.11	-0.09		
No	Count		1	3	4
	Expected Count		1.63	2.37	4
	Std. Residual		-0.49	0.41	
Total	Count		37	54	91
	Expected Count		37	54	91
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.425	1	0.514		
Continuity Correction(a)	0.017	1	0.895		
Likelihood Ratio	0.451	1	0.502		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.643</b>	0.462
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.421	1	0.517		
N of Valid Cases	91				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.63.				



Q14. Country (Aus/Other) * High LMX					
Crosstab			High LMX	High LMX	Total
Country (Aus/Other)	Aus	Count	Low LMX	High LMX	Low LMX
	Aus	Count	25	38	63
	Aus	Expected Count	25.62	37.38	63
	Aus	Std. Residual	-0.12	0.10	
	Other	Count	12	16	28
	Other	Expected Count	11.38	16.62	28
	Other	Std. Residual	0.18	-0.15	
Total		Count	37	54	91
		Expected Count	37	54	91
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.081	1	0.776		
Continuity Correction(a)	0.003	1	0.957		
Likelihood Ratio	0.081	1	0.776		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.820</b>	0.477
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.080	1	0.777		
N of Valid Cases	91				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11.38.				

Q15. Ethnic * High LMX					
Crosstab			High LMX	High LMX	Total
Q15. Ethnic	Yes	Count	Low LMX	High LMX	Low LMX
	Yes	Count	7	9	16
	Yes	Expected Count	6.51	9.49	16
	Yes	Std. Residual	0.19	-0.16	
	No	Count	30	45	75
	No	Expected Count	30.49	44.51	75
	No	Std. Residual	-0.09	0.07	
Total		Count	37	54	91
		Expected Count	37	54	91
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.077	1	0.782		
Continuity Correction(a)	0	1	1		
Likelihood Ratio	0.076	1	0.782		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.786</b>	0.497
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.076	1	0.783		
N of Valid Cases	91				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.51.				

Q16. Sex * High LMX					
Crosstab					
Q16. Sex	Male	Count	High LMX	High LMX	Total
		Expected Count	Low LMX	Low LMX	Low LMX
Std. Residual					
Female	Count	14	17	31	
	Expected Count	12.60	18.40	31	
	Std. Residual	0.39	-0.33		
Total	Count	23	37	60	
	Expected Count	24.40	35.60	60	
	Std. Residual	-0.28	0.23		
Chi-Square Tests	Count	37	54	91	
	Expected Count	37	54	91	
Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
	0.395	1	0.530		
Continuity Correction(a)	0.163	1	0.687		
Likelihood Ratio	0.393	1	0.531		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.653</b>	0.342
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.391	1	0.532		
N of Valid Cases	91				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.60.				

Mann-Whitney Test					
Ranks					
Q10. Time in position	High LMX	N	Mean Rank		Sum of Ranks
	Low LMX	37		49.74	1840.5
	High LXM	54		43.44	2345.5
	Total	91			
Q12. Time in organisation	Low LMX	37		50.81	1880
	High LXM	54		42.70	2306
	Total	91			
Q13. Age	Low LMX	37		44.66	1652.5
	High LXM	54		46.92	2533.5
	Total	91			
Test Statistics(a)					
	Q10. Time in position		Q12. Time in organisation		Q13. Age
Mann-Whitney U	860.5		821		949.5
Wilcoxon W	2345.5		2306		1652.5
Z	-1.178		-1.474		-0.481
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>0.239</b>		<b>0.140</b>		<b>0.631</b>
a	Grouping Variable: High LMX				

Tests x Selected

<b>Q11. Full time * Hi/Lo LMX</b>					
Crosstab			Hi/Lo LMX		Total
			Out	In	Out
Q11. Full time	Yes	Count	77	10	87
		Expected Count	77.44	9.56	87
		Std. Residual	-0.05	0.14	
	No	Count	4	0	4
		Expected Count	3.56	0.44	4
		Std. Residual	0.23	-0.66	
Total	Count	81	10	91	
	Expected Count	81	10	91	
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.517	1	0.472		
Continuity Correction(a)	0	1	1		
Likelihood Ratio	0.954	1	0.329		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>1</b>	0.623
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.511	1	0.475		
N of Valid Cases	91				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .44.				

<b>Q14. Country (Aus/Other) * Hi/Lo LMX</b>					
Crosstab			Hi/Lo LMX		Total
			Out	In	Out
Country (Aus/Other)	Australia	Count	55	8	63
		Expected Count	56.08	6.92	63
		Std. Residual	-0.14	0.41	
	Other	Count	26	2	28
		Expected Count	24.92	3.08	28
		Std. Residual	0.22	-0.61	
Total	Count	81	10	91	
	Expected Count	81	10	91	
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.612	1	0.434		
Continuity Correction(a)	0.176	1	0.675		
Likelihood Ratio	0.657	1	0.418		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.718</b>	0.351
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.605	1	0.437		
N of Valid Cases	91				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.08.				

<b>Q15. Ethnic * Hi/Lo LMX</b>						
Crosstab		Hi/Lo LMX		Total		
Q15. Ethnic		Out	In	Out		
Yes	Count	13	3	16		
	Expected Count	14.24	1.76	16		
	Std. Residual	-0.33	0.94			
	No	Count	68	7	75	
		Expected Count	66.76	8.24	75	
		Std. Residual	0.15	-0.43		
Total	Count	81	10	91		
	Expected Count	81	10	91		
Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	
Pearson Chi-Square	1.195	1	0.274			
Continuity Correction(a)	0.427	1	0.514			
Likelihood Ratio	1.054	1	0.305			
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.372</b>	0.243	
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.182	1	0.277			
N of Valid Cases	91					
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table					
b	1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.76.					

<b>Q16. Sex * Hi/Lo LMX</b>					
Crosstab		Hi/Lo LMX		Total	
Q16. Sex		Out	In	Out	
Male	Count	27	4	31	
	Expected Count	27.59	3.41	31	
	Std. Residual	-0.11	0.32		
Female	Count	54	6	60	
	Expected Count	53.41	6.59	60	
	Std. Residual	0.08	-0.23		
Total	Count	81	10	91	
	Expected Count	81	10	91	
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.176	1	0.675		
Continuity Correction(a)	0.004	1	0.947		
Likelihood Ratio	0.172	1	0.678		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.730</b>	0.462
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.174	1	0.676		
N of Valid Cases	91				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.41.				

Mann-Whitney Test				
Ranks	Hi/Lo LMX	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Q10. Time in position	Out	81	45.07	3651
	In	10	53.5	535
	Total	91		
Q12. Time in organisation	Out	81	45.31	3670
	In	10	51.6	516
	Total	91		
Q13. Age	Out	81	46.35	3754.5
	In	10	43.15	431.5
	Total	91		
Test Statistics(a)	Q10. Time in position	Q12. Time in organisation	Q13. Age	
Mann-Whitney U	330	349	376.5	
Wilcoxon W	3651	3670	431.5	
Z	-1.002	-0.728	-0.435	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>0.316</b>	<b>0.466</b>	<b>0.664</b>	
a	Grouping Variable: Hi/Lo LMX			

Tests x LMX (Selected)

Q11. Full time * High LMX					
Crosstab			High LMX		Total
			Low LMX	High LMX	Low LMX
Q11. Full time	Yes	Count	5	5	10
		Expected Count	5	5	10
		Std. Residual	0	0	
Total		Count	5	5	10
		Expected Count	5	5	10
Chi-Square Tests	Value				
Pearson Chi-Square	.(a)				
N of Valid Cases	10				
a	No statistics are computed because Q11. Full time is a constant.				

<b>Q14. Country (Aus/Other) * High LMX</b>					
Crosstab			High LMX	High LMX	Total
Country (Aus/Other)	Aus	Count	Low LMX	High LMX	Low LMX
	Aus	Count	3	5	8
		Expected Count	4	4	8
		Std. Residual	-0.5	0.5	
	Other	Count	2	0	2
		Expected Count	1	1	2
		Std. Residual	1	-1	
Total		Count	5	5	10
		Expected Count	5	5	10
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.5	1	0.114		
Continuity Correction(a)	0.625	1	0.429		
Likelihood Ratio	3.278	1	0.070		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.444</b>	0.222
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.25	1	0.134		
N of Valid Cases	10				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	4 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.00.				

<b>Q15. Ethnic * High LMX</b>					
Crosstab			High LMX	High LMX	Total
Q15. Ethnic	Yes	Count	Low LMX	High LMX	Low LMX
	Yes	Count	3	0	3
		Expected Count	1.5	1.5	3
		Std. Residual	1.22	-1.22	
	No	Count	2	5	7
		Expected Count	3.5	3.5	7
		Std. Residual	-0.80	0.80	
Total		Count	5	5	10
		Expected Count	5	5	10
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.286	1	0.038		
Continuity Correction(a)	1.905	1	0.168		
Likelihood Ratio	5.487	1	0.019		
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.167</b>	0.083
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.857	1	0.050		
N of Valid Cases	10				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	4 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.50.				

Q16. Sex * High LMX					
Crosstab					
Q16. Sex	Male	Count	High LMX Low LMX	High LMX	Total Low LMX
		Expected Count	3	1	4
Std. Residual		2	2	4	
Female	Count	0.71	-0.71		
	Expected Count	2	4	6	
	Std. Residual	3	3	6	
Total	Count	-0.58	0.58		
	Expected Count	5	5	10	
Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.667	1	0.197		0.197
Continuity Correction(a)	0.417	1	0.519		0.519
Likelihood Ratio	1.726	1	0.189		0.189
Fisher's Exact Test				<b>0.524</b>	
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.5	1	0.221		0.221
N of Valid Cases	10				
a	Computed only for a 2x2 table				
b	4 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.				

Mann-Whitney Test				
Ranks				
Q10. Time in position	High LMX	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	Low LMX			
Q12. Time in organisation	High LMX	5	4.5	22.5
	Total	10		
	Low LMX	5	6.7	33.5
Q13. Age	High LMX	5	4.3	21.5
	Total	10		
	Low LMX	5	6	30
Test Statistics(b)				
	Q10. Time in position	Q12. Time in organisation	Q13. Age	
Mann-Whitney U	7.5	6.5	10	
Wilcoxon W	22.5	21.5	25	
Z	-1.088	-1.289	-1	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>0.277</b>	<b>0.197</b>	<b>0.317</b>	
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	0.310	0.222	0.690	
a	Not corrected for ties.			
b	Grouping Variable: High LMX			

APPENDIX H: RELATIONAL NEEDS IN THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

**EMPLOYEES' RELATIONAL NEEDS**

<b>LEVEL OF CULTURE</b>	Attachment	Eye-to-eye Validation	Identification & Idealization	Mutuality & Resonance	Embeddedness	Holding	Tending (Care)
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**ARTEFACTS**

**Emotional Outcome for Employee**

Absence	Aloneness, loss	Annihilation, rejection	Disillusionment, purposelessness	Loneliness, dissonance	Alienation	Falling	Indifference to others' needs
Excess	Fearful clinging	Transparency	Slavish devotion	Merging	Over-conformity	Suffocation	Compulsive caregiving
'Good enough'	Availability of other if needed, joy inherent in the connection itself, desire to explore the environment	Understanding, acceptance, validation from another of qualities we do possess	Hope – the possibility for a better self	Shared experience	Feeling connected to the world we are part of	The feeling of being bounded, grounded	The feeling of being cared for

**Pattern of Behaviour (for a 'good enough' emotional outcome)**

Organisation	To be predictably responsive over time	To empathically respond	To act as a role model	To always holds the we in mind, mutual empathy	To embrace diversity & therefore a place for all	To provide a safe container, mitigates against harm	To care for employees
Employee	To cling to / seek out attachment figure, especially when anxious or uncertain	To seek validation through another	To aim to be like or control role model	To always holds the we in mind, mutual empathy	To aim to fit in with the culture	To be held	To be tended

**ORGANISATIONAL VALUES**

	Support individuals	Acknowledge importance of individuals	Develop individuals	Promote friendship	Acknowledge importance of group	Nurture wellbeing	Be socially responsible
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## APPENDIX I: DISCUSSION GUIDE

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### **Introduction**

We know quite a lot about organisations – about jobs and job design, strategy and organisational structure. But we don't know as much about emotions and relationships in organisations and that's the focus of this research, on the social/emotional aspects of work.

### **Broadly describing the culture (5 mins)**

How would you describe the culture of [name of organisation] to someone who just started working here? Tell me what you'd tell them so they'd know what it's really like for most people here, not just what you think the organisation would want you to say.

What else would you tell them about how most people find the culture? Anything else?

### **The social/emotional aspects of the culture (25 mins)**

I'm now going to ask you some questions specifically about the social/emotional aspects of your organisation's culture. For each question I'd like you to give me an example to illustrate your answer if possible.

1. How do most people feel here in terms of other people being responsive to their needs? For instance, do most people feel there is someone there for them to turn to who they know will be responsive to them, especially when needed such as when feeling anxious. (Poles: alone or lost / sometimes there sometimes not)
2. How do most people feel others receive them here for being who they are, that is, in terms of being accepted, understood, and validated? (Poles: not accepted, etc. / transparent, others know you better than yourself)
3. How fair and equitable do most people feel the organisation is in recognising and valuing people's effort and contribution? (Poles: have to put in more effort for same recognition / get away with less effort)
4. How much mutual sharing of experiences, or a sense of doing things together, is there for most people here, including informal things like a joke or casual conversation? (Poles: lonely / merging, too much sharing)
5. How much is there a sense that when people do work together here all actively participate, that is, where everyone involved participates as fully as possible?
6. How do most people feel about their future here, for instance how hopeful do most people feel, and is there something to strive for or a role model to be like? (Poles: purposeless, disillusioned / willingly and unquestioningly follow)
7. How do most people feel about the appropriateness of the emotions and behaviours expressed here? For instance are appropriate workplace relations maintained? (Poles: absence of emotional and behavioural control / withhold self-expression)

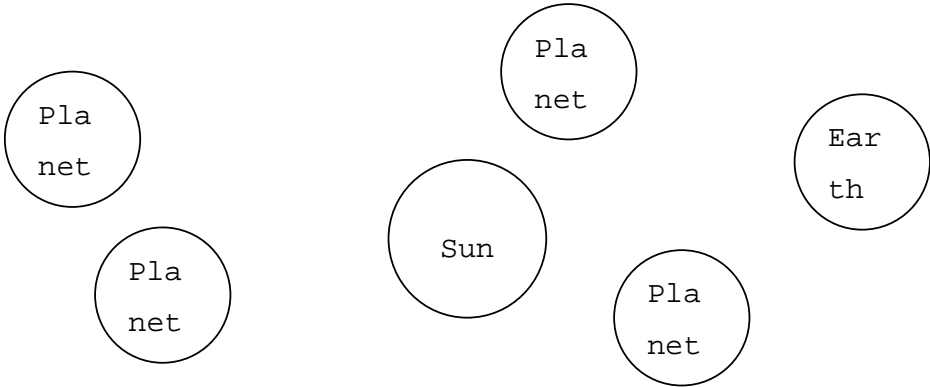
- 8. How safe and secure do most people feel here, not just in terms of tenure, but also in terms of doing their day-to-day tasks? How safe is it to make a mistake?  
(Poles: falling / overprotected, suffocating)
- 9. How connected do most people feel here in terms of whether they feel like they belong just as they are?  
(Poles: alienated / over-conform to fit in)
- 10. How cared for and looked after do most people feel here?  
(Poles: indifferent / too much or not what want)

Now, moving from what most people experience to what you personally experience.

- 11. Is there anything about the social or emotional aspects of the culture that helps you get your job done?
- 12. Is there anything about the social or emotional aspects of the culture that gets in the way of getting your job done, frustrates you, annoys you, or makes you angry?
- 13. Is there anything about the social or emotional aspects of the culture that holds you back here, suffocates, controls or overwhelms you?
- 14. Tell me about any relationships you have that are particularly gratifying or meaningful to you.
- 15. Tell me about any relationships you have that are particularly fraught or difficult for you.

**Relational maps – formal and informal (45 mins)**

You might remember that when you were in school, you used to see diagrams of the planets that looked like this (draw a fresh one).



I'm going to ask you to make similar diagrams about your workplace, only instead of putting the sun in the middle; I want you to put yourself there. Around yourself, I want you to arrange the people who were important to you at that time. By *important*, I mean people who were in your mind, whom you would have been thinking about. So the distance from you on

the page that you put the important people in your life should reflect their inner presence for you rather than who was physically there, how far away they worked, or similar factors.

What you will end up with is a diagram that looks like the planet scheme, all with circles. Please label each circle with the name of the person who belongs there.

There are two additional kinds of circles that you might find yourself wanting to draw. One is a 'dotted circle' to indicate someone who mattered a lot to you at that time of your life in relation to work but who was not there at all as a physical presence. This might be someone whom you talked to in your head or thought about a lot even though you had no real interaction with him or her at that time.

Another kind of circle you might like to draw is the group circle. This you might draw to indicate people who were important as a group but didn't really matter as individuals. This might be needed if, for example, you want to indicate the importance of the HR Department, a project team, the social club, or something like that.

I would like you to do two drawings, one after [chosen time period] of being in the organisation and one for as it is now. They will go better if you think of yourself at the particular times rather than trying to do the months in between.

Before doing those drawings, if we could start with an organisational chart for each time period showing the formal organisational relationships and where you are on that chart. On the chart, use dotted lines to show who you worked with directly. This is so we can see where you formally fit in, but we'll be talking in detail about the drawing of your important relationships and how you feel about them.

Now lets do the drawings of your important relationships. So imagine yourself after the [chosen time period], try to fix yourself in time, and then pretend to interview yourself, asking yourself about who is in your mind at that time. On each drawing, I want you to indicate how important people were to you by how far away they are from you, the more important people closer to you; and to show the quality of the relationship by the size of the circle, bigger circles indicating better quality relationships.

The interview following the drawing of the circles focuses on how each person on the relational map was important. Keep questioning until the 'how' becomes clear. If necessary, ask for specific instances or illustrations of the emotional nature of the relationship. As you go through the drawings with the subject, be sure to inquire about how people came to appear on or disappear from the map.

*Also ask about the quality of the relationships and why some are better than others.*

**Ratings (15 mins)**

For each row below, please mark on the scale with an **x** where you see yourself, and with a **●** where you see most people here.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel alone, lost, there's no-one there to respond to you or your needs			Feel there's someone who is consistently responsive to you & your needs, & you'd miss them if they left			Feel you have to keep reminding someone who matters to you that you need them & want them to be there for you, you're afraid they won't be		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel annihilated, rejected			Feel accepted, understood, & validated for who you are			Feel transparent, like others know you better than you know yourself		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel your effort and contribution is not recognised and valued as much as others, you have to put in more			Feel your effort and contribution is recognised and valued fairly and equitably			Feel your effort and contribution is recognised and valued as much as others even though you get away with putting in less		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel lonely, dissonant			Feel there's a mutual sharing of experiences with others			Feel there's merging or too much sharing; lose yourself in another (others)		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel with shared tasks that either you or the others involved do not actively participate as fully as possible			Feel with shared tasks that you and the others involved all actively participate as fully as possible			Feel with shared tasks that you and the others involved become like one entity, like a merging or loss of your individual selves		

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel disillusioned, purposeless			Feel hopeful, there's scope for personal development			Feel your purpose or how you develop is decided for you, whether it suits you or not		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel there's no role model for you			Feel there's a role model to emulate			Willingly & unquestioningly follow your role model		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel others show an absence of emotional or behavioural control; and express emotions and behaviours not wanted by you			Feel others appropriately express emotions and behaviours; and maintain appropriate workplace relations			Feel others withhold expressing self for fear of crossing boundaries		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel like you're falling, it's not safe & secure			Feel safe, secure			Feel like you're suffocating, it's too safe, over-protected		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel alienated, & that you don't belong in the group			Feel connected & that you belong in the group			Feel that you have to over-conform to fit in with the group		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Feel they're indifferent to your needs & give nothing			Feel cared for, looked after			Feel they're indifferent to your needs in their giving; by giving what they want to give & not what you need or want		