The factors and forces influencing evolution: an empirical study of entrepreneurs in context of organisational life.

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Andrew Wagg   **June 2017**
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Abstract

This thesis challenges the widely held theories based on quantitative research which suggest entrepreneurs are a particular type of individual, and exhibit certain traits. The study analyses the contention that entrepreneurs have to act in particular ways during the evolution of their business. It adopts sensemaking as a conceptual tool, to examine the effects of cognitions, motivations, and self-efficacy on organisational change. The study is based on a combination of auto-ethnographic and ethnographic methods; this approach offers a unique insight into the working lives of different entrepreneurs. The thesis underlines the practical and emotional issues individuals' face when placed in context of their organisations. The magical view of entrepreneurs held by society is one of many issues raised which negatively affects them during their journey. The main contribution of the thesis is to the field of Entrepreneurial and Organisational Studies in advancing knowledge and understanding.

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Introduction

The majority of mainstream literature concentrates on the role of the entrepreneur in the rescue and success of economies (Hjorth & Steyaert, 2008). Entrepreneurship, according to Burns (2007), drives competition and challenges monopolies. Entrepreneurship is positioned by writers such as Calas, Smircich & Bourne (2009) as a positive economic activity, and places great significance on the individuals who influence the outcomes of entrepreneurial ventures.

Entrepreneurship should therefore concern itself with the structural, cultural and functional arrangements of organisations - The Theories of Enterprise, and the entrepreneurs who exploit the opportunities in the environment that surrounds them. Existing research on entrepreneurs is however based on taken for granted norms, dominant assumptions, grand narratives and universal truths (Tedmanson et al, 2010).

It centres on three main areas of research. These are as follows, *classifications* - the extent to which their involvement influences their ventures (Burns, 2007; Rae, 2007; Wickham, 2004), *traits* - who entrepreneurs are and the attributes they need (Burns, 2007; Rae, 2007; Wickham, 2004) and *evolutionary stages* - what they should do at given intervals (Burns, 2007; Hanks, Watson, Jenson & Chandler, 1994; Churchill & Lewis, 1983 and Greiner, 1972). This current landscape of literature however, lacks the 'critical eye' which comes from creating a 'critical mess' (Gartner, 1990). It seems that popular culture has cultivated an identity which, individuals wishing to pursue business ownership need to assume.

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The landscape of literature concerning entrepreneurs is based on the prescriptions of enterprising behavior such as, individual innovation, novelty and difference. Writers describe the entrepreneur as a socially distinct individual (Wickham, 2004; Landau, 1982; Schumpeter, 1934). They are characterised as having exceptional qualities (Schumpeter, 1934) which include; creativeness (Wickham, 2004), an expert mind-set (Burns, 2007), and a propensity to risk (Rae 2007; Kets de Vries, 1985). Generally, they are perceived as heroic figures that hold great promise (Weiskopf & Steyaert 2009).

Wickham (2004) contends entrepreneurs focus on the bigger picture rather than functional details, and as such suggest an entrepreneurial venture is based on innovation, and high levels of growth, in order to pursue long term strategic objectives. According to Kets de Vries (1985), entrepreneurs appear to be achievement orientated, responsible when making decisions, and have a distaste of repetitive routine work. He urges they possess high levels of energy, a great degree of perseverance and imagination, which combined with a willingness to take moderate calculated risks, allows them to transfer an idea into something concrete.

Indeed the popularist view, supported by writers, such as Burns (2007), Wickham (2004) and Rae (2007) depict entrepreneurs as opportunistic visionaries who are positive, self-confident, and motivated individuals with little aversion to risk. Wickham (2004, p17) suggests 'entrepreneurs tend to be flamboyant extroverts, who are spontaneous in their approach and rely on instinct rather than calculation'.

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Existing Research

The preponderance of literature relating to entrepreneurs is however based on quantitative research (Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009; Burns, 2007; Jennings et al, 2005; Wickham, 2004; Jayasinghe, 2003; Holliday, 1995 & Hofstede, 1991), and devoid of a critical tradition (Wickham, 2004 & Hofstede, 1991). Holliday (1995) argues there may be reasons for this, such as, a lack of time in the field, an inability to gain access into organisations, or the type of researchers conducting studies. Stewart (1998) points to a lack of rigour with qualitative studies. It may, however, reflect the determination that entrepreneurship does not lose its glory from a study that challenges the celebration of individualism (Weiskopf & Steyaert 2009). As a society we are eager to find the secret to successful entrepreneurs, and to many that secret is hidden (Weiskopf & Steyaert 2009). However, it could be disputed that the contention that entrepreneurship may be open to more than a select few, may not fit with the magical view of entrepreneurs, held by society.

A large concentration of the literature concerning entrepreneurs focuses on pre-start activities, rather than what transpires once individuals involve themselves in their venture. As a result, it lacks a discourse regarding the practical and emotional issues that surface when entrepreneurs are placed in the context of organisations (Tedmanson et al, 2010; Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009; Ireland et al, 2003; Gartner, 1990).

Although some entrepreneurs do appear to fit the profile of popular culture, autobiographical memories early in my career observing these individuals, consultancy projects undertaken with entrepreneurs, and empirical data produced from the study, suggest that their involvement in organisations affects the entrepreneur in many different

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ways. Motivations and past experiences often influence decisions in the start-up stages of ventures, but also determine how entrepreneurs spend their time on a daily basis. Cognitive experiences also result in different levels of self-efficacy which influence the decisions they make at key times.

Many of the entrepreneurs I encountered during my time as a consultant were unable to embrace the changes required at different intervals, as their businesses evolved. As I became engrossed in the lives of these individuals, I realised there was a need to delve deeply, the ability to move through these key stages was much more complex than I had originally appreciated.

The Factors that Influence Evolution

Levies' 2008 research reviews many of the 'Stages of Growth Models' in which writers, such as Burns (2007), Hanks, Watson, Jenson & Chandler (1994), Churchill & Lewis (1983) and Greiner (1972) advocate, entrepreneurs have to pass through different stages in their organisations development. Beer, Eisenstat & Spector (1990), however, maintain the changes required to create organisational flexibility, in response to environmental turbulence, are rarely achieved in the manner they were intended.

Organisational change is problematic because it destabilises and challenges individuals existing schemata, the interpretive frames of reference through which entrepreneurs make sense of the world (Moch & Bartunek, 1990). Ambiguity dictates the development of new schemata, through the sensemaking process (Bartunek, 1984). Entrepreneurs have to go through a process of reformation, as they experience disparity between their expectations and experiences. Existing frames, the assumptions, and rules, which are embedded and taken for granted, no longer apply once situations create shocks and surprises.

Entrepreneurs are affected by issues within and around their organisations, in different ways. Kruger (2007), Mitchell (2002) and Baron (2000), suggest the move from novice to expert manifests in significant changes, in deep cognitive structures. Although an expert's knowledge base may not differ from a novice, they perhaps organise or structure the content differently. Kruger (2007) suggests the business world is a complex domain, where individuals connect the same dots very differently from one another.

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Baron (2000) maintains cognitions are the knowledge structures which people use to make assessments, judgments or decisions involving opportunity evaluation, venture creation and growth. Cognitions lead to a state of mind known as self-efficacy, 'an individual's conscious belief in their own ability to bring about desired results in the performance of a particular task' (Bandura, 1997). An entrepreneur, who demonstrates low self-efficacy, may make sense of the world in an entirely different way than someone with high self-efficacy. Organisations are also formed out of social structures and the interactions between different individuals or groups (Bratton, 2005). There are all sorts of inequalities between entrepreneurs and their followers, such as, past experiences, education, class status, values, aims and objectives.

If cognitions are the learned experiences that people use to make assessments, judgments and decisions, sensemaking turns these events and circumstances into situations that are comprehended explicitly, and serve as a springboard into action (Taylor & Van Every, 2002). Individuals are intent in developing plausible images to rationalise what others are doing, especially, if day to day issues are not in line with their expectations. Weick (1995) contends that sensemaking is a process that is simultaneous, ongoing and retrospective; it cannot be isolated from lived experiences.

Sensemaking, it seems, is used to justify actions and gain validity with questions such as 'What's the story here?' 'What should I do about it?' (Weick, 1995) During the study we experience the way in which entrepreneurs react to different situations. They appear to deal with the issues they face in incongruent ways. Some embrace the challenges that come their way, whilst others become entrenched in post-mortems and negativity.

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Bartunek (1984) suggests the reframing of thoughts alters meaning. In all cases it is clear that the contextual differences of cognitive experiences of entrepreneurs, alters the way in which sensemaking is approached. Both the role of the entrepreneur and their cognitions affect their framing of events, and highlight the importance of social interaction to analyse meaning (Maitlis, 2005).

Implementing change creates new situations; this produces cognitive disorder for the entrepreneur and their followers (Maitlis, 2005). The entrepreneur has to manage subordinates emotions, anxiety and defensiveness, whilst dealing with their personal confusion and concerns. This causes inevitable stress and often paralyses decision making. Luscher & Lewis (2008), argue dynamic context intensifies complexity and ambiguity and organisational members and entrepreneurs struggle with changing roles procedures and relationships.

In order to analyse the evolution of organisations, the study examines the importance of schemata, the cognitive frameworks through which past experiences are stored. Schemata act as a data reduction device which enables entrepreneurs to make sense of complexities in an organisational context (Bartunek, 1984). The events that occur result in tensions between entrepreneurs old and new schemata i.e., a 'gap' forms in their expectations.

This creates the need for sensemaking; entrepreneurs begin to act in a conscious and less automatic fashion to resolve cognitive disorder (Balogun & Johnson, 2004). Sensemaking is based on the concept that reality is ongoing; consequently the entrepreneur concentrates their efforts to generate order, and make retrospective sense of what is happening, (Weick, 1995). Entrepreneurs undertake a process of social

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construction, through the interpretation of events, in order to produce a plausible account of the world (Maitlis, 2005). It appears that this process needs to take place, before they can make decisions, and undertake action to enable organisational change.

Aims and Objectives

A large number of writers are aligned to the notion that entrepreneurs need to act in certain ways, do particular things, and instigate change at key junctures (Burns, 2007; Wickham, 2004; Hanks, Watson, Jenson & Chandler, 1994; Churchill & Lewis, 1983 and Greiner, 1972). To illustrate, these writers argue, that at some point, a team should be appointed and further growth will be achieved as a result of the contribution of these new members. Organisational capabilities are however, assembled in different ways and often for different reasons. It is unclear why decisions are taken to reflect economic rational in some cases, but are heavily influenced by social factors in others. The gathering of resources, should in theory, be matched to market requirements or organisational needs. On the other hand, Hamm (2002) argues, selection is often influenced by social factors. He believes, it is widely established; entrepreneurs tend to employ individuals personally known to them.

The study focuses therefore on the cognitive experiences, motivations, and levels of self-efficacy exuded by entrepreneurs. In doing so, it creates a deeper understanding of the process by which decisions are taken and modifications are initiated. The thesis considers whether the transformation that occurs which is subject to a range of choices, is influenced by the way individuals make sense of the world. The study adopts sensemaking as a conceptual tool to appreciate how organisations evolve. It examines the extent to which the process is controlled by past experiences, social factors, and an entrepreneur's confidence in their own abilities.

The Methodological Approach and Empirical Setting

According to Holliday (1995), the reason positivist studies dominate the study of entrepreneurship is due to the difficulties in arranging access, for prolonged periods, in the environment the entrepreneur operates in. This eliminates the opportunity to use the access of time to slice through the current literature landscape and illuminate, not just its hills, but its chasms. Another may be due to the influences of popular culture and its heavy foundation in Tayloristic elements such as categorisation and measurement, and the segregation of entrepreneurs from their organisations (Wickham, 2004). The weakness in these widely used quantitative methods is an inability to uncover dynamic processes, 'because they investigate variances and relationships in a static manner' (Uy, et al, 2010).

This study takes the position that we need to rid ourselves of the idea the entrepreneur is someone surveying the world from above (Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009), and accept there is a managerial entrepreneurial overlap (Ireland et al, 2003). We have to place them firmly within their respective organisations, examine their reaction to everyday occurrences, and determine the extent to which context can influence the behaviours and decisions they make on a daily basis. The research focuses on the symbolic processes of production and exchange that are only available to insiders (Linstead, 1997). It specifically examines the dialogue between entrepreneurs and their employees, and analyses an array of social organisational aspects within the institution (Maitlis, 2005).

The study, therefore, avoids assigning the separatist stereotype of an entrepreneur to the setting from which the research is performed within. Just because the popular brand of an entrepreneur is that of a non team player and maverick, it should not place individuals separate, detached or removed from the effects of their setting or culture, or indeed of their effects on it. The research challenges the array of prescriptive literature conveying what it is like to be an entrepreneur in organisational life. Given that the research intends to examine lived meanings and practical sensemaking, a blend of auto-ethnographic and ethnographic approaches have been utilised as the most suitable methodological standpoints.

This combination allows us to slice through the hills of enlightenment about entrepreneurs, create connections where previously few were present, and shed light onto the chasms of obscurity that exist between entrepreneurs. In adopting auto-ethnography and ethnography, a critical mess (Gartner, 1990) will be uncovered through an 'immersion into the muddled circumstances of an entrepreneurial phenomenon that is cluttered and confusing' (Singer, 2001, p66-71).

The use of paradigmatic assumptions, in carrying out research, lies in exploring the nature of those assumptions and the consequences they bring to bear on the method of enquiry. The aim of this study is to provide explanations and theories, which further our understanding of the world, and therefore contribute to improved performance. The research adopts an interpretivist stance i.e., the ontological assumption that there are multiple realities in certain conditions, and knowledge is itself a social construction (epistemological assumption). Many of the findings have been tested by interpretation and understanding, from the point of view of the subjects questioned (methodological assumptions).

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Outline of the Thesis

The thesis is based on a combination of autobiographical memories, various consultancy projects, participant observation within a service based consultancy business, interviews with entrepreneurs, and an auto-ethnographic account of the return to entrepreneurship by the researcher. The autobiographical memories emanate from my early life observing the founder of a joinery business, my experiences after purchasing the shares, and various consultancy projects. The participant observation lasted three years between, 2006 and 2009, and included an array of visual artefacts and documentary evidence. Where common themes emerged out of the data, I conducted a number of semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs I have worked with previously. The organisations and entrepreneurs were chosen to reflect the differences between individuals. Those studied, offered diversity due to the incorporation of age, gender, experience, background, social class, and their education.

The thesis begins with a review of the 'Theories of Enterprise', the structural, cultural and functional options adopted by organisations. The second part of the chapter examines how entrepreneurs position themselves, in their organisations, in different ways - '*classifications*'. It also highlights the 'traits' these individuals should possess, and documents the way in which, the literature suggests; they should react at certain intervals -'*evolutionary stages'*. In doing so, it highlights the 'gaps' in mainstream research.

Chapter Three explores the way in which entrepreneurs form cognitive knowledge. It makes the connection between past experiences, and they way they make sense of situations. The chapter offers sensemaking a conceptual tool to analyse the evolution of

organisations, and reviews the literature on the process leading up to intentions and actions. The section also examines the contention of social positions and relationships, and how they impress upon the sensemaking and sensegiving properties of entrepreneurs.

Chapter Four adopts a framework developed by Denzin & Lincoln (2008) to discuss issues of representation, presentation and performance. It also makes explicit the paradigmatic stance assumed. The strategies of enquiry section, presents the reader with a rigorous description of the methods used why each phase was necessary, and how they complemented each other. This chapter describes how the data was analysed and recorded, and explains how ethical dilemmas were dealt with.

Chapter Five offers an ethnographic account, which relays the sum of the events that occur, during 'a day in the life' of two entrepreneurs. It places them within their organisational setting and documents the way in which, they make sense of unfamiliar circumstances. This chapter introduces other entrepreneurs that were interviewed, and relays their past experiences and motivations to start a business. The next three chapters bring to light various themes that arose throughout the observation period and interviews, these appear important in determining the evolution of different businesses. The cross-section of interviews gives an insight into the working lives of different entrepreneurs.

Chapter Six examines the early stages of businesses, the motivations to start a venture, and an entrepreneur's readiness to deal with the challenges they will inevitably face. It analyses the relationship between capital and risk, and examines decisions that are

made i.e., the selection of management staff that sets the organisation on its entrepreneurial path.

Chapter Severn scrutinises the daily involvement of entrepreneurs, and the extent to which they spend time analysing and making sense of everyday occurrences. This section also determines the levels of trust exhibited by different individuals, and their ability to relinquish control to others. It depicts the interaction process between entrepreneurs and their followers, and examines the way in which individuals feel they have to be viewed by their staff.

Chapter Eight illustrates, the way in which, organisational occurrences influence the levels of self-efficacy that entrepreneur's exhibit, and their effect on decision-making. This section explores individual's aversion to risk, and their fear of failure, and scrutinises the contention that, although entrepreneurs crave freedom to make decisions, they often procrastinate and avoid them until it's too late.

Chapter Nine draws the previous chapters together to interpret the findings. It attempts to make sense of entrepreneurial behaviour, and the evolution of organisations. Chapter Ten offers conclusions to highlight the contributions made by study. Finally, to help others who may be considering business ownership it offers suggestions for future research.

The study is structured in such a way that it demonstrates the literature fails to deal with; the effect past experiences, and self-efficacy, has on attitudes and intentions. It uncovers everyday issues that influence an individual's ability to make decisions and move through evolutionary stages. It portrays a story where the motivation to set up a

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business, the way in which people view the world and the subsequent challenges they face, has a significant bearing on what they do next.

Chapter Two - The Prescriptions of Past Research

This chapter presents a review of the various theories relating to enterprise. These guide the entrepreneur through the different functional areas, in order to prescribe things they need to consider as their business evolves. The chapter then focuses on three theories that dominate existing literature; *traits* (who entrepreneurs are and the attributes they need), *classifications* (the extent to which their involvement influences their ventures), and *evolutionary stages* (what they should do at given intervals). The chapter concludes with a critique of this literature based on its contribution to the appreciation of entrepreneurship. In doing so, the different levels of understanding that need exploring in greater detail, are underlined.

Theories of Enterprise

'The Theory of Enterprise' is based on two connected concepts; business and industry. Business is concerned with turning investment into profit (the capitalist system), whilst industry concentrates on the manufacture of products or the delivery of services, and the maximisation of profits through efficient delivery and production processes. All processes are subject to, (1) the motions of people, (2) the variation of products and services, (3) uncertainty of demand, and (4) quantitative accuracy (Veblen, 1904). Industrialisation, through invention and technology improvements, has created increased competition between organisations, and a greater need for investment to sustain their position. It has also created standardisation and the division of labour, whereby the production process is broken down into a sequence of stages, and workers are assigned particular tasks.

The business owner/entrepreneur is normally the controlling force behind investment, plant, processes, people, materials, and an organisations structure. Nevertheless, there is often a clash between industry, due to managers looking for efficiencies and investment, in contrast to businessmen, who are motivated solely by capitalism through profit maximization (Veblen, 1904). As a result, strategies are usually formed to; unify all stakeholders, paint a vision of future intent, and articulate the way in which the organization is likely to achieve their goals. An enterprising approach usually involves risk, and the ability to think creatively in developing and delivering solutions to problems. An organisation with an enterprise culture therefore presents people who are innovative, creative and open to risk.

On the other hand Ireland et al (2003), denotes that firms of this nature may be skilled in identifying entrepreneurial opportunities, but prove less effective in developing and sustaining the competitive advantages needed to exploit opportunities.

Ireland et al (2003) argue entrepreneurs have to implement a strategy in order to create and exploit opportunities. Other researchers believe that entrepreneurs and strategy are complementary, supportive and inseparable (Ireland et al, 2003: Barney & Arikan, 2001 & Meyer & Heppard, 2000) There are many methods in which the entrepreneur can develop competitive advantage. In fact, Porter (1998) offers four generic strategies as follows; (1) Cost Leadership where organisations strive to create economies of scale and become low cost leaders, (2) Differentiation where business finds a new way of delivering products or services, and (3&4) Focused Cost Leadership and Focused Differentiation, both of which specialise in narrower niche areas.

Strategy analyses an organizations macro-opportunities - the key drivers of change that have a differential impact on industries, markets and organisations (Johnson, Scholes and Whittingham, 2005), and the micro- environment, where organizations should define the profitability of any given industry, and shape the response of individual firms to them. Nonetheless, some entrepreneurs are more introspective, focusing on capabilities and developing core competences - this is the resource-based approach to strategy. Hamel & Prahalad (1994, p79), suggest that whilst the eighties were characterised by executives abilities to 'declutter and delayer', in the nineties, senior executives would be judged on their ability to 'identify cultivate and exploit the core competencies that make growth possible'.

Entrepreneurs generally adopt three layers of strategy, (1) Corporate, (2) Business, and (3) Functional. At the corporate level the entrepreneur is concerned with; the acquisition of individual businesses, the levels of new investment needed, the returns obtained, and maintaining a balanced portfolio of businesses. At the business level, entrepreneurs are focused on; the creation of customers, the identification of market niches where leadership can be achieved, the identification of customer needs and how to satisfy them, the application of technology, avoiding direct competition, and the motivation of people. Functional strategies comprising; Marketing, Financial, Human Resources and Operations are discussed below.

Marketing strategies are used by entrepreneurs to facilitate growth by developing an understanding of the market and gaining an appreciation of the needs and wants of customers. Drucker (1999) argues, because the purpose of business is to create and keep customers, it has only two central functions, marketing and innovation. He maintains the basic function of marketing is to attract and retain customers at a profit. Jobber (2001) promotes marketing is the achievement of corporate goals through meeting and exceeding customer needs better than the competition. Kotler (2005) maintains that it is the task of creating, promoting and delivering goods, and providing services to consumers and business.

Financial strategies are required to raise capital, both at the start up stage, and throughout the evolution of ventures. The entrepreneur through the utilisation of his or her own funds frequently creates capital. This can be restrictive. Often ventures have to create additional funds, as the retention of profit is often not enough to sustain growth. The cost of capital has a significant bearing on the choice of funding, which can originate through the banking system or, from equity release. Working capital is the difference

between money owed from debtors and money owed to creditors. It is subject to work in progress and inventory levels; these are determined at the strategic level. The flow of cash is managed from the collection of debtor money, against the payment of suppliers, creditors, employees and various taxation bodies.

Human Resources strategies should be developed by the entrepreneur in order to secure and retain the best possible employees. Policies should be implemented for selection. Job descriptions should be created, interview frameworks developed, and interviewers trained to ensure they judge candidates effectively.

Processes should be developed to deal with all sorts of housekeeping and disciplinary issues. Appraisals should be implemented to; review performance, offer additional training, and inform employees of their future prospects within the organisation. The welfare of employees and business principles are at the forefront of all organisations. Crises, depressions and hard times all affect businesses, and in turn their employees. Organisations have to balance their own survival with the interests of their employees; staff however can at times be subject to poor working conditions, pay freezes, layoffs and redundancies.

Operations deliver services and products to customers, and are involved in the management of people, materials, resources and delivery systems (Hill & Hill, 2011). Strategies should consider location choices, layouts, plant, procurement, logistics and information technology. Operations should help organisations to develop their overall strategy, improving capabilities in order to secure competitive advantage.

Business activity is controlled by legislation. Welfare is bound in the conduct of business. As such, legislation is used to guard natural liberty. Rules have been fashioned to protect the interests of all stakeholders, suppliers, buyers and employees. Organisations have to comply with financial reporting methods to prove they can, for example, pay their debts as and when they become due. Employees are protected with all sorts of employment restrictions, and organisations have to comply with a multitude of health and safety and environmental regulations.

Having determined what entrepreneurs are supposed to consider, the chapter now focuses on three theories that dominate the study of entrepreneurship. (1) The identification of the different characteristics, personality's and behaviors that entrepreneurs exhibit (Wickham, 2004; Brockhaus & Horowitz, 1986), (2) the classification of different entrepreneurial approaches (Wickham, 2004; Landau, 1982), and (3) an examination of various stages of evolution organisations pass through, and the changes required at these intervals (Burns, 2007; Mullins, 2006 & Greiner, 1972).

Dominant Theories

These areas of research have been chosen to be reviewed, not only because they reflect the density of research, but also to illustrate the prescriptions of entrepreneurship. Although the researcher recognises that these areas are not particularly helpful, illuminating, or broadening, they are discussed to highlight that there is a need for new research material to shed light on the spaces between and through. Studies on entrepreneurs should not be limited to prescriptions that dominate the literature, for example, who they are, what they should do, and the forms of success that they should strive for. They ought to be concerned with the actual lives lived, behaviors, cultures, and the narratives of entrepreneurs themselves. In a time of austerity, with wealth creation at the forefront of many agendas, the importance of entrepreneurship should be understood in its complexity, rather than in its prescriptive simplicity.

(1) <u>Traits/Personalities</u>

Mullins (2006), Wickham (2004), Baron (2000) and Mitchell (2000) have all examined possible traits that may be unique to the entrepreneur. Mitchell et al (2002), maintains that trait based research has attempted to describe the entrepreneurial personality as a key component to organisational success, but is unable to report a unique set of personality traits that characterise the entrepreneur.

In order to determine if an entrepreneur has to be a certain type of person to succeed, comparisons have been made between the entrepreneur and non-entrepreneur (Mitchell, Busenitz, Lant, McDougall, Morse and Brock Smith 2002). Mullins (2006) and Drucker (1985) are at odds with trait theory. Drucker, in particular, claims that entrepreneurship is neither magic nor mysterious, and contends it is a discipline and as such can be taught.

The topic is still subject to great debate. Toftjoy & Chaterjee (2004) take what seems to be a middle ground. They believe, although basic functions can be learned, underlying traits and behaviours have a significant bearing on the ability to be entrepreneurial when individuals put their knowledge into practice. Despite the research undertaken, the uniqueness of entrepreneurs i.e., the relationship between the inclination to start a business and personality, is a view held by many writers.

The research however, fails to indulge in the possibility that traits form as a result of past experiences and motivations, as entrepreneurs make sense of what is happening on a daily basis. Their sensemaking creates beliefs about their followers, which manifest in different attitudes and behaviours towards them. Most of the research describing

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personality traits and behaviours is pedalled with a cause and effect relationship. If we are 'like this', and do 'these things', we will inevitably progress. It fails to determine however, why so many entrepreneurs construct organisations where creativity is stifled, and organisational members are unable to function effectively.

The majority of literature bypasses relational issues which surface between entrepreneurs and employees. The empirical research reveals that many individuals are unable to relinquish control, and find it impossible to trust their employees. The study highlights entrepreneurs, unable to anticipate situations, unwilling to commit to a course of action, and avoiding decisions until it is too late. I contend that if we want to limit the amount of failed businesses we need to understand why.

(2) Classifying Entrepreneurial Approaches/Motivations

Schumpeter (1934) argued that the entrepreneur is pecuniary, having the characteristic of being capitalist and profit motivated. Being pecuniary however, is not necessarily the same as being profit motivated. Being pecuniary can be as simple as seeking payment of, or expecting money for, ones efforts, this is a largely different perspective. Entrepreneurs are often driven by motivational forces outside of capitalism (Wickham, 2004 & Burns, 2007). In many cases the move to business ownership can be the result of a lack of prospects or fulfilment at work, losing one's job, seeking independence, gaining social acceptance, or simply to provide income in order to live. Wickham (2004) maintains that the separation of entrepreneurs into categories, and an acknowledgement of their motivational forces, helps us to gain an insight into how different types of ventures operate, and the disparate factors that exist in organisations.

Wickham (2004) suggests that an individual, who starts a venture for the very first time (nascent entrepreneur) and is actively learning, will almost certainly have a different approach to business, than one who has experienced the process previously. An entrepreneur who has experience of buying and selling different businesses (a serial entrepreneur) or running them concurrently (a portfolio entrepreneur), will conduct day to day activities very differently from those whose time is devoted solely to one organisation.

Burns (2007) and Wickham (2004) also make a distinction between entrepreneurs that emerge out of a craft background, to those who do not have practical knowledge of the business they intend to start.

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Research suggests an entrepreneur who has in depth technical expertise relating to their business will generally immerse himself or herself far deeper, than one who has limited knowledge of the products and services they intend to deliver. A useful line of questioning perhaps ought to consider, the degree to which entrepreneurs involve themselves in their organisations, and the extent to which this affects their ability to be entrepreneurial.

Existing research considers why ventures are started (motivations or causes), but rarely analyses the connection between motivations and the roles entrepreneurs occupy. In many cases, the motivation to set up a venture or, the position the entrepreneur assumes, can be based on more than simply achieving rational outcomes. Entrepreneurs often display a need for achievement. Money can be a badge of public recognition (Burns, 2007). The creation of a business therefore, can be used to prove something to someone, make up for some past failure, or fill a void in one's life. Motivations are complex phenomena, which have to be explored and understood, as they have a significant bearing on a venture as it emerges over time.

(3) <u>The Life Cycle of the Entrepreneur</u>

If we consider the life cycle of any business, the common perception is that each venture takes a similar course. Past experiences and motivations appear to influence the decisions that are made at the start up stage, in particular, the type of capital employed and the selection of employees. This suggests that the entrepreneur goals for the future and what they do in the early stages, sets the shape of the business for years to come.

Hamm (2002) stated many entrepreneurs could enjoy early success although, he argues, it is often short lived, as they are often unable to respond to the changes required during the evolution of their business. Hamm (2002) also points out that this is often where 'founders/flounder' and their business eventually fizzles out. He maintains that many entrepreneurs have an inability to switch to 'executive mode' and 'fail to scale'.

Burns (2007) considers that many entrepreneurs are effective up to the point where they employ two dozen employees and are doing everything themselves. Nevertheless, he highlights, there comes a time where they have to start letting go, delegate to others and introduce managers.

Research suggests many entrepreneurs are unable to do this, fearing that everything they have worked for will fall apart (Kets de Vries, 1985). Their constant meddling and lack of trust creates frustration, resentment, and unwillingness on the part of their staff to accept responsibility. Du Toit (1980) suggests the root cause of this problem is the entrepreneur's need for control.

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Greiner (1972) argues the different phases during the business evolution process can be plotted prescriptively. He lists these key stages as; developing opportunities (creativity), setting the direction (strategy), delegation (of activities), coordination (of resources) and collaboration (with people). Burns (2007) and Mullins (2006) both have similar views but introduce additional tasks for the entrepreneur. Burns underlines the need to create an appropriate culture and monitor and control performance; whereas Mullins promotes the managing of growing the business and harvesting value.

Each of these models suggests that there are a number of crises that occur in a linear fashion. Greiner (1972) states growth is achieved as a result of entrepreneurial creativity, but the constant scrutiny of new opportunities, and matching of innovative solutions produce the first crisis - resources are spread too thinly. Greiner suggests the next stage of an organisations development is where a team should be appointed. He argues further growth will be achieved as a result of the contribution from these new members. Having started to delegate activities, Greiner believes that there comes a point where assigning tasks becomes an abdication of responsibility, and entrepreneurs experience a loss of control. Effective co-ordination, he sustains, has to be implemented where controls are in place, and accountability is reached.

Having acquired control, the entrepreneur is able to move on to the next key stage, where the organization often loses its entrepreneurial drive. Collaboration has to be embraced, and an appropriate culture developed to maintain creativity (Burns, 2007).

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Many businesses do evolve in the manner described by Burns (2007), Mullins (2006) and Greiner (1972). The key stages however, often present themselves in many divergent ways at different times. Baron (2000) suggests individuals will have had many diverse experiences and hold disparate views of the world. It seems ambitious to assume, these individuals can simply reinvent themselves at certain courses during business life. It is crucial entrepreneurs are aware that functional disciplines will have to be modified. On the other hand, the organization cannot change and adapt to meet the needs of the business, until the entrepreneur is aware of the way in which their own behaviours can be influenced by past experiences, and the issues that surface on a daily basis.

A Critique of the Literature

There is a body of literature that connects entrepreneurial ventures to economic success (Tedmanson et al, 2010; Calas et al, 2009; Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009 and Ireland et al, 2003). There are also a number of current studies that investigate the impact of entrepreneurial action on social change (Calas et al, 2009). Studies should not however, be limited to research on the creation and recognition of opportunities. Researchers should equally concern themselves with the exploitation of opportunities (Ireland et al, 2003), and the process of emergence (Gartner, Bird & Starr, 1992). It is accepted however, that ventures do pass through different stages of evolution, and individuals and organisations have to remain entrepreneurial throughout their life cycle.

We are aware there is significant risk associated with these ventures, particularly in the early stages. Figures in fact, suggest that between thirty and seventy percent of new businesses do not last more than five years (Burns, 2007; Philips & Kirchoff, 1989; Star and Massel, 1981 & Churchill, 1952). Ireland et al (2003) argue, although entrepreneurs are successful in exploiting opportunities, they often create a temporary, rather than sustainable competitive advantage. This is due to their failure to manage resources effectively. It is critical therefore, that we learn more about the factors that contribute to these failures.

Organisations are simultaneous, individual and social phenomena (Weick, 1979). Being and becoming entrepreneurial is a matter of everyday activities, rather than the actions of elitist groups of entrepreneurs (Steyaert & Katz 2004). The research should therefore be balanced between prestart and beyond. Organisations and entrepreneurs are in a continuous flux and transformation (Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009). The development of

entrepreneurs should be seen as an ongoing process, entrepreneurial becoming rather than entrepreneurial being (Weiskopf and Steyaert, 2009).

In placing entrepreneurs in context with their emerging ventures we can establish 'what persons in organisations do?' and 'why?' In analysing the specifics of emergence, past literature fails to consider mistakes often occur at different junctures, these may be based on an individual's cognitions and motivations. These issues often have a serious impact on the business where decisions have to be reversed or situations accepted. A significant number of entrepreneurs are not prepared for the emotions that surface as a result of business ownership, and spend large blocks of time making sense of daily events. There are gaps in entrepreneurial research connecting self-efficacy to a fear of failure, the inability to take risks, and poor decision-making. Many entrepreneurs have behavioural issues, in particular, with trust and control.

The introduction of others into management ought to make decision making a collective objective. The study demonstrates however, that most entrepreneurs appear reluctant to involve others in the process. In some ways sharing this responsibility goes against the stereotypical view of the hero; one who seemingly cures anything, and single-handedly takes a venture from the depths of despair to an empire that all can be proud of (Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009). Most entrepreneurs will not allow others to interrupt their journey. We need therefore, to explore why individuals feel the need to fit the widely held profile of an entrepreneur.

As entrepreneurs bring others into their team, they tend to ignore alternative opinions and, as a result, neutralise members as disciples rather than contributors. Janis (1982) defines this as 'Groupthink', a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a group situation. Janis suggests groupthink refers to; a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures. Research should consider why entrepreneurs are generally more secure with team members who are unlikely to go against them.

Businesses grow at different rates. Some are successful in their infancy but eventually go into decline, whilst others struggle in the early stages but experience rapid growth and success. Many simply stand still. The entrepreneur has a lot to consider as their organisation changes. Most of the literature recognises the changing requirements of organisations, suggesting what should happen at different intervals. It fails however, to consider the reasons entrepreneurs rarely achieve this. The entrepreneur's behavioural issues; a lack of trust, a need for control, and an inability to make decisions, need to be explored in greater depth, as these impact negatively on organizational members. This study therefore, will connect these themes in attempting to uncover the reasons why ventures go into decline.

The chapter has reviewed elements of the existing literature, and examined a wide range of theories on enterprise. In particular, the chapter analyses the mainstay literature based on the trait theory, classifications and business evolution; all of which represent the dominant scientific spirit of entrepreneurial studies (Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009).

This chapter also demonstrates, however, that the literature has to connect entrepreneurship with organisational behaviour in order to understand the way in which ventures evolve, and an individual experiences entrepreneurial being. A more critical study of entrepreneurship is required to destroy false promises, ideological distortions and monolithic studies, which exist in past research (Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009). The conventional view, portraying an entrepreneur as individual and separate from their organisations, is one that is challenged in this research. The study will instead, examine individual cognitions and behaviours, and the extent to which these change as a result of an entrepreneur's immersion into their organizations, and the situational factors they face. It scrutinises the way in which individuals make sense of organisational occurrences, and examines whether their sensemaking manifests in behaviours, which affect the evolution of organisations.

The study will analyse the behavioural issues adopted by the entrepreneur along the way. Kets de Vries (1985) for example maintains that an entrepreneur's obsession with control, sense of distrust, and desire for applause, often obstructs rational decision-making and reduces the focus on strategic development and organisational capability.

Individuals bring their past experiences into their organisations. These experiences will have transmitted into attitudes, for example, concerning their employees and the approach they should take to grow their business. This study examines these relationships, in particular, relating to themes such as trust and control, and mindsets relating to risk and their fear of failure.

Chapter Three – Sensemaking

This chapter explores how individuals learn and form cognitive knowledge. It examines what happens once their assumptions are challenged and unfamiliar situations occur. The section analyses the extent to which past experiences and self-efficacy influence, the way in which, sense is made of different events and situations. The chapter reviews the process of sensemaking, which ultimately forms attitudes, and prompts decision-making. Chapter Three also highlights Bourdieu's (1977) 'Theory of Practice'; this links social positions and relationships to sensemaking practices, and considers its effect on organisational development.

Finally this section examines the way in which entrepreneurs attempt to influence the process of organisational learning, using a form of sensegiving to offer a preferred definition of organisational reality.

Learning and Unlearning

Humans learn in diverse ways. Behavioural models focus on acquiring information through memorising and regurgitating, for example, one fact displaces the other. A constructivist model argues however, human structures continue to evolve over time (Kruger, 2007). An entrepreneur's prior knowledge and assumptions are likely to cause complications if they are not confronted in a constructivist manner. In many cases it is important for individuals to relearn over time, this is often difficult given their deep-seated beliefs. Entrepreneurs need meta-cognitive skills to influence their ability to learn or unlearn (Butcher & Sumner, 2011).

Various writers (Kruger, 2007: Kets de Vries, 1985; Mitchell, 2002 and Baron, 2000) suppose, early life experiences influence attitudes, intentions and personalities. This, it seems, prioritises entrepreneurial behaviour over achievement-oriented imagery.

To illustrate, individuals can form a positive lesson from a horrific experience, or the wrong lesson from a highly positive experience. They are therefore, subject to how they personally interpret situations. These cognitive experiences are the processes by which sensory input is reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered, transformed and, used. For that reason attitudes and traits once thought to be stable, can evolve over time (Kruger 2007). This supports the contention that daily issues impinge on the ability of individuals to remain entrepreneurial.

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What is Sensemaking?

If entrepreneurial life requires adapting and responding to unfamiliar situations, then sensemaking involves deep level thinking skills to process information sources meaningfully (Butcher & Summer 2011). This is critical to organisational activity (Weick, 1995). Sensemaking helps us review inputs and enact sense back into the world to make it more manageable. It is a cognitive process that people engage in when analysing and decoding connections of information sources, to solve a problem (Maitlis, 2005).

The sensemaking process occurs when there is an inadequacy of current understanding of events and situations (Weick, 1995). It helps us to resume interrupted activity and continue with a set of actions. Sensemaking is the interplay of action and interpretation, as opposed to the influence of evaluation on the choices we make.

It concerns itself with fitting data into a frame or indeed, fitting a frame around the data. It helps us to understand connections between people, places and events. Sensemaking creates a structured awareness out of different individual perspectives, and varied interests. It considers highly complex situations, and assists us in arranging the intrinsic flux of human action. This allows us to focus on certain goals and shape thoughts to generalise and institutionalise particular meaning, in order to make decisions. Sensemaking is not necessarily about finding the truth; it is more involved in the redrafting an emergent story, so that it becomes plausible. Weick (1995) argues it is the central role in the determination of human behavior.

Sensemaking questions how something comes to be an event and what the event means. It considers what the story is, and what we should do about it. Sensemaking is shaped and reinforced through identity. An individual's personal view of who they are, moulds what they enact or how interpret (Currie & Brown, 2003). As a result, what an entrepreneur enacts and how they interpret things sends essential messages to their followers. The method, in which employees in turn treat entrepreneurs, can stabilise or destabilise their identity. Entrepreneurs cannot appreciate what they are becoming until they see how their followers respond to their actions. If entrepreneurs can modify the images that outsiders send back to the organisation, and the insiders utilise those images, it will give rise to reflection and redrafting of thoughts.

Entrepreneurs enact environments through dialogue and narratives (Currie & Brown, 2003). Speaking out loud helps them to understand their thoughts, organise their experiences, and control and predict events (Weick, 1995). In doing so, entrepreneurs can reduce the complexity in a change of circumstance.

The engagement in this social activity, and a conversation with ourselves and others (Currie & Brown, 2003) creates plausible stories that are preserved, retained or shared (Maitlis, 2005). This process is ongoing and allows entrepreneurs to shape and react to environments. This process can also create identity and influence behaviour displayed towards entrepreneurs, and in turn alter the attitudes from the entrepreneurs to their followers.

The Process of Sensemaking

The involvement of entrepreneurs in their organisations, question many of the cognitive experiences that have formed over many years. As situations occur, the entrepreneur might observe that the current state of the world is different than their expected state. These differences are related to human behaviour, and the actions of internal or external factors; these issues create chaos. The entrepreneur realises there will be consequences for their organisation. Weick (1995) points out sensemaking starts with noticing and bracketing, this is where new meaning is invented. Sensemaking concerns the interpretation of something, which has occurred, but has no meaning. The process is guided by mental modes, and is based on cognitive experiences. The entrepreneur recognises a similar event, which guides a response, and the world becomes simplified.

Weick (1995) advises entrepreneurs orientate towards the problems, and ask, 'what is the story here?' 'What should I do about it?' Their thoughts are guided by past experience. The change in circumstances however, frequently creates self-doubt. The majority of entrepreneurs found issues extremely challenging, and experienced emotional turmoil. In the empirical data we see Dale, Justin, Elizabeth, Les and Martin, all obsessed with making sense of what was going on in their respective organizations.

The entrepreneur labels and categorises variances in order to stabilise the problem (Weick, 1995). Their thoughts are based on presumptions (making the abstract concrete), and looking back at earlier observations for a pattern in turning circumstances into action. It is a process that is ongoing, subtle, and easily taken for granted.

Through sensemaking meaning materialises so that it informs and constrains identity and action, and as a result determines behaviour. (Mills, 2003) Entrepreneurs create plausible images that rationalise others actions, but often test their own interpretations on different people. Once false beliefs are established, they become self-perpetuating because those who hold them seek out others who share the same beliefs (Hergenhahn and Olsen, 2005). Organizational context is turned into words i.e., entrepreneurs organize their thoughts through communication, in order to comprehend how events may affect them. The resource of languages talks events into existence, and provides the basis for action. When you hear yourself talk, you see more clearly what matters. Stories are viewed as narrative resources to bring shape and meaning to lives; these stories can however, only be defined by their audience.

The output of sensemaking is often influenced by a range of social factors, what the story becomes therefore, may not be what actually occurred. Sensemaking is generally employed at the point when a cluster of things goes wrong. For example, it might be when an event occurs during the organising process that has no name. For many entrepreneurs, the world has to be simplified. These individuals, by their nature, find themselves in flux; ambiguity has to be compressed and uncertainty made real. Entrepreneurs have to find common ground to clarify what the problem might be, and create and maintain coherent understanding, which sustains relationships and collective action (Weick, 1995).

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Context on Sensemaking

An individual's sensemaking can affect context through the reformation of roles and relationships (Maitlis, 2005; Bartunek, 1984). This paper is concerned however, with the influence of context on sensemaking. Weick (1995) offers seven properties of sensemaking, three of which directly relate to entrepreneurs context. The first, he contends, is grounded in the construction of an identity i.e., who people think they are, shapes how they perceive the world around them (Currie & Brown, 2003 and Weick, 1995).The second, sensemaking is retrospective based on past experiences (Shultz, 1967), and thirdly, it is a social process, both individual and shared, and represents an ongoing product of conversations with ourselves and other people (Currie & Brown, 2003).

In exploring how the context of individuals shapes sensemaking, we will understand why the content of sensemaking differs within a common phenomenon. We will also determine why the social processes of sensemaking are influenced accordingly. In doing so, we will uncover why change is often so difficult to achieve, in line with expectations. Adopting the 'Theory of Practice' proposed by Bourdieu (1977), we can conceptualise the interaction between entrepreneurs and the context from which they are situated.

Bourdieu (1986) contends that individuals are located in a unique social position according to their capital resources (economic, cultural and social). These resources are gathered through their lived experiences and shape individual perceptions, interpretations and actions. In adopting this theory, we can examine the multidimensional nature of social positions, and the extent to which social standing influences the sensemaking propensity of an entrepreneur (Battilana, 2006).

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Bourdieu (1977) argues that an individual's social position, the relationships, and the sources and forms of capital at their disposal, influence their sensemaking capacity. Bourdieu suggests there is three forms of capital; economic, cultural and social. Economic capital transmits into financial capital i.e., it is exchangeable into money, and is undoubtedly seen as a source of power (Bourdieu, 1986). Cultural capital relates to the knowledge, skills, values and possessions, which influence relations (Bourdieu, 1986). Cultural capital can also develop from dialogue, perceptions, or institutionalised knowledge and skills.

Social capital conveys the importance attached to a relationship that gives rise to an entrepreneur's power within their organisation (Bourdieu, 1986). The three main aspects of social capital are structural, relational and cognitive (Napapiet & Ghosal 1998). Structural relates to an entrepreneur's network of contacts. Rational relates to trust and reciprocity and the cognitive understanding of peoples perspectives. Social capital develops through verbal interaction, cognitive experiences, stories, rituals, obligations and expectations.

Economic capital influences an entrepreneur's position and power within an organisation, and shapes their propensity to action (Crossley, 2001). On the other hand, entrepreneurs construct social reality once they become embroiled in events and circumstances orientated to elevate their views. They do so however with their interests shaped by their dispositions and the social position they hold, in the organisation they seek to preserve or transform (Bourdieu, 1986). For that reason Bourdieu's work enables us to connect an entrepreneur's social position to their sensemaking and indeed sensegiving activities, which influence evolutionary change.

Sensegiving

Sensegiving, like sensemaking, is employed by managers to reduce ambiguity and provide subordinates with workable certainty (Maitlis, 2005). In parallel to sensemaking, it reduces cognitive disorder, clears confusion, and reduces stress and anxiety where individuals are unable to cope with shifting organisational expectations. This process nonetheless, is unlike sensemaking, where stories are regarded as narrative devices to bring meaning and shape into their lives. Sensegiving utilises stories to be narrative resources that individuals use, when seeking managerial control (Collins, 2013).

Chapter 4- Methodological Standpoint

Researchers have a personal biography borne out of class, gender, race and culture (Michels, 2010; Silverman, 2005; Holt, 2001 & Stewart, 1998). Individual characteristics structure a set of ideas/framework (ontology), that form a set of questions (epistemology), that are examined in certain ways (methodology). The conundrum is, however, whether the competent researcher, when collecting empirical data can with objectivity, clarity and precision, report on their observations of the local world and the experiences of others (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

Guzik (2013), Ellis (2009) & Wall (2008) make reference to researchers merging their own experiences into the observation of the world involving their subjects. The qualitative researchers objective is to record their observations, and attach meaning to events and situations involving the 'indigenous other'. In doing so, they are entrusted with providing subjective verbal and written expression of meaning. A number of writers contend this is extremely problematic, suggesting that there is no clear window of objectivity in what has been observed, and subjects are seldom able to offer full explanations (Gilmore & Kenny, 2015; Sparkes, 2002 & Guba & Lincoln, 1985).They maintain that empirical data has to be filtered through lenses of language, social class, gender and race.

In order to explain how these challenges have been dealt with, this chapter adopts a framework developed by Denzin and Lincoln (2008). The model is summarised under five headings; the researcher as self, interpretative paradigms, strategies of enquiry, collection/analysis, and presentation/performance. In addition, the chapter examines the

ethical dilemmas faced by the researcher during the research period, and explains how they were treated.

The Researcher as Self

In order to determine how past experiences may have influenced this research, I reflect on my autobiographical memories observing the founder and personal experience as a business owner. In doing so, it is clear I will have pre-conceived ideas about the decisions that were taken at key times, and how they may have shaped the evolution of my past organisation. It seems likely therefore, that I will relate the themes uncovered in the research period, to the way in which I dealt with situations and events, during a number of years engaged in entrepreneurial activity. In order to address the claims made by Guzik (2013), Ellis (2009) & Wall (2008) relating to, the influence of cognitive experiences on the interpretation of data, I have summarised my cognitive experiences and beliefs, and discussed my ontological position in studying these individuals. The next section offers a narrative of [my] 'self reflection'.

Self Reflection

My initiation into the discipline on management began in 1980. This involved carrying out various estimating and costing activities. 'The numbers' captivated me. The opportunity to generate profit was an activity that both fascinated and consumed me. Using financial data coupled with my experience based on the shop floor, I was able to predict outcomes, plan work activities, develop processes and procedures and direct staff, all of which, done effectively, I reasoned could improve profitability.

On a daily basis I would examine different types of information that was received by, and generated within the organisation and where necessary organise its distribution. This would allow employees to carry out their duties effectively. I would involve myself in planning and scheduling work tasks, and allocate all sorts of resources to maximise

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efficiency. As a manger looking to maximise profit my focus was entirely on margin. Life was about selling as many hours as possible at the highest value per hour. I embraced what Hamel & Prahalad (1994) termed 'leverage and stretch,' a demand to exceed what is possible, with the resources available.

Having completed a management buy-in during 1990, I attempted to make the transformation from manager to entrepreneur. My approach to business however, could have hardly been deemed entrepreneurial. In the context of financial results there was a degree of success but having squeezed every last drop of productivity and goodwill out of the factory, it could not be sustained.

As the organisation evolved, problems became more inherent. The business was no longer being managed effectively. The company began to lose good staff. Quality problems surfaced. There were financial issues arising out of the mismanagement of projects, and people who were once willing to work long periods of overtime, suddenly refused. The organisation needed fresh ideas, a new management approach. As a result I decided to sell the business in 2002.

New Possibilities

As time passed and lifestyle changes occurred I met many new and diverse people. A number of these individuals have, I believe, influenced the path I have since taken. I am unsure how, or indeed when it happened, but I became surrounded by people who had a different view of the world, one that stimulated my curiosity. During a social gathering amongst friends, Ian was discussing his recent application for a Masters Degree. For some reason, he was trying to persuade me it was something I ought to consider. As I

laughed at the thought, others convinced me that I was more than capable of doing myself justice on the course. The evening was one of those life changing experiences where I had agreed to something without really questioning why.

An Introduction to Management Studies

There was no apparent justification for my entry into management research; it may have been about removing the stigma attached to a poor set of results at school, aiding my own career prospects, or more likely, to improve my future effectiveness as a consultant or as an entrepreneur. What I was not prepared for, was the deep curiosity that arose from applying theoretical issues, to make sense of the decisions I had made throughout my career. I was even more surprised at my willingness to embrace different possibilities during the learning experiences, and the transformation it would have on my own entrepreneurial life.

I started to accept that the objective view I had held for many years, characterised by certainty, was not the only way in which to scrutinise the world. I began to examine situations from an ontological assumption that there are multiple truths, and knowledge is itself, a social construction. I moved from a very functionalist position to an interpretivist view of the world.

The Transformation from Entrepreneur to Researcher

Having completed the course I felt no nearer to unraveling entrepreneurial/managerial life. I was uncertain how the knowledge I had gained could be applied to any future career/venture. The course however, offered me the opportunity to examine my past experiences from different perspectives and link the pragmatic sensemaking of my performance with reflective judgment. Consultancy projects carried during and after my Masters Degree, allowed me to observe the way in which people approached business. I began to experiment and apply new attitudes, behaviours and frameworks in work life, not just to add structure and credibility to arguments, but also to test the theory within working conditions.

Having experienced considerable frustration in trying to help other entrepreneurs during consultancy projects, and my decision to embark on a Doctorate, the opportunity to become involved in an organisation, which was expanding rapidly, came at just the right time.

Research Paradigm

The use of paradigmatic assumptions in carrying out research lies in exploring the nature of certain assumptions, and the consequences they bring to bear on the method of enquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The aim of this study was to provide explanations that further our understanding of the world, and contribute to improved performance. I adopted an interpretivist stance, the ontological assumption that there are multiple subjective realities, and that knowledge is itself a social construction (epistemological assumption). The findings have been interpreted and understood from the point of view of the subjects questioned (methodological assumptions).

Interpretivist approaches rely heavily on naturalistic methods (interviewing, observation, and an analysis of existing texts). These methods allow for the adequate dialogue between the researchers and those with whom they interact. This allows the researcher and the respondent to collaboratively construct a meaningful reality (Angen, 2000, p105). Individual subjects do however; offer multiple, fluid, and at times contradictory accounts. What is real is often socially constructed, subject to change, and accords to the time and place of its happening.

Guba (1990, p27) argues 'the inquirer and the inquired are fused into a single entity, and findings are literally the creation of the process of interaction between the two'. In parallel with Guba & Lincoln (1985) I believe, people 'construct their own understanding of reality i.e., we construct meaning based on interactions with our surroundings, and social reality is a construction based on the actors frame of reference within that setting' (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p80).

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Strategy of Enquiry

In his review of entrepreneurship methodologies, Aldrich (1990) called for more diverse data collection methods, particularly qualitative, and specifically ethnographic. He believed these approaches would add unique insights. Smith (2015), Griesbach (2013), Steyaert (2011) and Linstead (1997) all made pleas for an ethnographic approach in the study of managers and entrepreneurs. The primary aim of this research was to examine cognitions, motivations, sensemaking, attitudes and behaviours, and relate them to decision making properties/processes of entrepreneurs. This, I contend, will help us to understand the patterns of evolution within organisations.

Past experiences and motivations appear to influence the way in which entrepreneurs make sense of situations. This in turn results in behaviours/attitudes relating to, for example, trust and control, and the decisions they face on a daily basis. The research employs a combination of auto-ethnographic and ethnographic methods. This approach captures the experiences of entrepreneurs in their own environment, and produces data from natural settings. The study adopts Grounded Theory to collect data and define concepts, build relationships between concepts, and discover patterns in the data (Kogan & Muller, 2006).

Grounded Theory has been used in conjunction with ethnographic studies previously. Kogan & Muller (2006, p759) employed this approach during their research on collaborative work. Data was collected on observation sessions, field interviews and validation sessions using prototypes. It was then analysed using the principles of Grounded Theory to find relationships, and 'distil patterns from loosely collected data.' The data was analysed to guide the collection of additional information.

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Bringer (2006, p245) maintains, 'Grounded Theory is an iterative process, whereby the researchers move between data collection and analysis, writing memos, coding and creating models'. Van Maanen (1979) claims that grounded theories highlight the context of that being studied, for example the organisations, participants and their daily activities, all of which portray a conceptual understanding of issues that make up their world.

There are many connections between Grounded Theory and Ethnography. Stewart (1998) and Agar (1996) both utilised the comparable processes of generating understanding, with iterative comparisons of data and theory. "Ethnography is grounded in that ethnographers prioritise trying to think through observations in terms of their immanent context, before trying to construe the data in the light of existing theories" (Stewart, 1998, p9).

Auto-Ethnography

Auto-ethnography is a creative methodology, which presents a range of autobiographical data; this is based on the researcher's intimate knowledge of cultural settings. As such, it offers a reflexive socio-cultural analysis of their own community, the output being a narrative of personal experiences, which blends autobiography and ethnography respectively (Ellis, 2009). Whilst ethnographic methods utilise multiple research participants, auto-ethnography relies upon the researchers own data i.e., they become both the author and the focus of the story (Ellis, 2009).

Auto-ethnography is used to illuminate information experiences, and provide intimate knowledge of events and situations in cultural and social settings (Guzik, 2013). Auto-ethnography is not evaluated in its ability to replicate; its strength is its capacity to examine. Ellis suggests, it leaves space for the researchers own ideas and experiences, and focuses both on lives we have lived and the work we have done. Auto-ethnography offers a story the reader can take in and use for themselves (Ellis, 2009).

Auto-ethnography is employed to get as close as we can to information science (Guzik, 2013). It is about giving a voice to personal experience, for the purpose of extending sociological understanding (Wall, 2008).

Sparkes (2002) maintains, writers contend this form of research can at times be self-indulgent. Burnier (2006) suggests however, its methodological justification is based on its ability to cross-artificial boundaries between self and culture, politics, and society. Holt (2001) contends, auto-ethnography can explicitly link concepts from the literature to narrated personal experiences, and the narratives can illuminate social scientific issues.

"In autobiographical narrative performances, the performer often speaks about acts of social transgression. In doing so, the telling of the story itself becomes a transgressive act – a revealing of what has been kept hidden, a speaking of what has been silenced – an act of reverse discourse that struggles with the preconceptions borne in the air of dominant politics" (Fuller, 2000, p26).

Whilst auto-ethnography can be criticised for leaving out alternative perspectives, ethnography employs multiple research methods i.e., it combines participant observation and interviews, with the analysis of artefacts, stories and documentary evidence. The

blending of auto-ethnography with ethnography offers intimate knowledge of cultural settings, with methodological diversity based on the contribution of multiple respondents. Hughes (1984, p496) suggests that ethnography 'refers to the observation of people in situations, finding them where they are, staying with them in a role which will allow both intimate observation of certain parts of their behaviour, and the ability to report it in ways which are useful to social sciences, but not harmful to those observed'. The features of ethnography, according to Atkinson and Hammersley (1994), focus on exploring the essence and nature of social phenomena, a propensity to work with unstructured data, and an interpretation of meaning of human actions.

Ram (1999, p.1) contends, 'Insights into the trade of ethnography, highlight the contingent, fluid and developmental nature of encounters in the field'. The illumination of dynamics in organisations has been well demonstrated in classic studies by Alvesson (1995), Holliday (1995), Richman (1983) and Roy (1954).

Alvesson offers interesting insights through the analysis of the social process within two firms in understanding Knowledge Management. Holliday utilises ethnography across three case studies, these describe how the notion of the family is actually operationalised in the workplace. Richman suggests, his methodological experience (ethnography) takes 'slices of total life'… offers an 'accumulation of stories'… in order to 'construct a repository of information and collective wisdom'. Roy's paper also analyses the social interaction of individuals in the work place, again, through participant observation.

The study emanates out of; my autobiographical memories observing the founder of an organisation that I eventually purchased, the experiences I had as an entrepreneur from

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1990-2002, and consultancy projects as I was involved in terminating in 2006. 'Head notes' which Wall (2008) suggests have been used for whole auto-ethnographies formed particular themes (See Table 1). These head notes were extrapolated from diaries that I kept during the early part of my career, and reports during consultancy projects. These topics served as initial problems to focus on, as I spent time observing two entrepreneurs in my consultancy role from 2006-2009. Securing this management position afforded me the opportunity to develop a greater understanding of cognitions, motivations, attitudes and behaviours of the two entrepreneurs, and their relationship to their decision-making strategies.

TABLE 1 – SUMMARY OF THEMES

| Past Experiences | Motivations | Self-Efficacy |

| Attitude to Risk | Role Assumed |

| Source of help | Sensemaking | Behaviours |

| Control | Trust |

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| Decision Making |
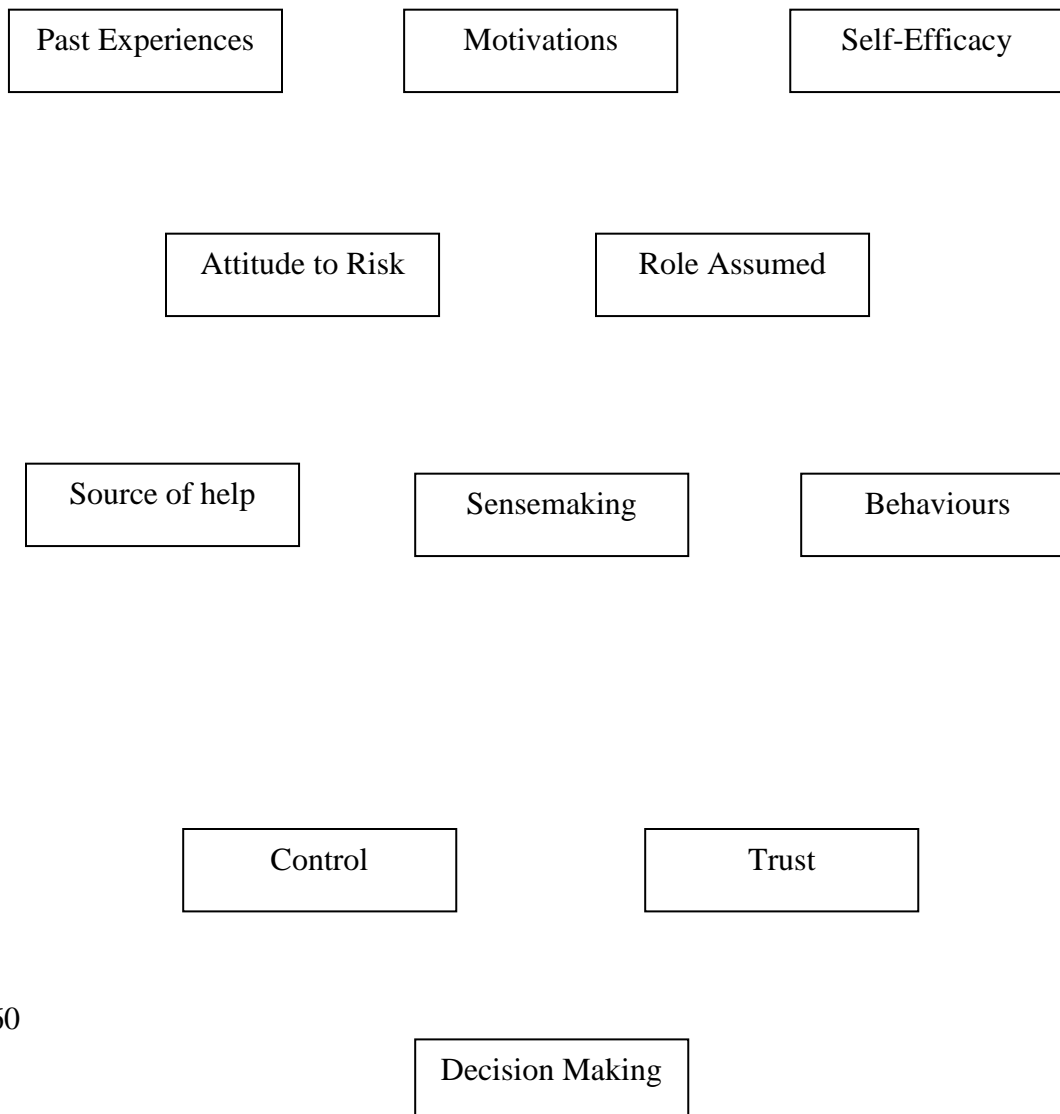
Participant Observation

During my time with the company, I observed two entrepreneurs at close quarters as an active participant within the organisation, over a period of three years. The dual role allowed me to access all sorts of data, which formed a number of interesting phenomena. Although I had some preconceived notions relating to issues that faced entrepreneurs, I was unprepared for the extent, to which, individuals spent making sense of situations, the connection of sensemaking to the behaviours they exhibited, the way they interacted with their colleagues, and the decisions they made at key times. The data was far from structured; events simply took place.

Artefacts and Documentary Evidence

During the data collection phase I examined a number of artefacts, technological, cognitive and organisational. Gobo (2008) suggests these assist in creating meaning. Artefacts included; information systems, notice boards, furnishings, and presentational literature. I also analysed an array of documentary evidence; reports, presentations, meetings minutes, and emails. These hard facts supplemented the softer impressions (Duncan, 2004), and made a significant contribution to the research.

Interviews

The themes refined during the observation stage were used to form the structure of the interviews, which Fontana & Frey (2005), Hiller & DiLuzio (2004), & Berg (2001) believe, are one of the most common and powerful ways of understanding our fellow human beings. The interviews both unstructured (casual conversations with a purpose) and structured (around themes), were used to search for contextual truth. Thirteen in-depth interviews were undertaken; six with different entrepreneurs and seven with managers.

Data Collection

The participant observation arose due to access; I was offered a Strategic Management role, which allowed me to be involved on a daily basis. The entrepreneurs, although made aware of my studies, seemed oblivious to the day-to-day scrutiny of events and activities being recorded. The observation followed an intense literature review, and themes derived from my past experiences. Additional concepts were inevitably derived on an 'as and when' basis. In adopting Glaser and Strauss's (1967) methodology, an iterative approach based on manual coding, categorising, and comparing data without any preconceived theory, I began 'noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flows and propositions' At all times, I held these 'lightly, maintaining openness and scepticism'. The conclusions were incomplete and vague at first and then became increasingly explicit.

Being immersed in the organisation, I was able to witness the events and situations that happened on a daily basis first hand, and the way in which the two entrepreneurs made sense of them. During the observation phase, a range of different behaviours became evident, in particular, related to trust and control. Being involved in the decision making process I could analyse entrepreneurs attitudes towards risk, and consider the extent to which they influenced the way in which their organisations evolved.

The business was a relatively young company, which had grown significantly over a short period of time. The organisation focussed predominantly on completing surveys for owner occupied buildings. The regulations, originating out of a European directive in 2004, provided an opportunity, which the entrepreneurs had successfully exploited. The business was primarily a people based organisation. As such, it had many human

resource challenges. The two entrepreneurs had only ever worked for one previous business. Influenced by its success, they copied many of the strategies used by their past employer. It seemed that they were not prepared to deviate from what they knew and trusted.

The data was collected in many different ways; documentary evidence, an examination of artefacts, conversations held with the entrepreneurs, discussions that went on around us, my involvement in meetings, and conversations with managers about the entrepreneurs. Eisenhardt (1989, p538) suggests "team members often have complementary insights which add to the richness of data i.e., different perspectives increasing the likelihood of capitalising on any novel insights in the data". These multiple investigations enhanced confidence in the findings, convergent perceptions added to the conflicting perceptions, and kept me from closing off the study prematurely.

Seeing and Hearing

During the observation stage I used what I could see in addition to what I could hear. I had access to a number of management reports produced by entrepreneurs aimed at staff, and from employees, for the attention their bosses. There were also presentations developed by the entrepreneurs demonstrating their value to customers. Amongst the wide range of documents were meeting minutes and emails; these flowed back and forth between the entrepreneurs and their staff. Although I have presented one of these emails in the thesis (it offered enlightening empirical data), in the main, I chose not to publicise what I considered to be confidential documentation. I was also concerned about presenting material that could be extremely subjective and ambiguous.

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I focused instead on organisational artefacts such as notice boards, furnishings, and presentational literature. These visual representations I believe, offer the reader the opportunity to relate cultural aspects of the organisations, to the entrepreneur's personality, motivations, identity and need for social acceptance. Technological and cognitive artefacts also supported themes such as trust and control; to illustrate the information systems employed, and the processes and procedures adopted, could be considered a mechanism for administrative control, based on their mistrust of others.

Interviews with entrepreneurs I had worked with previously challenged, refined and added to the notions derived from the observation. The interviews provide data on a broad cross section of entrepreneurs. Some of the individuals have a wide range of experience in different businesses, whilst others had only witnessed life in one organisation. There are entrepreneurs originating from a craft background and others who have spent their lives as professionals, for example, accountants. The age ranges of individuals were between Thirty Two and Sixty Five, and involved male and female entrepreneurs.

Dale and Justin's move towards business ownership is well documented in the next chapter. Les spent the majority of his time as a tradesman, but eventually moved into a managerial position despite minimal experience. Martin, a capable engineer, spent most of his working life as a business owner. Denise, prior to having her children, worked in the front office of a bank, but due to her desire to be a full time mum refused to return to paid employment. Elizabeth (an accountant) was involved in corporate finance. This suggested she had an in depth knowledge of business, she simply saw an opportunity to apply her knowledge in the context of running her own venture. Ron held senior roles in

a host of larger organisations, and was nearing the end of his career. Mo started his own business early on in his career, again, without experience of working for others.

The interviews began with general questions, for example, 'can you tell me a bit about your background?' They focused on family life, education, and previous careers. I would ask them to explain how and why, they started a business. Throughout the process, I was trying to avoid leading the respondents into manufactured accounts. I encouraged them to consider their approach to decision making formulating questions such as; 'When you were faced with situations and events, how did you come to a decision'? Again, I was aiming to cultivate some broad accounts. Other questions were asked to ascertain how they liked to be viewed, and how they communicated with others on the changing requirements of their business. Specific queries would attempt to determine the types of people they employed, and the extent to which they trusted their followers. I was also determined to establish the structural arrangements of these businesses, and establish who these individuals consulted when making decisions and accomplishing courses of action.

Many of the interviews took place outside of their working environment, for example, in a public house or, in my own home. Others were conducted in their office environment. Generally, the enquiries were performed in a very informal manner. As the first round of questions were semi structured, the process felt more like a chat about their working life. Throughout the interviewing process, I was prepared to allow the dialogue to become unstructured. Eventually we would arrive at the key themes established as a result of the observation. There were occasions where some of the respondents became uncomfortable and embarrassed, particularly, when relaying their attitude to things such as trust and control. Others entrepreneurs however, appeared relieved to get things 'off

their chest'. On a number of occasions they sought reassurance that the decisions they had made, were indeed rational. Throughout the process it seemed that most individuals were struggling to deal with the situations that arose on a daily basis.

The Return to Entrepreneurship

Although I believed the data collection phase was complete at the end of 2009, an opportunity presented itself to re-purchase the business I had sold in 2002. The return to entrepreneurial status gave rise to an auto-ethnographic account of the feelings I encountered, and lasted for another twelve months' whilst I attempted to resurrect the organisation. The narrative of this experience, not only added considerable insight, but was a reflexive vehicle that helped me to relate closely with the entrepreneurs studied; to feel what they felt, to better understand why they operated the way they did.

TABLE 2 – DATA SOURCES

DATA SOURCE		
Observation		
Entrepreneurs Managers Documentary Evidence Artifacts	5 7 14 12	October 2006 and December 2009 - although I used autobiographical memories, from events throughout my working career.
Meetings observed		
Senior management mee Office staff meetings Board meetings	21 14 12	October 2006 and December 2009
Interviews		
Entrepreneurs Managers	6 7	October 2008 to December 2009

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Data Analysis

Having produced a large amount of data, I employed NVIVO software to assist with processing and coding the data. The literature reviews, data relating to artefacts, documentary evidence, participant observation, and the results of the interviews, were all filed separately (Project Summary in Appendix 1). The initial stage involved setting up a research journal with project notes; Bringer (2006) suggests this is an important tool for reflection. This allowed me to record my involvement in the research, and document all of the intangibles. The journal helped me to synthesise the data, build arguments, and put the data back together again. It was also used to evidence research procedures, and provided me with reminders on topics and themes that needed further research. The research journal enabled me to consider questions like, 'what was the event?' 'How was it interpreted?' 'What were the resultant behaviours and the decisions that ensued?'

Source folders were created for all the interviews, and observation notes were split into themes, for example, control and mistrust. Sections were also formed for literature reviews; these again were divided into subjects such as, cognitions, and consultants (Source Summary in Appendix 1). Nodes were created using topics such as analysing and, confrontation (Node Summary in Appendix 1). This structure allowed me to begin the coding process which, for example, enabled me to compare attitudes relating to trust from my autobiographical experiences, to entrepreneurs studied during the observation stage, and the respondents I had interviewed. I was then able to compare it to the relevant literature. Folders were used as a means for grouping sources and nodes. To illustrate, I created a directory for the documents and memos that belonged to specific entrepreneurs. Occasionally, I linked a portion of one the items content to a whole item or, to its selected content. I related a passage in an entrepreneur's interview transcript

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to; (1) a memo about entrepreneurs newly formed ventures (2), a paragraph in the document about trust of managers and (3), a folder named control.

Whilst I employed NVIVO extensively throughout the data collection period to analyse all sorts of concepts, I also printed out substantial amounts of data. I found it easier to evidence a number of relationships from hard copy material. I searched for relationships between different attributes such as the age/gender of an entrepreneur or, the type of organisation they worked in. In addition I attempted to define connections between different project items, for example, the relationship between two cases (Dale and Justin are entrepreneurs in the same organisation), or relating to past experiences (individuals with demanding fathers, seeking constant recognition).

Throughout the data collection and analysis period I adopted grounded theory methodology to offer a compromise between extreme empiricism and complete relativism. This presented a middle ground where systematic data was used to develop theory on observable events. Grounded-Theory's origins date back to 1967 through the seminal work of Glaser & Strauss. Although it became one of the most common and widely used approaches to qualitative research, Glaser & Strauss were to develop different paradigmatic stances in relation to their methodology. Glaser's ideas were based predominantly on objectivity, whilst Strauss's were more aligned to pragmatism. These differences eventually led to Charmaz (2006) developing a methodology, which encompasses the ontological assumptions that there are multiple subjective realities under certain settings. This variation of Grounded Theory (Figure 1) allowed me to capture experiences in the observation, and determine the extent to which I might have influenced them. The approach, rather than viewing the research as separate from the

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researcher (Glaser's approach), embraces the contention that the theory simply reflects the interpretation of multiple realities, mutually constructed by the researcher and the researched (Wertz et al, 2011).

Figure 1

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┌──────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────┐
│ Research         │───────▶│ Data collection  │───────▶│ Initial/open     │
│ problem/questions│        │ for initial      │        │ coding           │
│                  │        │ coding           │        │                  │
└──────────────────┘        └──────────────────┘        └──────────────────┘
                                     ▲                            │
          ┌──────────────────┐       │                            ▼
          │ Writing drafts of│       │                   ┌──────────────────┐
          │ report           │       │                   │ Focused coding   │
          └──────────────────┘       │                   │ and refining     │
                    ▲                 │                   │ categories using │
                    │                 │                   │ further data     │
          ┌──────────────────┐        │                   │ collection       │
          │ Theoretical      │        │                   └──────────────────┘
          │ memoing and      │        │                            │
          │ sorting for      │  ┌──────────────────┐               ▼
          │ integration into │◀▶│ Theory           │◀────▶┌──────────────────┐
          │ theory and       │  │ development and  │      │ Theoretical      │
          │ related          │  │ refinement       │      │ sampling         │
          │ abstractions     │  └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘
          └──────────────────┘                                     │
                                  ┌──────────────────┐             ▼
                                  │ Final report once│   ┌──────────────────┐
                                  │ theory           │   │ Further memoing  │
                                  │ effectively      │   └──────────────────┘
                                  │ captures         │
                                  │ development of   │
                                  │ participants'    │
                                  │ socially         │
                                  │ constructed      │
                                  │ reality          │
                                  └──────────────────┘
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(Modified from Charmaz, 2006)

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Constructivist Grounded Theory followed the literature review on entrepreneurs and, sensemaking; a number of questions/problems formed that I felt needed investigating further. Why certain individuals had few problems moving through the evolutionary stages of business, whilst others remained trapped in different phases of change; in the context of sensemaking, why individuals connect the same dots very differently from one another (Kruger, 2007), and the extent to which cognitions influence self efficacy, and the effect an entrepreneurs motivations has on the roles they assumed in their respective organisations.

Data for initial coding was collected from my autobiographical memories and the early stages of observation in the asbestos consultancy business. This data referred to the problems mentioned above, and that was considered important in understanding entrepreneurs in organisations. This open coding focused on what 'being entrepreneurial' was like for different individuals and how the entrepreneurs made sense of events and situations; it also examined the divergent attitudes to decision-making, and the roles these individuals occupied within their firms.

Having analysed the data the coding became more focused, categories were refined in order to return to the field and collect further data. It was becoming evident, for example, that past experiences were influencing the way in which entrepreneurs made sense of the world, and the decisions that were being made. It was clear that mistrust and excessive control were also consistent with problematic situations.

Having produced most of data from a small number of cases, the next stage was to undertake theoretical sampling using interviews held with a number of entrepreneurs. Semi structured questions focused on; past experiences, motivations to start a business,

who they confided in order they could make sense of situations, the extent to which they controlled daily activities, and their propensity to risk.

During this process, theory was developed and refined on themes such as, the influence of cognitions on sensemaking, self-efficacy, risk, and the ensuing decisions they made. It also generated and refined theory on motivations, control and mistrust, and the extent to which these themes influenced the roles they assumed, and their daily activities. In memoing and sorting these discoveries, further observation was carried out to delve more deeply into the themes, and the related abstractions. The process was repeated to uncover further theory, for example selection and the choice of capital employed during the early stages of business.

<u>Rigour in Analysis</u>

Having undertaken a great deal of research on auto-ethnographic and ethnographic methods, I was fully aware that they can display 'an exceptional degree of eclecticism, causing it to exhibit theoretical naivety' (Richman, 1983, p9). Both Stewart (1998) and Agar (1996) contend ethnography focuses on description and illustrations, compared to analysis or interpretation. It can also, at times, discharge responsibility for the description of methods; this requires the reader to judge the extent to which insights are representative of the truth. Agar (1996, p.15) argues, 'if one is committed to application of knowledge as well as its creation, one needs credible arguments to persuade sceptical people who are being asked to put themselves on the line'.

I became committed to reflecting and questioning my rigour when collecting and analysing data. I have been transparent in describing how the data was collected so the reader is able to identify and interpret the context of the situations that occurred and form their own balanced opinions. At all times, I reflected on the data collected in the analysis stage. I considered the motivations of all contributors, the language they used, and power relations that existed between myself, the entrepreneurs and their followers. I was careful to hold realities, plural and contextual, dependent upon the persons studied and their particular interest at the time. In parallel to identifying themes, I would compare findings from the field work to what had been written before.

I paid particular attention to Thomas's concerns, cited in 2003, that can threaten the merit of a study; these include looking for things that satisfies the researcher's purpose, placing passion before science, making assertions beyond the evidence to hand, and replacing reason before stridency. I accepted Gilmore and Kenny's (2015) comments,

whereby aspects of self-reflexivity ought to include; the silence around the ethnographers' emotions, power relations and authority, and research as a joint endeavor (the influence of others).

It is worth noting, that within the consultancy business, I was an active member of the organisation, working alongside the entrepreneurs on their businesses strategy. One of the major challenges therefore, was to balance my position as a manager (offering constructive feedback), with that as a researcher (in interpreting what influenced behaviours and decision making). The role, as it happened, became a mentoring function to the entrepreneurs. For example, 'this has happened!' 'Do you think we should we do this?' 'We'll be ok won't we?'

Bate (1997) considers, the informal process of negotiating formal aspects is the 'contested terrain' upon which different interests, points of view and ideologies in organisations, are played out. Bate argues, thought and behaviour has to be understood in the context from which they are situated. Context, he maintains, can also refer to the temporal, physical or institutional embeddings of focal events or objects.

Reflecting on the interviews, I concluded, there was little consistency amongst the respondents in relation to their motivations in participating in the research. Mo, for example, appeared to want to assert his power throughout the process, communicating what he considered entrepreneurship was about. In truth, I had very little input throughout the interview, and at times, felt overawed by his personal narrative, which demonstrated his ability to turn negative situations into successful outcomes.

Elizabeth and Martin appeared to covet acceptance, were emotional, and at times irrational; both their businesses were struggling to sustain themselves. Denise seemed to be searching for answers, and was almost apologetic for what she considered to be an exploitation of work-life balance. Les and Ron's interviews emerged as a self reflection of their time in ventures, neither felt like there was an unequal distribution of power, they simply told their story.

Arguably, the most enlightening interview was conducted with Jamie, who gave an honest appraisal of Elizabeth, and the way in which she conducted her affairs. This discussion was without doubt the most challenging and the one where the power relation issue came into question. The interview had no boundaries, it felt like I could ask whatever I wanted. I certainly wasn't held back by emotional concerns in overstepping the mark with the entrepreneur. The time spent with Jamie was where I had to be extremely careful with the pitfalls raised by Thomas (2003). In analysing the transcript, I continually reflected on my interpretation of the answers he had given, in relation to the questions I had asked. In doing so, I omitted some of the comments that may have been inadvertently induced. I also contextualised a number of phrases so that they were a true reflection of the situations described.

Presentation, Performance and Representation

When we consider presentation, performance and representation, we are depicting the art and politics of interpretation and evaluation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative interpretations are constructed, in this case; from personal narratives, an account of the 'day in the life' of an entrepreneur, and the description of events and situations involving other entrepreneurs. The 'day in the life' simply construed events as they happened. It was used to demonstrate that being an entrepreneur on a daily basis, is very different, than the picture painted by mainstream literature. The section offers a true representation of the critical mess that occurs, once entrepreneurs are placed at the heart of their organisations.

Having collected empirical data, I spent many months making sense of what had been learned. The processes included in-depth self-reflection. To illustrate, having described an ordinary day, I analysed the written text and endeavored to immerse myself back into the story. In doing so, it was clear that the writing style lacked atmosphere and visual representations. As a result, I scanned my memories and consulted my field notes for pictures and sounds of the social and cultural settings to give a richer description. In addition, I attempted to convey the appearances and expressions of the actors to provide a sense of 'being there'. Realist ideology in ethnography leads to an expectation that the ethnographic text will be true to the original, the studied life (Clough, 1998).

The text appears in many forms; confessional, formal and literary. Recognising there is no singular interpretative truth, I made sense of the data using situational, relational and contextual analysis. I was trying to understand why different attitudes were being applied to situations, what the decisions being taken were based on, and how different

entrepreneurs reacted to diverse situations. Having addressed issues relating to performance and representation (the relational nature between the researcher, actors and points of view); I turned my attention to the audience. In presenting the thesis, I related the structure of the chapters to key junctures, in order, to replicate the evolutionary stages of business life. To illustrate, the empirical sections begin with a account of the lives of entrepreneurs (trait and classification subjects), then, travels through development of organisations; the capital introduced and selection of people in the early stages, day to day involvement and the decisions made which shaped the organisations future. I used the literature as a constant comparative, and inserted relevant empirical data from both the observation and interviews that had a bearing on the particular section. At all times, I was aware that my subjects could never be fully identified or, myself, as the writer, fully aware because unconscious desire makes intentional subjectivity impossible (Clough, 1998). I followed Duncan's 2004 advice to be guarded against emotional writing, and a lack of honesty about motivations of all persons involved in the study. Where gaps did appear or subjectivity was needed, I used my autobiographical experiences to help create meaning or reduce ambiguity.

Again reflecting on the writing style, I put myself in the place of the respondents, in order to judge whether they would have considered the empirical account to be contextually accurate, and a representation of the truth. I was conscious that I was representing those who were unable to represent themselves. Whilst analysing the auto-ethnographic accounts, I challenged myself to replicate my feelings, emotions and thoughts experienced at the time. "Autobiographical writing is based on movement, complexity, knowing and not knowing and being and not being exposed" (Wall, 2008 p41).

Ethics

The study gained ethical approval through the appropriate Keele committee process. As such, I followed its codes of practice relating to informed consent. Denzin & Lincoln (2011) insist research subjects have the right to be consulted about the nature of enquiry that they are involved in. The Keele process included a questionnaire, which was filled in by the researcher, and focused on consent, process and procedures. All persons involved in the research were sent an information sheet; this informed them, of the aim of the study, and why they were chosen. It described the process relating to anonymity and confidentiality, and advised them of their right to withdraw at any time. I gained prior agreement from all persons within the study, surprisingly; whilst some of the respondents preferred to go unrecognised, others were keen to be named.

The interviews were in all cases overt, however during the observation stage the process did feel covert at times. Although I was at times questioned about the nature of my research, it appeared that those involved were generally not conscious of the scrutiny of events, despite their agreement to participate. At no time did I attempt to mislead the individuals being studied. I constantly reflected on the extent to which the data collected might have been influenced by respondents, trying to paint themselves in a better light. I was aware that I was placing my body in the same location as the informants, listening into conversations, and was therefore, careful not to deceive or misrepresent any of the subjects.

I constantly thought about how I was viewed by others, in particular, relating to the 'power' I may have been wielding, this was so that I could determine if the activities we were involved in or the dialogue they offered may have been affected by my presence.

Throughout the study I have attempted to relay the context in which stories and interviews were based. I was determined to ensure that the reader is able to judge the extent to which different context may have changed what I was in fact writing.

Earlier in the section, I offered an honest appraisal of [my] 'self as the researcher.' Weber contends that research is contaminated, to some extent by the values of the researcher. Only through these values do certain problems get identified and studied in particular ways. The conclusions and implications to be drawn from the study are largely grounded in my moral and political beliefs.

During the study ethical issues arose both explicitly and implicitly, either relating to the proper treatment of 'human subjects' in the field research or to wider issues of representation. Throughout the research period I placed an emphasis on the importance of constructions of life-worlds (Linstead, 1997), i.e., my involvement in defining the situation. I consider my research to be driven by honesty, justice and respect, and I hope that my actions are judged by intent and not by consequences.

Chapter Five - High and Lows

This chapter challenges many of the ideologies raised in Chapter Two, based on existing literature. This characterises entrepreneurs as having exceptional qualities, and suggests individuals focus on the bigger picture rather than functional details. The chapter demonstrates the '*highs and lows*' that entrepreneurs experience, and the critical mess that occurs once they notice that the state of the world fails to concur with their expectations. The section suggests that spending a large portion of their time analysing and encoding events, indicates that entrepreneurs are far from working on their respective businesses, i.e., being entrepreneurial. The chapter describes an entrepreneurs attempt to stabilise data in order to reduce complexity. These individuals, as a result, become embroiled in insignificant detail, and lose sight of important issues at key times. This affects their ventures in a negative way.

In observing two entrepreneurs at close quarters, over a period of three years, I was able to witness just how far apart life as an entrepreneur is, to that rendered by mainstream literature. The chapter considers 'a day in the life' of Dale and Justin, partners in a consultancy business. These individuals have only been involved in one other organisation (as employees), and have great difficulty adjusting to life as entrepreneurs. The chapter examines the extent to which these entrepreneurs match the widely held view of 'who entrepreneurs are' (traits), comparing their actual activities, with what the literature suggests they ought to do at certain intervals (evolutionary stages).

It analyses the degree to which they adopt 'The Theories of Enterprise', and exhibit the behaviours and attitudes needed to sustain their business. The section draws comparisons with prescriptive literature, in evaluating their approach to issues that arise on a daily basis. The chapter presents a wider view of what 'being entrepreneurial' is actually like, meditating on the accounts of their daily activities, during the research period.

A Day in the Life

It is an ordinary day at the entrepreneur's head office. Outside, the arrival of employees sees cars jockeying for spaces in designated parking areas. Two surveyors are propped up against the side of the newly refurbished building, puffing on the first of their allotted two cigarettes per morning. Other surveyors, dressed immaculately in various items of work wear, carefully navigate around the Directors gleaming new cars, whilst loading their vehicles for the day's work. The banter begins when one of the smokers boisterously relays a story; this describes the weekend events involving a couple of their colleagues. The employees are all very close and have known each other for years either in a social capacity, or as work colleagues.

Inside the immaculate reception area, which displays certificates and news stories, various individuals make polite greetings as they pass each other. People entering the building make their way to their work stations, and those leaving '*headquarters*' prepare for a day on site, trading the busy atmosphere of office life for the solitude of lone working. On this particular day, training is being conducted with external businesses. Visitors take their seats, whilst female members of staff rustle up coffee amongst their own colleagues who are busy taking refreshments.

It appears that this is a particularly sexist organisation where females are associated with domestic chores. The little kitchen eight feet square seems even smaller for those occupying the space, there is a note hanging on the kitchen wall reminding people of their responsibility for tidiness and cleanliness at all times.

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The main office area accommodates project managers, the quality team, information technicians and administration staff. The majority of these employees are mainly female, and responsible for the preparation and checking of reports. The office is spotless, there are pigeon holes and shelves spaced equally around the walls. The shelves are full of corporate literature and gifts; these include four different types of brochures, presentation packs, rulers and coasters, all of which are stacked neatly. The fabric walls, blinds, chairs and carpets, are all colour coordinated, and there is a specially designed painting that incorporates the organisations logo in an abstract display. The tone of the facsimile machine is heard above the photocopier; this is manned by the newest arrivals, and is in constant use. Most of the employees are seated at identical work stations. The atmosphere is muted, despite quiet murmurings, which are almost a whisper.

A young lady asks if she can open a window, there is no air conditioning and the temperature is well in excess of twenty degrees. The two entrepreneurs Dale (34) and Justin (33) had worked for a local firm (now competitors) for over ten years and witnessed its success story. The individuals held senior positions during that time, as project managers. During his final year with the company, Dale had become disillusioned; this was exacerbated once he had learnt that the Directors were looking to exit the business. Dale told me that the new owners were looking for existing employees to manage the business, and he was tempted to carve out a niche position for himself. Recognising the scale of the task however, he came to the conclusion that if he was going to '*kill himself*', he may as well do it for his own gain, rather than '*making other people rich*'.

Dale informed me that he believed the timing was right for him to start his own venture, and capitalise on the knowledge he had gained during his spell with this former company. At the time, changing legislative requirements laid out by the government (which meant increased demand for the services they offered), led him to conclude that an opportunity existed that he could exploit. Dale was not however, prepared to risk it alone, and persuaded Justin and a third party John, to enter into business with him. Six months later they made their dream a reality.

During my time as a consultant for the company I participated in a number of meetings involving the two entrepreneurs and their staff, where all sorts of situations were talked into existence. On this particular day Dale looked extremely stressed as he entered the main office to question the whereabouts of Jamie, a Project Manager. Jamie, once again was filling in on site for a member of his team who was off sick. Dale asked Gerry (Jamie's line manager), if he was able to 'spare a minute,' but this was not a question. As the meeting commences fingers attach themselves to keyboards, and all eyes remain firmly on computer screens.

Gerry, a lively individual in his mid thirties with greying hair, reluctantly rises up from his chair and follows his superior out of the room. One by one people relax their posture, simultaneously acknowledging their colleagues presence with tightened muscles in their faces, questions are uttered, but nothing is said in reply. The team realise that something is wrong; they appear concerned that the problem may involve them. It seemed that Gerry had been strategically placed in the middle of the main office to ensure that productivity was maximised.

The door in the adjacent office used by the Directors was propped open throughout the day, and was only closed when discussions were held. The latch mechanism is broken. As a result, the closing action appears to trigger reactions as the sound reverberates around the whole office. This noise signals an immediate change to the atmosphere in the environment in which they all work. On the occasions where I wasn't involved in meetings, the audible murmurings we could all hear seemed to be ignored by the staff, no matter how much of a distraction they were. I reasoned that people had simply accepted it as a way of life.

I join Gerry, who is seated at the table; Dale and Justin are as usual preoccupied with phone calls. Dale and Justin spend large blocks of their time speculating what might be happening both within and surrounding their organisation. They appear to scrutinise all sorts of incidents, endorsing sense back into the world. I had witnessed this obsession for a number of months, as they scanned the environment for something to confirm their suspicions.

Dale was proud in the knowledge however, they were '*too clever*' for their staff and suppliers. '*They'd been there, done that and got the 'T-Shirt'* there was no way that anyone was going to put one over on them. The contention being that the two entrepreneurs past experiences in a previous organisation influenced the way in which they would make sense of situations. Their paranoia was out of proportion to anything I had witnessed previously, and their behaviour extended beyond analysing, to anticipating the actions of others.

Fourteen minutes later Dale wipes his phone, straightens his tie, and tells us that he had earlier visited his old firm. As he signed the visitor's book, he had spotted the signature of our software supplier. A situation had occurred that had been bracketed, he had developed plausible images to rationalise what others were doing. Gerry, Justin and I listen to Dale relay an event, which he believes could have serious negative consequences for the organisation.

He describes in vivid detail, how he believes the supplier is collaborating with a competitor, on a product they were developing for him, under a confidentiality agreement. Gerry shuffles uncomfortably in his chair. The narrative even depicts the conversation Dale believes might have been taking place between the two parties. I was not entirely sure what the purpose of our meeting was, it seemed that Dale just needed to hear our interpretation of the matter. Having witnessed other firms and individuals breaching Dale's trust I became concerned that this would eventually have a negative effect on the relationships with important suppliers.

Dale and Justin seemed to thrive on unravelling the meaning of the tales passed to them from '*trusted sources,* i.e., people within the organisation that had proved their allegiance to the cause. There was a triangulation process; the inadequacy of understanding would unfold in the presence of a first person; others would be used to process information sources; and then a group of us would be asked to make retrospective sense of events and situations. This ritual of being called into the office happened on a daily basis. I listened to them, reviewing the actions of managers, interpreting incidents involving staff, and inferring and explaining cues from the environment.

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It was clear to me that the decisions that needed to be made at key times were being avoided, or influenced by the way which these entrepreneurs made sense of situations. On many occasions the picture being formed appeared entirely based on events they had experienced previously, despite the context of new occurrences being very different. As Gerry returns to his office, his colleagues wait in anticipation. Only the senior managers dare to question him. '*What was that all about*?' Gerry knows he is in an impossible situation. Avoiding their question would isolate him from the group, casting him as one of them (there was obviously a feeling of separation), to divulge information would undermine the directors and jeopardise his own position. Awkwardly, Gerry attempted to pacify the employees with half-truths, implied stories and manufactured accounts. His colleagues, I later found out, chose not to believe him.

Many of the discussions held behind closed doors were about hiring new employees. Dale and Justin regularly returned to their old company, selecting candidates who were known to them, and who '*could be trusted"*. Soon after appointing a couple of the '*more able*' consultants, they realised that working alongside these individuals as a superior, was an entirely different proposition than as a work colleague. Their expectations changed. Dale maintained that it now '*felt personal*'.

Dale and Justin became obsessive in confronting this somewhat surprising change to their view of the world. They began to investigate everything their employees were doing, to the extent, it disrupted their entrepreneurial qualities. Forward thinking began to decline, and they appeared indecisive and negative.

I was astonished that Dale and Justin wasted so much time listening to gossip, stories and rumours and even more curious was the way in which they constantly scrutinised symbolic behaviours, in order to make accounts plausible. I also thought it significant that they were reluctant to confront issues, choosing instead to communicate through inference relayed in many different ways, at opportune moments.

This lack of confrontation was a complex phenomena, which I witnessed on three different levels; avoiding things that were real, over playing problems so that they warranted concern, and creating dilemmas in their own minds. The new employees however, were not the only people causing Dale and Justin problems. They had begun to examine the contribution of John (a third partner), whose work ethic, they said, was on an entirely different level than their own. John was struggling to grow his side of the business; the services he offered were different. From the outset, Dale insisted that the management accounts were set up in such a way, that the contributions of the two business units were easily identifiable. On the fifteenth day of every month, my task was to present monthly figures to all three Directors prior to the business review meeting.

This, amongst other things, was held to attribute meaning to the results of the previous month, and set objectives for the next quarter. I knew that Dale and Justin poured over the figures before the meeting; I was regularly hauled in to explain certain aspects of the accounts. As we sat round the table, there was an uneasy atmosphere. John appeared to know what was coming. Although little was said directly, the message was there, he was not experiencing the same type of growth as Dale and Justin, and his continued poor performance would not be tolerated. The strange thing was, no matter what issues they had, they would never confront him directly.

As time went on, meetings were held in secret outside of work without John. We would leave the office in separate cars to meet at various rendezvous. As Justin got a round of drinks Dale sighed, "*He's doing my head in; he's just oblivious to the results. If it was me I would be dashing around, banging away at the phone*". Justin placed the drinks in front of us, and shook his head in despair. They spent the next half an hour dissecting John's poor performance. It was clear that Dale and Justin were not going to put up with this imbalance, especially as, they argued, John was doing very little to reverse the situation. "*I'm not busting my arse so that he (John) can swan around taking a third of my efforts*".

John had been excluded from meetings, and was no longer consulted over important decisions. As a result there was an icy atmosphere between the three directors. Trying to interpret their implied messages, John turned to me for assurance. Looking downtrodden he confessed;

"*I feel isolated I know I'm probably paranoid but I think they're pissed off with me. I can't help feeling I'm the topic of conversation every time that office door closes. Have they said anything to you...?*"

I mumbled something about figures, John interrupted...

"*I know I'm continually asked what work I've got coming in and you've seen yourself that there's a post mortem held at the end of every month. I'm trying but it's getting me down. I can't even have my hair cut without feeling guilty*".

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My first experiences at the company in a full time capacity were somewhat different than I had expected. Although I had observed the two entrepreneurs in my position as a business consultant, nothing could have prepared me for the reality of how they behaved within their business. I began to associate myself with the plight of John; I also felt a sense of isolation. Dale and Justin worked long hours, although they never communicated an issue with me being able to match them hour for hour, it became clear that they had a problem with it. Work life seemed to be about quantity rather than quality. Justin would put in requests for dental appointments and would make up for the lost time; it was all incredibly strange to me. They had the ability to perpetuate your own self guilt. I found myself worrying about going to my children's sports days. The words '*no problem'* came out of Justin's mouth; his expression, however, suggested something entirely different. I heard John's words reverberating around my head, '*I can't even have my hair cut without feeling guilty'*.

Some days I was completely ignored. Dale and Justin often inferred displeasure without actually articulating it. I reasoned it was a way that they could retreat if challenged. As I entered the building late one morning (I had dropped my children at school), Justin was deep in discussion with Harry, as I breathlessly motioned a good morning Harry gestured with his hand, Justin simply looked at the clock and continued with his conversation. I became completely de-motivated; it began to affect my own performance.

As a researcher it was becoming apparent to me, that although the entrepreneurs were relatively successful, they could never fulfil their full potential, until they found ways to deal with the rollercoaster of emotions they experienced on a daily basis. There was a

lot of interesting phenomenon within the organisation, and I began to address 'why' rather than 'what' things were occurring.

I attempted to establish why they wasted so much time labelling, bracketing and categorising situations, and why they were unable to release control to members who appeared capable of carrying out particular work tasks. These preoccupations impacted greatly on their time; this meant that the tasks they should have been working on were either ignored or avoided. It was also clear that their sense of mistrust was having a negative effect on both the entrepreneurs, and their employees. Their behaviours eventually affected the relationship between them.

'It seems that human fear, insecurity, oversensitivity, dependency, and paranoia eventually motivate members to protect themselves by being cautious, by minimising their risks, and by going along with cultures that build protective barriers around work units and around entire organisations (Kilmann et al, 1985).

The extent of control exerted by Dale was suffocating. He rarely delegated anything; employees under his supervision appeared de-motivated. As I sat in Dale's new Audi, I watched, whilst he arranged his suit on a specially prepared hanger. Dale carefully attached his phone to the hands free mechanism in readiness for the journey. I was accompanying Dale and Justin to a meeting where our software provider had stipulated their interest in selling their business to us.

As was often the case (due to his involvement in areas that were unwarranted), we did not have the opportunity to discuss our level of interest, or the tactics we might employ during the meeting.

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The forty minute journey was our chance to discuss possible scenarios, and agree the tactics we might employ during the meeting. Dale began the discussion, conveying his scepticism towards James's (the individual we were due to meet with) motivation behind the sale. Dale's phone rang; he rarely ignored his phone, it was hardly ever switched off. The call was from a supplier, who was travelling to a meeting with two members of our team, to discuss possible Health & Safety training initiatives, he simply needed directions.

He rang Dale, it was the only contact number he had. Dale could have given him the office number or, simply pointed him to our website. He not only gave detailed directions, but went on to discuss the rationale for the meeting. After several minutes, the signal was lost on the phone; Dale immediately rang the caller back. I turned to look at Justin; he simply shrugged his shoulders and smiled. Finally, after four separate calls (the phone had cut out three times), he had negated the need for the meeting to take place. The two employees; that had instigated the idea, were more than capable of communicating our proposals. As a result, the only thing Dale had achieved was to undermine his staff and leave us unprepared for our meeting.

I was unable to determine why Dale felt that his involvement in something that didn't require his input was more important than a meeting that could be of great value for the business. Was Dale avoiding discussing something that involved taking risk? Was he concerned that he was out of his depth in negotiating an acquisition? Did he simply trust me to get on with the negotiations? I reflected that Dale might have been demonstrating his worth with his persistence, and his confidence in talking about things he knew a great deal about.

Dale, Justin and I had a totally different perception of the value I could add to the business. They used me predominantly as a sounding board. '*Andy, can I have your opinion on this*' and a reassurance mechanism, '*there can't be any comebacks on us can there?' 'We'll be ok wont we?'* My aims, on the basis that the organisation was fairly successful, were more geared towards to the emancipation of these entrepreneurs, and the improvement of their work/life balance. I considered that I needed to improve their deep level thinking skills, and make them aware of how different schemata and social contexts conceptualized events, influencing their behaviours and the decisions they made.

The deeper I became involved, the more I recognised that the behaviour and actions of Dale and Justin were based on their interpretive frameworks. These were not only influenced by past experiences and emotions, but equally, as a result of doing the same things day after day. Habits, according to Dewey in (Cohen, 2007), focus on 'recurring action patterns,' both individual and collective, i.e., they are embedded in organisational identity or culture (Cohen, 2007, p773). An examination of Dewey's works helped me to understand how routines arise, are maintained, change, or indeed are resistant to change. In Dale and Justin's case, a lot of what they did was based on doing the same thing over time, in isolation from thought or feeling. This, Dewey argues, is mindless and without thought, deliberation or reflection (Cohen, 2007). Through observation and interviews, it was clear that a combination of emotional habits and cognitions influenced how the entrepreneurs framed events, and produced individual and collective outcomes.

Another theme that became significant during the study was the extent to which Dale and Justin sought recognition for their successes within their community. Their strategy to recruit from social circles supports Kets de Vries (1985) contention that many

entrepreneurs have to show that they are noteworthy and amount to something. His article contemplates that there is an inclination for some entrepreneurs to build monuments as symbols, to emphasise their achievements. Dale and Justin both coveted a desire to gain applause from friends and family, this was bound up in their inability to separate or distinguish between, social and work life.

In this particular case, the desire for applause seemed to manifest itself in their inclination to recruit from past colleagues, friends' relatives or, individuals who were well known within the industry.

Their strategy, to promote from within, appeared to be based on workable certainty, and not disappointing or losing their trusted staff. Many times Dale and Justin interviewed very able external candidates but more often than not, they would overlook them in favour of people they knew, even though they had little managerial experience. They believed friends would not '*fuck them over'*. There was less risk employing past colleagues, and they would surely get loyalty from family members. It seemed they could only deal with sameness. In other words, it was easier to control what they knew. The organisation, as a result, became a group of loyalists who rarely challenged the entrepreneurs. Consequently 'Groupthink' became the norm.

In parallel with Kets de Vries (1985), I suggested their strategy was counterproductive, and the organisation would miss out on new ideas. Their standard retort was that I didn't understand the industry and what was needed. I disputed that every business required a mix of skills, people who would bring something new to the organisation, but I was generally over-ruled. Employing people who were like-minded, or who worked for competitors, meant that mimesis of another competitor was created.

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Dale and Justin's inability to separate work and social life resulted in gatherings which were often held in a pub and appeared to be used to do three things, (1) ensure their staff knew how well they were doing in comparison to others (a form of sensegiving), (2) question their trusted staff about their colleagues and performance, and (3) uncover gossip about people and the competition, in the industry they worked in.

Whilst the literature suggests that entrepreneurs should be remote from day to day activities, so that they can focus on being creative, Dale and Justin were clearly embroiled in all sorts of issues; this resulted in the business being trapped in different evolutionary stages. Eventually, problems began to surface in relation to quality, productivity, delivery, human resources and communication. The business, in particular, experienced significant issues in regard to staff turnover, inconsistent sales, and late reports. When it became clear that managers were not competent in their respective duties, the entrepreneurs chose to take control. The deeper they became involved, the larger the issues seemed to be. Quality, inefficiencies in productivity, poor communication, a lack of commercial awareness, incomplete reports, and exposure to contractual penalties were all matters of concern. Throughout the observation period, I saw individuals rebelling against the suffocation they felt. This seemed to be as a result of the control exercised by the two entrepreneurs.

There was a complete lack of ownership, employees were de-motivated, and most couldn't see the point of carrying their tasks through to the end. Consequently, many were not empowered to find solutions to problems. This seemed to start a cycle where the entrepreneur stepped in to resolve the issues, and the employees retreated and gave up accountability.

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The observation of these two individuals raises many issues that conflict with the literature, discussed in Chapter Two. Dale and Justin do not appear to be socially distinct individuals, they are extremely risk averse, their focus appears to be related to social recognition and their fear of failure, rather than on sustainable growth. Daily routines were influenced by events that occurred either operationally, or involved people. The most significant aspects of the case relate to the sensemaking process of entrepreneurs. Large blocks of their time were spent noticing the chaos that surrounded them; bracketing events and labeling and categorising situations, in order to make sense of the world. Often, their schemata resulted in behavioral issues surfacing, particularly concerning mistrust, control, a reduction of self-efficacy, and decisions being avoided.

Being mindful of the criticism levelled at auto-ethnography and ethnography, I was determined to find out if the issues arising from my autobiographical memories, consultancy projects, and the participant observation, were representative of other entrepreneurs. I decided therefore, to conduct a number of interviews with other entrepreneurs I had worked with previously, in an attempt to present both confirming and disconfirming data relating to entrepreneurial life.

The next section attempts to relate the past experiences, motivations, and self-efficacy of individuals to entrepreneurial life. After completing my research, I spent a great deal of time reflecting on what I had obtained. Being entrepreneurial appeared to be something very different than the picture painted by the literature. For every success story, there seemed to be many individuals who were finding their ventures a real struggle.

The Entrepreneurs and Their Past Experiences

The interviews provide data on a cross section of entrepreneurs, introduced in Chapter Four. Some of the individuals have a wide range of experience in different businesses, whilst others, had only witnessed life in one organisation. There are entrepreneurs who originate from a craft background and others, who have spent their lives as professionals, for example accountants. The age ranges of these individuals were between Thirty Two and Sixty Five, and involved male and female entrepreneurs.

Upbringing

I was aware that Dale and Martin had brothers who were more successful in their academic studies; both believed their brothers courted more favour from their parents. I am unacquainted with Dale's father's background, however Martin's had been relatively successful in the property market. Both individuals admitted to having a hard time pleasing their father. I had performed poorly at school and was forever told that I would never make a tradesman. One story that sticks in my mind was my father hanging a piece of poor workmanship on the wall; this was done apparently, to remind me of my failings. So in these instances, all three parents found it difficult to praise their sons. Elizabeth's father had been successful in his business, and provided her with the funds to buy her own organisation. In all these cases, failure, in relation to their venture, was not an option.

Mo believed he was very much a product of his upbringing. *"A lot of my experiences, mostly negative experiences, in my childhood, actually manifested itself in the way I am today, my behaviour and attitudes".* Mo had a very tough childhood moving from

Pakistan to England as he was growing up. "*I was 8 years of age, it was the toughest experiences of my life coming to a new country, new cultures, not able to read, write, communicate – it was a terrible, traumatic experience".* Mo identifies that some people handle those types of situations positively, whilst others do not. He is convinced that his life path would have been very different if it wasn't for his upbringing.

> *"I have handled a very difficult situation and I learnt to actually confront and handle my demons, and I think when I look at life and business, most people don't actually have the ability to handle problems head on; most people shy away from those problems – they will turn their back – and of course, in a business environment, you do that and you are basically out of business"*(MC Int 8:p2).

Mo had been bullied at school.

> *"In my first school I was the only Asian kid, full stop, in the whole school; couldn't read, write or speak. I then obviously started to learn quickly and of course have been playing catch-up from that age. I didn't go to school until I was nine, so you can imagine how difficult that was".* In his next school he faced discrimination and had to tackle different problems. *"You had to fight or fright and basically go along with their ways and I decided… from the inside… no, I'm not having this, you know. I'm going to stand and handle it the best that I possibly can… and I did*".
> (MC Int 8:p3)

Mo admits to not being confident enough to put his hand up in a classroom environment, as a result, he was bypassed. Mo it seems, learned quickly and was taught a valuable lesson.

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"I realised that you have to stand up, and you've got to ask and not be afraid of being made a fool of, you know, because I think we are all learning, and so ever since then my style has been very open, very direct, because I am confident in myself now, and I have been for a long time. I have no issue if I don't understand something and probably I make a point now, out of principle, of keeping it simple and stupid". (MC Int 8:p3)

Mo explains it is alright to ask foolish questions, as it is the easiest way to learn. Having left school, Mo watched his father set up a number of businesses that didn't succeed. He describes his father as an *'aspiring entrepreneur'* who failed because he didn't have *'the grounding or the education'*. Although Mo seems to support the notions of entrepreneurs being born, he is clearly suggesting that entrepreneurship can be harnessed by others. Mo worked in the family business until his father was declared bankrupt.

"That was quite a traumatic experience as a young 15-year-old kid moving, going from a four bed-roomed detached property, lovely business, and being part of a family that is known and respected, to then being bankrupt. All of a sudden the whole world is collapsing in, and you go to a two-up/two-down property that has got no inside bathroom". (MC Int 8: p3)

Mo reflects on his own academic experience...

"It was no surprise, looking back at it, as to why I failed everything, because I just didn't have the right attitude, you know, I kind of became a victim. I felt like I was a victim to the world, and it's only dawned on me after I failed, that actually the world

didn't owe me, but actually what I could do, do for myself… and that's when I got

my ideas".(MC Int 8: p4)

Work Experiences

It is clear that the entrepreneurs studied, all had different work experiences. Dale and Justin only ever knew life in one organisation. Les and Martin had been involved in different businesses, but in a craft type management position. Elizabeth worked predominantly in the financial sector, but never directly in industry. Ron occupied senior roles in a number of large organisations, and Mo had a diverse range of jobs none of which, however, could be considered managerial positions.

Dale and Justin as employees, observed their leader putting things in place to sustain his organisation over the long term. They had witnessed the firm's achievements, and stored in their minds; the tactics, processes and procedures employed that they believed contributed to the organisations success. As well as the positives, they observed things that went wrong on a daily basis, and witnessed, the way in which staff took advantage of their boss. Dale told me employees used to finish jobs early, spend all afternoon in the pub, and carry out errands to save doing them in their own time.

Dale maintained inefficiencies were rife in the organisation, and argued, although it performed well financially, it could have been even more successful if it capitalised on *'operational improvements'*.

These learning experiences seemed to resurface once the entrepreneurs became involved in their own business. They imitated the majority of things that they believed made their past employer successful, but they refused to adopt processes and procedures that could have made the business even more streamlined. I have discussed in the previous chapter how they dismissed many of the ideas brought forward by others.

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It was also clear that Dale and Justin were unable to trust many of their staff, presumably, on the basis that they'd seen them in action previously. This made it all the more strange that they continually returned to their previous organisation, to recruit surveyors and managers.

Les' life was spent working alongside other tradesman, experiencing the banter, and pulling together to *'get the job done'*. Les was clearly *'one of the lads'* striving for a better life for their families. Les talked about the bond they shared and the laughs they had on site. Once in business, Les, although asserting himself as the boss, still had to feel part of the team delivering projects to his customers. His staff would have to come into the *'yard'* after a day's work, to communicate what had happened during the day.

Elizabeth knew the fundamentals of business; her experience on the periphery of organisations was to prove very different once she became a business owner. Her employees failed to marry up to her expectations. It took her some time to realise she was dealing with individuals who had a completely different outlook and education, to her colleagues in an accountancy practice.

When Elizabeth couldn't establish what was going on inside her organisation, she placed herself firmly in a position where she could make connections, and gain an understanding of situations. This tactic led to the reduction in the ambiguity and complexity of events and circumstances.

Ron had experience in diverse organisations, different management styles, and worked alongside a range of different employees. He was able to rationalise that '*what people were prepared to do',* was based on, '*how they were treated'*. He had witnessed the way

in which individuals responded to different styles of management, and observed the effect on organisations. Ron had attended management courses, applying many of the techniques learnt in different businesses. He understood what business was about. His experience in high-level positions resulted in effective management of people from all walks of life.

Mo trusts that his first occupation, selling insurance, was a job that '*brought out the raw skills, the raw abilities, the ingredients that one needs to make a successful life'.* Mo presupposes, the experience of knocking on doors in the cold, helped him to find something he didn't know he had, '*that real fire in my belly'.*

> "*My spark was when I failed everything. That spark got lit and it has stayed constantly lit ever since then. There are some ingredients you need which is basically persistency, and I realised that if I persisted in knocking on doors and handling rejection, that eventually I'd get in to see somebody, and that's exactly what happened. Tenacity, which is very similar to persistency and resilience, you get knocked down you get up, right?"* (MC Int 8:p7)

Mo's past experiences appear to have prepared him for the challenges associated with business ownership. He is, it seems, fuelled by his failure. The ingredients he believes you require as an entrepreneur, '*persistency, tenacity, and resilience'* are deeply embedded in his principles. Mo values commitment and hard work. He believes in; the ability to handle tough situations, learning from mistakes, being prepared to make difficult decisions, and not being '*airy fairy'.* Mo has no desire to be involved in the detail, he simply organises things in such a way, that his staff can make a name for

themselves, the way he did. Mo's philosophy is simple; find the opportunity, employ the

right people, agree the remit and let them go. (MC Int 8:p7)

Transferring Experiences into Action

Dale and Justin's experiences surface in the belief that replicating the process and procedures, working in similar sectors and applying the same or improved offerings, would result in the best chance of success. They believed it was crucial that their organisation mirrored their past employers business, and was perceived as credible as others highly placed in the industry. Dale and Justin valued order and consistency. Process and procedures seemed to be the foundation for compliance which they again, determined was crucial in delivering their service offering. Dale and Justin craved acceptance from industry players and other stakeholders, in particular, the people they employed. The entrepreneurs placed high demands on their employees, expecting them to fit their social life around work. They were convinced that the selection of people known to them, offered the best chance of convincing staff to go the '*extra mile'* for the firm.

Les had worked for organisations whose leaders were remote from the projects they were delivering, and were painted by their employees as people who had little practical knowledge of their trade. Les clearly promoted that, as a leader, you had to show people that you empathised with their issues, were prepared to roll up your sleeves and get involved. Les valued the relationships he held with his 'comrades,' particularly those, who had practical knowledge and shared the same ideals as himself. He was atypical of a craft entrepreneur whose focus was on '*getting the job done,'* rather than making the business more successful.

Elizabeth entered the business world expecting to apply the techniques she had learnt in practice. Her involvement in the venture, however, appeared to alter her thinking in relation to her input into the organisation. Subsequently, she became obsessed with controlling all aspects of the business. In order to improve performance, she concluded that she needed to understand all disciplines associated with her organisation.

Elizabeth cherished the respect of her staff, she felt that she had to be seen to be adding value at all times. Her involvement in the venture helped her to uncover issues within the business, and expose individuals who were not performing in line with her expectations.

Ron however, was content to stand back. He held the belief that his staff would succeed as long as they were given the tools to carry out the tasks. Ron applied everything he'd learned to his business. He believed firmly in mentoring, teamwork and collaboration. The next section presents further stories, which convey that the life of an entrepreneur is not perhaps, as straightforward as popular culture would have us believe.

Being Entrepreneurial

Martin became quite emotional as he explained how his business was affecting his and his wife's mental state.

> *"It's been very difficult, no cash, we've struggled for work. It's been hand to mouth, very little work apart from a little bit of development work. It's been really hard work, it's been a real pain as you can see in Lesley's (Martin's wife and Financial Director) face when you look at her, and at times you can see it in me as well. I have to say it's hard work just to get the energy to get out of bed with the knowledge I've got a problem with whether I could pay the wages or not"* (MM ,Int 1:p1).

Martin attaches great emphasis to the word work, '*struggled for work',* '*very little work',* '*little bit of development work'* and '*really hard work'.* He points out that the '*really hard work',* influences his '*real'* life. The effect of his struggle is seen in the reflection in his wife's face. His business decisions are clearly influenced, albeit subconsciously, by his home life. This is likely to be the reason he finds it difficult to make decisions, and is extremely risk averse. The language within the passage is also significant. He uses '*hand', '*mouth', '*face'* and '*energy'.* It appears that he is establishing a direct link between his physical welfare and his work situation. This is evident in the statement, '*you can see it in me as well'.* The only person who can see it is Martin; he cannot separate work from home life, and is in a state of limbo. Once again, this is reinforced with the comment, '*it's hard just to get the energy to get out of bed',* the bed, being a representation of his home life, which he cannot escape.

After completing a management buy-in, Elizabeth acknowledges that things are tough, but claims everyone else is finding it equally difficult. Is this relevant to her? Does this make it acceptable? Although she argues the drop in turnover is the main reason for her negative state, she alludes to other things that are contributing to a decline in earnings.

"We're having a tough time, which is a bit selfish of me, because to be fair, everyone I talk to is having a tough time. I think it's come at a point where turnover has just nose-dived in the last 12 months, but it probably came at a time with different things happening in the business as well" (ET, Int 6:p1).

Other entrepreneurs also experienced a rollercoaster of emotions about their respective businesses, both positive and negative. Denise also described her personal experience, with highs and lows in business.

"It has highs and lows. Sometimes you think you are doing the right thing and then you think, oh god it's all going to go horribly wrong. It's not going to pay the bills and then I will have to go and work for Nat West again… but emotions…I felt great when I won the business award and I got the impression that people thought I was serious…they took me seriously. Because I have to say, when I have Georgia [daughter] saying 'you don't go work mummy' it makes you think no I'm not. But then when someone acknowledges you and takes you seriously, it makes you…well, I feel a little bit more grown up then. [Laughs] Because most of the time I feel like I'm just dabbling at it". "I'm not dabbling at it but that's the impression people give me, and most people don't actually know that I do work. So that was a high point that was good. Low points are when someone cancels or I know I've got nothing booked in for the following week … but generally it turns out alright. The

function I organised for Knights... the garden party that was also good" (DB, Int 5:
P2)*.*

Denise set up her business to create balance between having an income stream, and
an ability to look after her children. She experiences mixed emotions concerning the
viability of her business. These alternate between the belief that she is doing the right
thing, and the guilt she feels as a result of the impact her career may be having on
her children. Denise is clearly a devoted mother but also a highly creative business
women. She is clearly fearful of failure; she is continually looking over her shoulder at
the return to paid employment, and the inability to pay the bills should things go
wrong. She relays the emotions she experiences, including the embarrassment she
feels when people don't think she's serious or, when they express the view that she is
playing at it. Even her daughter, she says, doesn't believe it's a proper job. Having
spoken to Denise at length, she is clearly entrepreneurial, but her opportunities are
restricted due to the insistence that her children will come first at all costs. For many
female entrepreneurs, society imposes a barrier that seems impossible for them to
climb.

Regarding how they spent their time, there was little to suggest that an
entrepreneurial spirit was being harnessed in these organisations…Elizabeth

"The first thing I do in the morning …a bank statement is brought to me and I look at
where we stand on the bank… the cash flow at the moment - cash is king as it always
is, so I look at that and then I look at daft things…I check my emails to see if there is
anything I've got to deal with there … then I look at the production scheduling… I'll
open that up… I'll look on the system and see what everyone's working on, on the

shop floor and I'll actually see if that relates to what I think they should be working on". (ET, Int 6:p12)

It is perhaps significant that the bank statement is physically brought to her. The flow of cash is obviously of great importance in this organisation. Others carrying this vital document must also be aware of its importance. Elizabeth analyses where the business stands at the bank. Having determined what the cash position is, she turns her attention to things that she suggests are '*daft'.* Does she actually believe this? If she did, why would she involve herself in these things? It seems more plausible that she believes that it might paint her in the wrong light - non-entrepreneur. She checks her emails to analyse, encode and evaluate, so that she can begin to confront a wide range of events. Her involvement in production illustrates her controlling nature. She admits to checking whether employees are actually working on the jobs she thinks they should be on. In most organisations, you would expect this to be left to the foreman or production manager.

"At some point in the morning I will, depending on what I see, pop down to Steve on the shop floor and get a sort of update with him … So I basically get a pretty live assessment of, you know, if a job's running late and you know what's happening on it. Throughout the day, Paul will bring me other jobs in and I'll actually load those onto the loading myself. That literally takes seconds and then I'll pass the paperwork through to Nicky. So I'm permanently looking at the loadings myself and it doesn't take that much of my time… it's something I'm doing throughout the day as things happen. I'm working on the accounts; on a Tuesday the wages would be brought through to me so I just give an approval look at the wages before that's sent off. The post will be opened and I will go and just look at

the it and give instructions on what needs to be done with things that are one offs, or whatever or direct them in the right direction and while I'm looking at the post I'll look at what enquiries have come in …what else, I must do something else". (ET, Int 6: p12)

Elizabeth cannot let things go. Once she spots something is a problematic or destabilising, she has to get onto the shop floor to understand the gap in her expectations. She admits, rather surprisingly, that she is actually doing the scheduling of work herself but justifies it by explaining that it doesn't take much of her time - seconds. She confirms that she is permanently analysing the loadings throughout the day as things change. As with the bank statement, the wage list and the post are physically brought to her. It seems nothing can be done without her involvement. Arguably the most telling comment is, '*what else, I must do something else*'. It appears, subconsciously, she knows that what she is actually spending her time on is not what she ought to be doing. Elizabeth is being far from entrepreneurial, she is not even managing. Her obsession with analysing and sensemaking results in her losing focus on the things which will really make a difference to her business.

"And I'm open to day to day problems of what's happening. I'd also be dealing with people chasing us for money and decide who is going to get paid that week. I'll be keeping an eye on what money is coming into us, and perhaps chasing up accounts, you know, credit control … where we are on that. Sales invoices will be brought through to me, when they've been raised, and I'll do a number of things with the sales invoices. Each sales invoice has on it a costing sheet so I'll look at each job as it comes through and compare, if it's gone out the door, and compare

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actual cost with budgeted cost. I'll update my loadings – we need that job off, because it's gone out". (ET, Int 6: p12)

The use of '*I*' is again prominent in the quote; aspects of her controlling nature continue to emerge. Within this particular quote there is another example of things being brought to her – the sales invoice. The specific activities she is involved in are not normally associated with entrepreneurs.

Martin describes his day to day activities but clearly thinks they should be someone else's. His main focus is on survival, yet he complains, he is the one who has to fill in all of the gaps. He maintains, his employees are not doing their jobs properly, and paints a picture of himself, dashing around to ensure everything comes together.

"My job for the past three weeks has been talking to the bank, talking to Michelin, talking to and staving off people chasing money, to give us the room so that we could pay the wages and stuff like that… Filling in all the gaps that everyone leaves open, I've got like eight quotes to do at the moment, or materials to get in, just filling in the gaps, I've got my strategic hat on, or my financial hat or project manager hat on. I'm doing a lot of commercial stuff with Bentley to make sure the orders are coming through". (MM, Int 1: p1-2)

What Martin fails to appreciate is that his involvement appears to create one significant gap, the co-ordination and accountability of his staff. The implication being, the entrepreneur causes the problem. His day to day activities do not resemble Mintzberg's (1983) contention that the seven key roles for an owner manager should be; selecting the CEO, exercising direct control during periods of crisis, reviewing

managerial decisions and performance, co-opting external influences, establishing contacts, raising funds, enhancing the organisations reputation and giving advice. It does not reflect Bhide's (1996) belief that entrepreneurs should build an enterprise that functions without them. Bhide argues that their role should be to build a structure, and mould the culture and character of the organisation.

On the other hand, Ron, an experienced senior manager who has taken up business ownership late in his career, seems to have embraced Bhide's stance. As he glides around his factory, he is almost flippant about the people and processes that he has put in place. His view of the business, and the way he articulates it is simple and matter of fact. He speaks slowly, has a relaxed pose, and is extremely self-assured.

Ron gives you the feeling that the company (we) were ready for the downturn, they had anticipated it, and is surprised that the impact on his business has not been more severe. He is confident that his organisation is prepared for any further decline, convincing you that the business has things in place to deal with all scenarios. He argues, if turnover drops, the company will simply concentrate on margin. All through the passage the word '*we'* is used in stark contrast to many of the other entrepreneurs. Ron proposes that he is very much part of a team, he states that the business is not his sole responsibility and that his employees are all viewed as equals, and are accountable for its success.

Ron maintains that customer retention is the key to his organisations future, again, simplifying the rules of business. The implication being, if his customers are happy with the service they are receiving, the rest will take care of itself. He is not searching for reasons for the drop in turnover; it appears that everything is under control. Ron

accepts that the company might be taking on work that they would not normally entertain, but believes that they can cope with the less profitable jobs, until the economic climate improves.

"It isn't as bad as we thought it might have been is the best I can say at present. The recession hasn't hit us as hard… now, whether that's as yet or whether there's more to come, I don't know, but we have weathered it pretty well. So far, if this is as bad as its going to be, were ok with it. We will return a profit number this year that has exceeded our expectations. Our turnover is not quite where it should have been, but we have managed to maintain margins and that's really what it's all about, isn't it?

*And we haven't lost any customers, and I think that's the key for me…our customers are ordering less, as they're suffering because we are part of the retail sector. We have taken on business that ordinarily we might not have done but overall we are doing pretty well" (*RW, Int7: p1)

Ron's approach is somewhat different to most of the other cases. He clearly believes that his organisation should function without him. Ron argues that the best way he can support his staff is by mentoring them.

"I suppose …experience has taught me how to trust others and let them carry out the tasks and find solutions. I knew that I had to work on, and not in, the business... so I became a kind of mentor" (RW, Int 7: p4)

Mo, the new owner of Waterworld, was brimming with enthusiasm as he aligned himself to Ron's approach; he also claimed that his role was mainly strategic.

"I sussed out, that really, the biggest asset of any business, generally, is the people that work within that business. I know what my skills are and my skills are more strategic, bigger picture". (MC Int 8:p12)

Mo argues that an entrepreneur has to use his time to good effect. He clearly knows what he needs to be involved in, and what he is good at. Mo maintains that he seeks out individuals who will be effective in functional roles, and then offers them the opportunity to get on with the tasks at hand, without interference.

"My skills are not operations…it was the last thing I wanted to do. So effectively, what I did, which is what I enjoyed doing, was actually empowering people. First and foremost, looking at the staff costs, staff structure, staff assets – what their skill sets are - and I got rid of a lot of people. Some went before I took over because they knew that they were going to be chopped/ get the chop. I then worked with a core team and developed out. And the core team is still with me" (MC Int 8:p12)

Mo upholds that selecting the right people is a skill in itself; he argues that it is the most important aspect of business management. Having handpicked the best people available, his role is simply to motivate them to succeed. Mo believes in autonomy, support, and decisiveness.

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"I would actually empower individuals I felt, that I had identified with them, without a lot of assessments, but just by discussing simple things with them, their potential… that's a skill I've acquired. So pick a small team, develop them and give them the power to build – the mandate to make decisions – and I also said to them, when you make a decision, some will go wrong and will end up costing the company money, but don't worry about it, I will still support you. As long as you make the decision to the best of your ability, because I don't do the detail – it's your job to do the detail – okay so that's how the team works. Give them power to make those decisions. Give them the confidence knowing full well, that if they mess up, their jobs are not on the line". (MC Int 8:p12)

Mo reiterates that this kind of support generates self belief for his employees, and motivates them to succeed at the highest level.

"And you know what, all of a sudden their confidence rises and they are a different person. And they become a little business unit within the business. And that's really how we operate, you know. One, two, three, four, five, … six managers that manage the department – full mandate – we agree about it – full mandate … it's their profit line. They make all the rules within that profit line; I oversee the whole thing and connect it together." (MC, Int 8, p13)

Mo clearly has high self-efficacy. He confirms again, his employees are the most important assets of his organisation. Mo supposes that business is all about empowering people, giving them their heads, and letting them go. Mo focuses on developing and supporting his staff, and argues that, unlike many others, he is not afraid of them taking risks, even if they make mistakes which cost the business money. Mo appears indicative

of the widely held prescription of an entrepreneur; it seems this is what he covets. He contends that, over the years, he's acquired the art of identifying the right people, simply by talking to them. He expresses, in a rather ambiguous way, that he enjoys giving *them 'power, full mandate, their profit line',* but then admits, '*we agree on it'*. Mo oversees it all therefore, begging the question, is control actually being released?

The first part of this chapter supplies the reader with an insight into the daily lives of two entrepreneurs. It attempts to relay the atmosphere in the office, and portrays the visual representations displayed within the firm. It also describes the way in which entrepreneurs make sense of, and react to, different events that occur on a daily basis. The study, in addition, highlights the way in which entrepreneurs avoid conflict with their employees.

It also describes the behaviours that surface, and the way in which they can affect morale, and working conditions. The ethnographic account depicts the way entrepreneurs spend their time and attribute meaning to the chaos they face on a daily basis. The case highlights many of the behaviours that form as a result of their sensemaking; these include issues with trust, control and risk. It also brings to the fore, issues relating to identity and the need for applause.

The second part of the chapter provides a broad cross section of interviews with other entrepreneurs which, through analysis, suggest that many of the themes highlighted in the main case, are consistent with other business owners. It would appear that entrepreneurs are not necessarily individuals with exceptional qualities. This section links the past experiences, motivations and levels of self-efficacy to their entrepreneurial being. To illustrate, as a result of their cognitive experiences, many of these individuals

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lack confidence and are fearful of failure. This often culminates in their need to control all functional areas of their business. The section highlights the highs and lows they face on a daily basis demonstrating that, for many, risk is uncomfortable and decision making impossible.

The large majority of entrepreneurs, as a result, bury themselves in a role that will not necessarily make a difference to the business, often choosing to spend large blocks of time making sense of what is happening around them. Chapter Five has therefore examined the trait and behaviour aspect of the literature i.e., 'who entrepreneurs are' and 'how they behave?' The next three chapters utilise sensemaking as a conceptual tool to demonstrate; how organisations pass through evolutionary stages, and classifications (the roles entrepreneurs occupy), motivations (aims and objectives), past experiences and levels of self-efficacy, to influence the interpretative frameworks of entrepreneurs'. The chapters are presented in such a way that the reader is taken through the different stages of business life in a linear fashion.

Chapter Six – The Influence of Early Decisions

Using empirical data, this chapter examines the entrepreneurs approach to three 'Theories of Enterprise'; Human Resource Management (in particular, selection), Financial Management (the capital required to set up the venture), and Strategic Management (the approach to business in the early stages of organisational life).

The chapter analyses the reasons that individuals decide to become business owners - motivations. It also scrutinises their past experiences and levels of self-efficacy. These themes, I contend, influences how the business evolves in relation to; developing opportunities, setting direction, creating the most appropriate culture, and the delegation of activities.

It is structured in a linear fashion, beginning with the move towards entrepreneurship, the readiness of the entrepreneur to start their venture, and the roles they adopt within their business. The second half of the chapter analyses the decisions that are made in the early stages of the venture relating to the selection of staff, and the different types of capital employed to run and grow the business. Throughout the chapter a connection is made between motivations, past experiences, self efficacy, and the way in which sense is made of the world.

The Move to Entrepreneurship

Les, a site agent working for a large construction company, argued that he was forced into starting his own business. Having being made redundant and unable to find alternative employment, he turned to his own particular form of expertise (Joinery), to provide necessary income for his family. This supports the contention of Wickham (2004) that some entrepreneurs start up new ventures simply because they lose their existing jobs and cannot find employment elsewhere. Wickham's classification of a craft entrepreneur is demonstrated effectively by Les' situation.

Well the first time was in 1962 and I was working for a brewery. It was the worst winter for years and years, and they sacked us on Christmas Eve. Of course I'd got no money; I walked all round the Potteries but couldn't get a job. There were no jobs going, the industry had come to a standstill. So, I started taking little steps you know like, easing the door for somebody and other bits and pieces, and one thing led to another, I was working in my mother's garage(LW Int 4:p1)

Les suggests he was left with little choice but to work for himself as he couldn't find a job, but needed money to support his family. Les was clearly not prepared for running his own business. It is hardly surprising that the venture did not prosper and he had to return to paid employment. Les did however, set up a business again a couple of years later, this time it seemed more opportunistic.

The second time I went to a firm making toys and things, then I heard a rumour that they were going to get rid of us all and close it all down. So, Terry and I decided… well, I decided… that we would get some premises in Stoke, we started

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doing a little bit of joinery for our last firm and a few other people, and we gradually

built it up and that was Winston Joinery (LW Int 4:p1)

This time the business was far more successful; searching my autobiographical memories I recalled observing Les from close quarters over a number of years. It seemed to me that (for Les), running a business was more about improving his social standing than financial reward. Les employed many people that he shared his personal life with. The relationships he had with his staff were complex; he would be out drinking with them at night, and remonstrating with the same individuals in the day. He seemed to thrive on his standing as a leader, someone his employees looked up too. Les told me he felt responsible for these individuals; despite business being a struggle, full of stress and generally about survival, it wasn't unusual for him to loan staff money to meet their personal commitments.

Denise had been through a traumatic divorce and needed a way of combining family life with the capacity to earn money. If you adopt the stance of Wickham (2004), Denise could be categorised as a 'lifestyle entrepreneur' again, there was little evidence of a readiness to start her business. What seemed to separate Denise from Les, was her creativity relating to the venture? Although lacking the necessary experience, Denise had spotted a niche area which combined cooking with education; her venture was clearly aimed at a specific audience.

It was desperation really because I needed to earn a certain amount of money,

and having two small children, I didn't want it to impact on their lives by having a

nine till five job, and going from a full time mum earning nothing, to supporting a

family, I decided that having my own business was probably the best way of doing it (DB, Int 5: P1)*.*

Denise had to find a balance between her social and work life. She makes no apologies that fitting things around her children, was the single most important thing to her. This is illustrated with examples of how she managed her time.

Because of the nature of the business it's fairly easy to run both alongside of each other, so in terms of managing my time, fitting it in around the children is probably the most important thing to me. If I have a buffet, I can get up at six in the morning while the children are still in bed. If I've got food to prepare for that, again, I can do it at night when they've gone to bed. The baking clubs that I do are at the kid's school, so they can come along to that. Whatever work I can do during the day is great (DB, Int 5: P1/2)*.*

Elizabeth`s approach to acquiring a business seemed, on the surface, to be well structured. She had become dissatisfied with the sector she was working in, and due to her position as a corporate financier, opportunities often came her way. She suggests however, that the acquiring of this particular organisation could well have been accidental.

I'm an accountant by professional training and probably had a bit of a midlife crisis and decided that the profession was becoming too bureaucratic and red-taped and I wasn't enjoying my role in the practice that I was in at the time so I moved out of the practice into industry, and then came across what I felt was a good company and one that I liked, I liked the people here, the product and I just felt it was it was

a good company. And what with... from my due diligence and corporate finance background what has become interesting to me over the years is how I feel I've got quite an empathy with, with the product and I love the product that we produce, which I sort of think back on it, and think well … was that a happy accident or was that part of my due diligence process, I don't really know? So that's how I've sort of ended up (ET, Int 6:p2)

Surprisingly, although Elizabeth had spent most of her working life in corporate finance, her reasons in becoming a business owner (she suggests), was based on liking the people, and having an empathy with the product. In my experience accountants, like Elizabeth, are normally more concerned with numbers, and whilst they might assess the capabilities of the staff, it seems unusual for an accountant to enter into a venture due to the likeability of the people and the nature of the product. Elizabeth admits to having a midlife crisis, she describes being in practice as bureaucratic and red-taped, perhaps owning her own business was seen as a form of escapism. Elizabeth states that she doesn't know if her purchase could have been a happy accident or, part of the due diligence process, that suggested the venture could sustain itself over the long term.

Ron had worked for several large organisations holding senior management positions; his move to business ownership was opportunistic and hardly planned. During the interview, and from my involvement with him in a different business context, it was clear that Ron had considerable experience of managing people and processes, and was evidently prepared to run his own business.

Well some might say it wasn't luck, but it was really. I'd been put out to grass by Waterford Wedgwood albeit a very lush meadow. As a result I was in a fairly healthy position; I was fifty five and didn't really need to do anything. An acquaintance and he was only that, was involved here, and he and the Managing Director had been planning for him to, at some point, instigate out a management buyout. He knew of my background at Wedgwood's and he asked me to help him look at the business and to tell what it was that he needed to do (RW, Int 7: p1)

Ron suggests the opportunity was down to good fortune. Ron's use of a metaphor is intriguing, he appears to be painting a picture of an individual who ought to be taking retirement (at his age), and considers, his own financial situation allows him to be more relaxed about things. If his business doesn't work he maintains, he will simply be back to where he was, '*in a lush meadow'.* The opportunity to evaluate the business needs, for a short period prior to his acquisition, allowed Ron to ascertain; what the opportunities were, the issues surrounding the business, and the capability of those working for the organisation.

My original assignment which for six weeks was a kind of consultancy role, the role did seem to grow and as you can see I'm still here. After a while the two of them fell out, it doesn't matter what about, and the proposed buyer (one of the shareholders) left, I was however, kept on. I could see that there was huge potential. I was simply putting in systems and reporting mechanisms such as management accounts (they didn't have any) to improve control within the business. There were other issues like the fleet of vehicles they had, which would simply deliver to wherever products had been manufactured for. I did an exercise

which showed that a large amount of money could be saved from outsourcing to other companies, and through better planning. (RW, Int 7: p1)

In his capacity as a consultant, Ron was able to stand back and create a plausible understanding of what the organisation needed. During his time at the business making improvements, he could still not convince the existing owner that it would sustain itself over the longer term, and therefore, arranged a sale with Ron. After acquiring the company, Ron was determined to employ his own style of management.

*Things had improved but clearly the business owner had had enough, and one day the Sales Director and I were in a meeting with him and he simply said "why don't you buy the business?" We thought about it and said, well, if the numbers are right we will. We agreed the numbers and shook hands on it, and the rest as they say is history (*RW, Int7: p1)

Ron makes you feel like securing the business was the simplest thing in the world. His manner, the way he expresses himself, his composure and almost flippant responses suggest that he didn't see any risk at all. He had made retrospective sense of what the business was about and was confident it could succeed.

<u>Readiness</u>

The readiness to start a venture often relates to an entrepreneurs current circumstance, past employment and previous experiences in running a business, or observing others doing the same. It would appear the large majority of individuals are not prepared for business life, or in the case of potential acquisitions, have insufficient knowledge of the business they are buying.

Elizabeth admitted to being naive,

> *"Probably doesn't marry totally that I was probably … and it's embarrassing to say this … but I was probably a bit naïve when I did buy the company, inasmuch that what my role did end up becoming. I mean, because to be fair, I don't think I was an entrepreneur at the time I bought the company. I think I've become one."*

Although Elizabeth appeared to know the fundamentals of business, she was clearly not ready emotionally for the turmoil that was attached to her venture. Naivety in this case seems to be related to things other than business management. Elizabeth argues that as a result of her exposure to issues that destabilised and challenged her existing schemata, she eventually became entrepreneurial. She highlights the skills she believes she had prior to her acquisition, but argues that being entrepreneurial involves far more than business knowledge. She concludes that making sense of, and dealing with, day to day situations is helping her with her quest to becoming an entrepreneur.

I think I was more just a professional figure kind of person, and more of an analyst if anything. I've probably got people skills because I was staff partner and I obviously employed people within the practice, but I didn't have to be so much a manager mainly because the professional structure that I worked in was more … was structured, and to be fair … and I don't want to insult anybody here ... but I was dealing with a much higher calibre level of people. Everyone I employed were graduates … sort of top flight graduates that were about to get… you know, a contract with a firm of chartered accountants, and they had a very structured professional education, and we worked in a very, very, structured and legislative background as well …so my day to day requirement wasn't dealing with man management… it was probably dealing with client management. (ET, Int 6: p2)

Elizabeth also maintains that dealing with people less educated than she is used to working with, has presented her with a challenge, one that she was not ready for.

Dale and Justin had only ever worked for one organisation previously, albeit one that was particularly successful. The human resource policies, the procedures that were developed, the information systems they installed, all replicated those of their past employer. Les' business evolved in exactly the same way as his previous one, and Denise was unable to seize opportunities that came her way, because she, like many female entrepreneurs, was limited by the demands of family life.

Mo, however, was supremely confident in his ability to turn an ailing business into profit, and saw his venture as a 'massive opportunity'. Mo clearly had no doubts that he had everything he needed to succeed.

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a foundation - education, the ability to handle tough situations, a refusal to fail, fire in his belly, tenacity, persistence, the ability to take risk and commitment (MC, Int 8: p1)

Mo clearly believes that he can deal with anything. He is very different to the other business owners, and is perhaps representative of an entrepreneur depicted by the mainstream literature. The empirical research suggests that he is the one individual who matches the profile described by writers such as Wickham.

Ron is not atypical, but does seem better prepared than most, perhaps as a result of experiences in larger organisations.

*I do think that experience helps you to understand people… as I said earlier I haven't seen anything is this business that I've not seen before, it's just the scale. I suppose I've done it the other way around. (*RW, Int7: p4)

Ron argues that, prior to business ownership; entrepreneurs need to have had experience of diverse organisations and the approaches they take. He suggests that an involvement at the top of companies, prepares you for everyday situations.

It seems therefore that individual's exhibit different traits, are motivated by diverse aims, and act in divergent ways. Learning experiences and forms of social, cultural and economic capital vary from entrepreneur to entrepreneur. Having examined these individuals move towards, and observed their readiness for, entrepreneurship, the chapter analyses what needs to be considered in the early stages of business, relating to decisions that set the path for future activity. Two of the choices entrepreneurs face

are; the way in which the organisation will be financed, and the policy relating to the selection of people to manage the business.

Capital

There are many ways to finance a new venture. These include; the use of one's own capital, bank loans, overdrafts, equity finance and venture capital. Some individuals are intent in borrowing as much money as possible; others, however, are far less comfortable with huge borrowings. Some entrepreneurs are happy to give up equity, whilst others are far more reluctant, wanting to have full control of their business. In most cases business owners, at some stage, cite a shortage of capital as the main barrier to sustained growth.

I always felt that we never had a big enough overdraft. I mean, at one stage I was doing two million a year and working on a £40,000 overdraft, which I thought was ridiculous…. We were always scraping the barrel for money (LW, Int 4: p5-6).

Les was obviously happy to take on more debt, and blames the banking system for his lack of capital. What he fails to consider is that the business may not be able to afford the repayment of the debt on a monthly basis. Denise is at the other end of the spectrum, being far more reluctant to borrow money.

There is something nagging away at me, in that I really do think it's a good idea, and now is a really good time to do this because there's a chance I could miss the boat, and that would be really galling, to think that someone else had done really well out of it. So if I knew that it wouldn't impact on the children I would take it to the next level but…that would be the biggest thing holding me back. I am worried about borrowing money, but I'm not borrowing money at the moment. I am not

comfortable borrowing money, but I think that is secondary to the impact it would have on my family life (DB, Int 5: P2)*.*

It appears that the entrepreneur's attitude to risk has a significant influence on how their business evolves over time. Denise is convinced that she is in the right market, at the right time. She appreciates that if she doesn't take the business to the next level, that her idea will inevitably be copied and developed by an organisation that is better placed financially and exploit the opportunities that she has uncovered. It seems that an inability to separate work from family life is restraining her. Her reluctance to borrow money may simply be down to the risks involved, but it could be due to the way in which, the business may change and impact on her children's lives.

Reflecting on my own experience of financing a new venture, it is clear that using life's savings can be an extremely traumatic. Having approached the bank I had been with for over twenty years for a loan, I was surprised to learn that, despite having a track record of three previous businesses, all of which were relatively successful, they were unwilling to support the venture without a personal guarantee. I decided to utilise my own funds and invested a considerable amount of money to get the business started. Following a pretty unsuccessful start, I was faced with the prospect of losing the investment, unless further funds were introduced to soak up the losses. I pondered long and hard about cutting my losses, and putting the loss down to experience. There must have been something, however, that would not allow me to suffer the indignity of failure. I concluded the years spent building up my savings from the sale of past businesses couldn't be wasted because of one difficult venture. At the time, although there was little evidence that the business could succeed, my schemata must have led me to the conclusion that it would eventually prosper.

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Investing additional funds to safeguard my investment, the practicalities of throwing good money after bad, and the way in which I made sense of the situation, all created emotions and behaviours; these had a major affect on my day to day involvement with the company, and the decisions I had to make.

Remembering the day I introduced more money into the company, I felt sick in my stomach. I was far from convinced that I was doing the right thing. All sorts of things crossed my mind; what life would be like if I lost the money, my children having to come out of private education, the type of house I would be forced to live in. I began to consider whether I would be able to secure full time employment. These kinds of feelings continued to surface every time we had a bad months trading.

There was a complete transformation from the approach I took in previous organisations, to way I was in this particular venture. Once a confident risk taker, like Mo; relaxed in daily life like Ron; I began to experience many of the traumas faced by other entrepreneurs. Many days I found it difficult to drag myself to work - the issues seemed more personal, my focus was much more short term, and I became generally been more risk averse.

Life was a constant worry, I found myself losing focus, and had difficulty motivating the staff. I recall sitting down one day with a blank piece of paper, to make sense of the decisions I had made. The exercise began by adding up all the time and money I had spent. The second column recorded the losses the business had encountered over the period. Analysing how much I paid for the business, adding the one off costs of moving, redundancies, and losses as a result of the standing start; I became far more convinced that things weren't as bad as they seemed. Having completed the analysis and recorded

the positives (the increase in work, the quality of staff recruited, the accreditations we had secured), I was able to conclude that the decision to buy the business may have been the right one after all. Like Ron, I believe that in twenty eight years of owning businesses I have pretty much seen it all. Knowing what to do, it seems, is sometimes not enough.

<u>Selection</u>

Selection is a critical aspect of business development as organisations grow. It is clear from the research that a significant number of entrepreneurs recruit people they had either worked with in the past, or individuals from within their social circle. This strategy often led to the wrong people being placed in the most influential roles. This 'loyalty to comrades,' according to Hamm (2002), can be a liability where people are not managed properly. I decided to question why entrepreneurs appeared to lose all rationality when selecting new recruits.

A guy called Graham Tooth who worked for me previously come down one day and said is there anything going? So, Terry and I decided that we could take another joiner and then Harry Stanley, who I knew for years, came part time (LW, Int 4: p2)

This seemed more like finding work for an old colleague, than filling a vacancy that existed within the organisation. Les could not resist an opportunity to employ individuals he knew and trusted. I quizzed him on this.

Well in the first instance it was always people who I had worked with…. and If I knew there was good blokes going I'd try and get him, like I managed to get Jimmy Edwards, people like that you have to have…, you couldn't get any decent people then even if you paid good money (LW, Int 4: p5)

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Les had to recruit people that he has seen in action first hand. He talks about, *"having to have"*. Les, like Dale and Justin, appeared to write off those candidates who offered a different dimension to his business, in favour of the security of sameness.

Jeff Moss I knew was very good at his job. He'd only got one failure – he couldn't handle blokes. But as a quantity surveyor and an estimator I knew you couldn't go wrong with him. So I …head hunted him. I had to get him, but he didn't come easy… took a lot of persuading (LW, Int 4: p3)

I was intrigued with the relationships that developed between Dale, Justin and their employees, many of which appeared to be entangled in a social/work life context. This led to difficulties when confrontation was needed. Dale and Justin had to be viewed as reasonable and fair. When they had issues with employees it caused them severe difficulties. If conflict occurred they would often use email or memos to convey their anger or frustration, the messages as a result were often ambiguous. To illustrate, there is an extract of an email from Dale to various managers see (Appendix Two).

The email on the 28 February 2009 was sent at 23:48, it indicates the extent to which business issues can impact on the emotions of entrepreneurs. The subject, Quality, has the words IMPORTANT! attached to it, capital letters and an exclamation mark signifies how crucial it is to Dale.

Having analysed and made retrospective sense of the quality issues raised by one of his clients, Dale concludes, he has problems with at least five of his staff. The first part of the email is a list of actions - you would have expected these to have been carried out (without prompting) by the quality manager. This brings into question the issue of trust,

would they have been done? It also supports the earlier claim, questioning the lack of investment into training. Dale asks two members of staff to arrange surveyor refresher training, but then, rather surprisingly demands to be present. This again demonstrates his mistrust. Dale emphasises the importance of the issue, stating, *"If they need to cancel jobs, then so be it!"* He also appears to be uncomfortable about the surveillance visit from their quality accreditors UKAS. He is clearly not assured by those who need to prepare for it.

Dale's emotions surface, '*I'm sure that you all join me in my opinion of extreme disappointment at the recent issues'*. Having canvassed the opinion of Danny, a Project Manager he concludes, '*The misses are blatant'*. The word blatant emphasises the serious wrong-doing inherent in the offence. The people involved are his friends, or at the very least, people known to him prior to their appointment. Dale admits, although he is trying to be balanced, he cannot help feeling let down; presumably he expects more from people who are supposed to be supporting him.

He suggests that the site teams are in no way mirroring the efforts of the management team, and appears to be issuing a threat that jobs may be at risk. He then surprisingly, apologises for the need to get tough. I am not sure why, if, as he implies, they have performed without due care. He reiterates that the manager's responsibilities are to ensure that the firm delivers the service he has sold to his clients. Towards the end we see his emotional turmoil, as he implores people to work together. This is one of a number of emails where Dale is letting off steam, instead of confronting the individuals involved, face to face. It is also significant that this was written close to midnight.

Being a 'knowledge intensive business' Dale and Justin should have understood that although systems and processes were crucial to their business, the main assets of the company were its personnel. They needed to ensure that the people they recruited were the most suitable for the job, received the best training, and went through the most effective development process.

Aside of surrounding themselves with individuals who were part of their social life, Dale and Justin preferred to appoint internal candidates with no managerial experience into senior positions. I considered whether this strategy was related to their fear of the unknown, their own insecurities as managers, and a perceived loss of control, or tying individuals they were scared of losing into the firm for the long term. I asked Dale and Justin to reconsider their approach, they were however, not inclined to change their strategy.

Holloway (1991) suggests a thorough job analysis is the foundation of successful selection processes. As such, organisations should determine, through observation and reports, the necessary outputs i.e., the tasks and responsibilities needed in different roles. Recruiters should also identify the behavior characteristics required to become an effective manager in a particular role. There appeared to be no such process in place in Dale and Justin's organisation. To illustrate, two members applying for the position of Project Manager (again, there were no external candidates shortlisted), were asked to give a talk on what they believed Project Management to be about. Following the presentation they were asked some fairly basic questions. The position was split, although both employees were subjected to rigorous instruction on the processes and procedures, they failed to receive training either in the core disciplines, or indeed, any other form of managerial training whatsoever.

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Ron had a completely different outlook to Dale and Justin. He was more concerned with how candidates would fit in to his business, rather than what they could do. "*It's a fairly contained area and I can't have people who don't get on*" (RW, Int 7: p3). Ron avoided appointing people known to him, arguing that it was important, that his personal and business life remained separate. Reflecting on my time as a business owner I have fallen into the trap of employing relations, friends and people that I had worked with previously. During their employment, I found it difficult to be objective when analysing performance. Jeff, for example, was someone I'd known for years and seen in action first hand. He was an individual I respected and trusted. As a salesman in the car industry he had a fantastic track record, as a result, he was appointed to exploit a number of opportunities that had been identified by our existing team. Jeff unfortunately failed to live up to expectations. I recall skirting around the issue for months, giving him the benefit of the doubt, when it was clear he was simply the wrong person for the job.

Mo suggests, as an entrepreneur, the key to selection and motivation, is being able to work out who is likely to be successful and getting behind them (MC, Int 8: p13). Mo is also aligned to Ron's notion, that social life should be separated from business life.

Having reviewed the choices relating to finance, and selecting the people to take the business forward, the section now addresses some of the strategies put in place in the early stages of business life.

Early Strategies

Dale and Justin had a need to increase their status in order that they were taken seriously. This resulted in heavy investment being made on their businesses image, which they believed, would promote their success. This strategy suggests 'a need for applause' (Kets De Vries, 1985). It appears that these entrepreneurs had to develop their social capital to make a statement, not only to their own staff, but the competition and the community at large. Dale and Justin were determined to portray an image of absolute professionalism from the outset of their business. They were obsessed with their corporate image, they had letterheads and business cards extending to four different types of brochures and presentation packs. Discs used to send out information had strap lines and logo's printed on them. Vehicles were all creatively sign written; all members of staff had uniforms which ranged from high visibility jackets to t-shirts, formal shirts and trousers. They sourced rulers, coasters, pens, golf balls, memory sticks and diaries, the list was endless. Dale and Justin's offices were immaculate; there was an obsession with tidiness. Signs were displayed everywhere, threatening those who did not comply with severe punishments. In addition, there was substantial investment into vehicles, software packages and schemes attached to quality and trade associations.

Dale and Justin thought nothing of spending large amounts of money entertaining clients at prestige events. They reasoned that this would create cultural capital with key customers. As it happened, many of the people attending these days out ended up being their own staff, friends or family. This supports the view that it was a way they could prove their worth. Dale and Justin maintained that they needed to compete with much larger organisations in their approach to corporate literature and hospitality. It seemed that the capital outlay was severely out of kilter in an organisation of their size. The pride

they seemed to take in their cultural capital appeared indicative of their need to prove themselves to others, through the visual representation these artefacts offered. In producing the same ingredients as others successful in the industry, they believed that it was inevitable that they would succeed. In conversation with Dale in June 2007 he told me, *"the more we convey professionalism the more we will be taken seriously."* The interesting thing was, however that the investment into corporate image was required elsewhere in the business.

Despite Dale and Justin's criticisms of their past company's management, their business also seemed to be modelled almost entirely on the strategies and policies adopted by their previous firm. The processes and procedures, the way in which projects were managed, the relationships with customers, all seemed to take the same form. It appeared to give them a plausible understanding of what was needed to succeed. Policies relating to employment, and working arrangements were all based on Dale and Justin past experiences during their employment with their former company; now a competitor.

Having recruited many of their staff from their previous employer, Dale and Justin never stopped complaining about the performance of their managers. Many of these individuals were, however, asbestos consultants who were promoted from within, but who failed to receive management training, lacked support and were clearly out of their depth. The business had ineffective human resource processes, aside from the problems relating to selection, people were generally not motivated to succeed. Staff turnover, as a result, was incredibly high. The Sales and Marketing department as a consequence of insufficient investment, suffered an inconsistent order intake. It seemed

more important to create a perception that the organisation was professional, than actually building a team who would deliver performance, and guarantee it.

Although Elizabeth argued that she was in business for financial reward, my observation suggests otherwise, many of her issues seem to be in parallel with those of Dale and Justin relating to acceptance. Elizabeth also invested large sums of money to ensure her business appeared professional, and was forever seeking reassurance on its profile from both staff and outsiders. Like Dale and Justin, many of the investments were superficial in creating professionalism, when in fact; money was needed elsewhere to improve the business. I asked her how successful she thought she was in context of her starting position and where she was now.

I think I'm just feeling a bit down at the moment Andy, in answering that question. We're under financial pressure because of the hit in turnover, and I've had to make redundancies. So the bottom line, we're not very successful at the moment, which, as you said earlier, that's what we're all here for. You know, that's why I'm running a business to make money and that's not very good at the moment.

Elizabeth makes sense of business ownership suggesting that it is about financial reward, but admits by that measure that she is failing. I reflected whether all entrepreneurs aligned success to profitability. Denise, I would suggest, is more concerned with a work life balance; Les, his relationship with his followers; and for Martin, avoiding failure could be a measure of success; others simply judge their performance against growth. Timing can also be relative to achievement. At what point do you stop and say the business is successful? It could be argued that there is

many a time where an organisation suffers a great deal of pain, in order to sustain long term success, Elizabeth explains;

> *If I were to answer that question in terms of where have I bought the business to now, I'd go back to the comment I think I made earlier, in that I feel we are sitting here like a coiled spring, you know, just waiting for business to take off again, and I just feel that the structure that we've got in place now you know one I'm much more in tune with production and I have, I know what's going on and I'm acting as the interface between production and contracts, not just me, but contracts are communicated with scheduling and taking advice, and talking about things – how we are going to do this – we're all working together, so in terms of where I feel the business, as a business is, I think it's a lot, I think it's the best it's ever been since I've had the business* (ET, Int 6:p15)

Elizabeth argues that she was building a platform for her business, in order to be successful in the future. She points towards the way in which the foundations have been built. The implication being that success is not necessarily about here and now, but rather what things might be, as a result of the investments that have been put in place. Elizabeth argues it takes time to work out how you should position yourself within the organisation. I considered whether her lack of success in monetary terms (she believes), is down to the investment in building a platform for future growth. It may be that she is simply clinging on to the possibility that things will turn out right in the future. Elizabeth uses the expression 'coiled spring', this may suggest that she believes she has compressed the problems, but they could surface again at anytime. There seems little evidence that the business has made significant steps forward, so the implication is that it is wishful thinking. Here we see the entrepreneur as an optimist.

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There are two things that appear particularly significant in the previous passages, (1) the entrepreneurs apparent need to build artefacts of success that are associated with much larger corporations, (2) the way in which Dale and Justin believed that mimicking organisations that have been successful over a period of time, was the only way of fulfilling their ambitions (a pre existing idea of what success is and how to achieve it). Mimetic Isomorphism is the achievement of conformity through imitation (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), the contention that what has worked for someone else provides legitimacy for others to copy. Dale and Justin were unable to disregard policies and procedures that were utilised in their past company, despite the realisation that many of these were cumbersome and added little value. Many times I questioned the way activities were carried out, and offered alternative ideas. The standard answer was, the procedures were ubiquitous throughout the industry, *"it is what we need to comply with our accreditation"*… *"It's worked successfully in the past; you don't understand what we are required to do*" (Conversation with Dale August, 2007). Dale and Justin continually created artificial imperatives, i.e. they could only achieve particular objectives by following the processes that were employed by their competitors.

In summary, this chapter has examined many of the reasons individuals' decide to start businesses. It is clear that the entrepreneurs all had different motivational aims. Some of the entrepreneurs were looking to increase social capital (Elizabeth, Dale, Justin and Les), others to improve their work/life balance and increase their cultural capital (Denise and Martin), Ron simply wanted to develop economic capital from future profits, and Mo had to make up for past failures.

These diverse motivations, coupled with their past experiences and levels of self efficacy, appeared to have a direct correlation with the way in which their organisations

made sense of the world and began to evolve. To illustrate, individuals intent on improving their standing in the community combined work activities, with their social life. Some of the decisions being undertaken were wholly attributed on the effect it would have on their standing in their social circle.

Other businesses evolved based on an entrepreneurs need to balance work with their home life. Denise had to exploit opportunities that fitted in with her dropping off and collecting her children from school. She told me that most of her work was arranged between ten in the morning and three in the afternoon, five days a week. As a result, she lost a number of promising opportunities due to her inflexibility.

Entrepreneurs, whose focus was on survival and on avoiding failure, appeared to be risk adverse, backward looking, and continued to employ the same tactics throughout their business life. Their businesses appeared to stagnate, when in reality they could have become very successful.

Entrepreneurs seeking immediate reward, and those constrained by their economic capital, often made short term decisions which had a detrimental effect on their organisations long term future. Elizabeth, for example, decided not to replace her only sales resource who had retired through ill health. She figured that the high levels of sales they were receiving at the time negated the need to spend Forty thousand pounds on a replacement. The business found itself losing market share within six months.

Entrepreneurs who focused on growth placed their organisation at substantial risk as a result of their propensity to grow. These businesses often lost margin due to their obsession with increasing turnover. Elizabeth took a step back to realise '*that perhaps*

sometimes we were busy idiots, chasing turnover and not looking so much on margin'. (ET, Int 6:p1)

The second part of Chapter Six has examined the decisions that are made relating to sources of capital employed to provide working capital, the selection of employees entrusted to manage day to day activities, and the early strategies that shape the direction of the business. We evidence the extent to which using one's own capital can have serious implications for their business, as the entrepreneurs focus is often on protecting their investment. The data seems to suggest that a balanced portfolio of borrowing seems to be more prudent, as the risk is shared. The entrepreneur can concentrate on their business knowing that his social life is secure and separate.

The selection of employees ought to be based on the rationale of identifying those best qualified to run a particular function, coupled with behavioural traits that fit with the cultural values of the organisation. It is, in fact, often based on past experiences, levels of self efficacy, and an array of social aspects. Many of the entrepreneurs returned to select employees who they had worked with previously, and/or were known to them on a social basis. New roles that were formed as a result of growth were generally filled by promoting staff from within, despite the respective candidate being unsuitable.

The early strategies, rather than being rationally thought out, tended to emerge as a result of the motivations of entrepreneurs, their past experiences, and they way in which they make sense of situations and events. The decisions in respect of capital employed, and the selection of employees, entrusted with managing functional tasks, heavily influenced the evolution of these organisations.

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The next chapter applies the literature on 'classifications', and analyses the way in which different entrepreneurs become involved in their organisations on a daily basis. It examines the reasons they adopt certain roles, and discusses the effect that this has on their ventures.

Chapter Seven - Day to Day Involvement

Having made a decision to start a business, raised finance to secure working capital, and elected individuals to work in the organisation; this chapter compares the theories introduced in Chapter Two relating to classifications (the roles entrepreneurs adopt), traits (specifically the extent to which they become involved in their ventures on a daily basis), along with data collected in the study. It also highlights the extent to which many of these individuals are searching for an identity in which they are seen to be adding value to their organisations. The empirical data shows them embedding themselves in roles which often reduce their focus on the important aspects of business strategy.

Throughout the study most of the entrepreneurs were affected by cognitive disorder, and spent large amounts of time interpreting the events that were costing them money. As things went wrong, a fear of failure influenced the entrepreneur to learn more about the issues that occurred on a daily basis; this resulted in them stepping in to prevent mistakes happening. The more they got involved, the more they learned, and the gap between their expectations and reality widened. The stories depict the lengths they went to in pinpointing the exact source of their problems, often at the expense of working on their respective businesses. The section therefore, utilises the literature raised in Chapter Three, to ascertain the basis on which sense has been made of the world.

The chapter also describes the way in which many of the entrepreneurs avoid confrontation, often relying on others to relay their dissatisfaction with performance. The theme of improving their social standing, discussed in Chapter Five, seems to be

absorbed in the contention that most entrepreneurs want to be viewed in a positive light and, as such, use others as a sounding board to determine whether they are being reasonable and fair. All sorts of mechanisms were used to send out messages to staff; this chapter will highlight some of these, many are often ambiguous and unclear.

Preparing for Life

Due to the time he has spent in large corporations, Ron has witnessed these issues both personally and through his observation of others. It would appear that his understanding of people, and his interpretive frameworks, has better prepared him for life as an entrepreneur.

"I do think that experience helps you to understand people… as I said earlier I haven't seen anything in this business that I've not seen before, it's just the scale. I suppose I've done it the other way around" (RW, Int 7: p2).

Ron maintains similar problems exists, whatever the size of a business. From my own experience, the difficulties regarding juggling financial issues, having too much or too little work, human resource problems, and management concerns, are all ubiquitous in organisations. Ron argues there is a common way to solve these problems; the only adjustment that needs to be made is reflected in the size of the business.

"The problems/issues are the same it's just the scale that's different. I would just approach things in the same way. It was different in that I was used to having line managers and a secretary …At Wedgwood's I would just have to find the solutions and someone else would address the practicalities …here I would have to do it myself" (RW, Int 7: p2).

Ron has spent most of his working life in large scale businesses. His new organisation, by comparison, is relatively small. I asked him how he coped with the day to day grind, and the detail that he had to get involved with, once he'd solved the initial problems.

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"You're right, of course, the detail is something I had to adjust to, and the tasks do become boring … I suppose …experience has taught me how to trust others and let them carry out the tasks and find solutions. I knew that I had to work on, and not in, the business... so I became a kind of mentor" (RW, Int 7: p2).

It is clear that Ron has little interest in what he considers the insignificant detail; he is accustomed to delegating tasks to others. It seems that Ron does not feel the need to make sense of things because he displays a preference for occupying the role of mentor to his staff. The entrepreneur as a teacher is an interesting concept, improving others, to be effective in their own roles, inevitably creates time for the entrepreneur to be creative and develop their business. Ron is prepared to let his staff make their own sense of daily events, and find solutions to the problems at hand. His stance of working on, rather than being too involved in the business, results in him standing back from day to day activities, in order to concentrate on the business strategy.

Ron understands the importance of delegating, and allowing others to carry out day to day tasks, but even he admits to occasionally getting involved in areas that he perhaps should not.

"The other week I was walking through the factory and I saw something, and simply told the person not to do it a certain way, but to do it this way. I should have just left him to get on with it. I got a bollocking off the production manager and he was right" (RW, Int 7: p2)

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Ron and Mo appeared to be the only entrepreneurs who were content to let their employees manage daily activities, and accept events and situations in everyday life. Most of the other entrepreneurs included in this study, found it difficult to adjust to the transition from employee to employer, and spent their business life trying to interpret and understand occurrences on a daily basis. Rather than focusing on important business decisions, most entrepreneurs spent large blocks of their valuable time analysing and making sense of things, and as a result, became far too involved in their respective businesses. The next two sections consider the way in which entrepreneurs become caught up in what was going on in their organisations, and involve themselves in areas that don't warrant their attention. This, I contend, results in negative behaviours relating to trust and control, and a lack of focus on key business issues.

Many of the individuals included in the study were obsessed analysing the mistakes that occurred, often blowing the issues completely out of proportion. Jamie explains...

"Without exception, every incident calls for an enquiry, a witch-hunt. We had an issue the other day where one of the goods-in guys went to assist a joiner to load out doorsets [40 miles way]. He forgot, or wasn't told, whatever, about wearing a high visibility jacket and wasn't allowed on site. Elizabeth had to pinpoint exactly why it happened and whose fault it was, so it doesn't happen again. Yes it was an issue and somebody messed up, but was a three hour investigation, really necessary?" (JL, Int 2: p2).

It appears that Elizabeth has to identify the source of the mistake. I wasn't sure whether she was letting people know that errors would be investigated and nothing would get past her, or that future poor performance would warrant punishment. I also considered whether Elizabeth was suggesting (to Jamie) that he was not doing his job properly. Here we have the idea of the performance of managing, at the expense of management itself.

Jamie went on...

"I've also noticed that she seems to lie to herself, convince herself that the decisions she makes are right. She takes logic to the extreme" (JL, Int 2: p2).

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I asked him to explain.

"You know, sort of manipulating what's happened to make it worse than it actually is. The series of events or comments made about people, by other people, are taken out of context so that decisions appear more justifiable". (JL, Int 2: p2).

The implication being that by making more of something (perhaps a form of sensegiving) she is trying to justify the time she is wasting. She clearly knows she should not be spending her time analysing the issues at hand, but cannot leave them. It appears that Elizabeth is obsessed with finding the truth, or possibly a convenient version of the events that have occurred.

I asked Jamie to describe how she spent her time…

"She has very short term approach to everything. Regarding cost cutting exercises, she's always looking backwards, rather than at the future. She is easily distracted and, being an accountant, it's all about analysing figures. Unbelievably, she has three accountants working for her, I'm not sure what they all do, but it seems; one is focused on how the company has performed, one on credit control, and the other just seems to be a clerk. You see them once a week huddled around her desk, papers spread everywhere, it's just like a "witch's cauldron". I think she believes it's clever to keep secrets, I just can't relate to the way she thinks. Also, although she runs herself down always apologising, she can never be wrong. To be fair though, since TB [production manager] has gone, it is a lot better" (JL, Int 2: p2).

It appears that making retrospective sense of events is the only way that Elizabeth can move forward. She seems to be withdrawing into her former role, i.e. as an accountant she would analyse past results to expose weaknesses in order to improve businesses. Elizabeth appears insecure, and seems to have difficulty forging an identity within her firm. I considered whether the recruitment of three accountants, in such a small business, gave Elizabeth the opportunity to manage people, within a discipline that she was familiar with. The use of a 'witch's cauldron' is a particularly interesting metaphor. Jamie is perhaps suggesting that the accountants are stirring something up, that may become unsavoury for others.

The point about her poor self-image and apologetic nature is rather ambiguous, as Jamie maintains that she finds it hard to accept that she's ever wrong. Why would you apologise and run yourself down if you were sure you were always right? It seems there may be a connection between low self-esteem, and the need to be right.

Ron and Mo, for example, have little issue with being wrong. On the contrary, they encourage others to challenge their views. As the interview progressed, Jamie went on to inform me how he felt Elizabeth instigated situations.

"Well, you know how it is. I get called in "Jamie can I have a word" and you know by the tone of her voice that it's going to be more than a word. So she relays the story of the Christmas do where Jeanette doesn't want to go (it's in works time). Elizabeth says she is going to make her sit in the office whilst we are at the do. I have the conversation with her and persuade Jeanette to go to the do. After one drink, Jeanette ups and goes, much to the disgust of Elizabeth who feels she's been challenged. She thinks that Jeanette is taking liberties. Elizabeth is not going

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to let her get away with it. So I spend [waste] forty minutes listening to Elizabeth talking about Jeanette, the conversation does as it always does, move on to something else [another moan]. Elizabeth has a habit of apologising for not sticking to the point, but then digresses once again, it happens regularly, there's never an outcome, I just think she's letting off steam". (JL, Int 2; p1)

During my time as a consultant I was regularly hauled into Elizabeth's office to help her make sense of events and situations. This was something I experienced during my time in Dale and Justin's organisation as well. Elizabeth, like Dale and Justin, could not bear the thought of someone taking advantage of their good nature. In parallel with Dale and Justin, she uses somebody else (Jamie in this case) as a sounding board. It seems that she is incapable of meaningful construction of situations by herself. These meetings were perhaps used for Elizabeth to gain support, or to pass the problem onto someone else. She is, again, concerned that the people involved in these situations feel that she's being unreasonable or acting inappropriately. I quizzed Elizabeth on who she spent time talking to.

AW - *"When you say you listen to people, who do you talk to?"*

ET - *"A small group of people"*

AW - *"And what is it about these people that makes you listen to them and not necessarily to other people?"*

ET - "*Well, it's the senior people in the organisation. Having said that, if anybody came up, you know, with a suggestion, I'd listen because sometimes there's*

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something happening on the shop floor that you're just totally oblivious too" (ET, Int 6; p4)

Elizabeth gives a text book answer insisting that she welcomes in the ideas of others. It seems more likely that based on the inadequacy of her understanding relating to events, that it will unearth things that she might be missing on the shop floor. When she realises what she is saying, she is quick to retreat.

"So you know. But the sort of conduit to that communication does not happen very often, so most of the people who are most likely to be talking to me are the senior managers/management side of thing, and I suppose I listen to them because I respect them, and I respect their knowledge of the industry. You know it might be a technical issue or they're experienced".
(ET, Int 6:p9-10)

I asked how else she was able to make sense of complex situations.

"I sit with my office door open and just take in what's going on around me. And if I think about it, I use that quite often for picking up on things. And I think I just pick up on, little bit sexist here, but I pick up on sensitivities of people. I feel that sometimes the male staff and the male management can be a little bit lacking in consideration". (ET, Int 6; p2)

Elizabeth makes no apology for leaving her door ajar. In fact, she seems to think it's the most natural thing in the world. This act, however, clearly sends out a clear message to her employees. Elizabeth has to be aware of everything that is going on, and is intent on

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not letting anything get past her. Why she feels the need to use the excuse that she is protecting female members of staff is unclear, but Elizabeth has clearly got an issue with male/female identity in the workplace. She told me on more than one occasion that she believes others think that she is a female misplaced in a male dominated industry. She goes on to say…

"Sometimes I've just picked up on the little things, little vibes that I pick up on, and I'll speak to the management of that division and ask "Do you think so and so is happy? Or I sense that there's a problem?" (ET, Int 6; p2)

Elizabeth is clearly obsessed with issues that are affecting her staff, but instead of going directly to the member of staff concerned, she uses senior managers to help her untangle ambiguity and confusion relating to situations.

She apologises for going off on a tangent, but once I let her know it's alright, she continues…

"A 'how are they?' scenario so as to keep an eye on them, on how they are doing; but to go back to your question, how do I assess? I will, you know, use my eyes and ears in terms of what's going on. But, I will then sit down with, say, their direct line manager after a period of time and ask them".
(ET, Int 6:p11)

Elizabeth simply cannot let things go; as a result, she is involved in all aspects of the business. It was apparent, from the conversations I had with her, that she often lost focus on the business, most of the time she seemed extremely troubled.

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The next section compares and contrasts the extent to which entrepreneurs are involved

in their respective organisations, and examines the effects on the business.

Getting too involved

Ron and Mo both contend that entrepreneurs should work 'on' their business. Nonetheless, many made the mistake of getting far too involved 'in' matters, generally, to clarify what the problems might be in relation to current issues. Elizabeth appears to have manoeuvred herself into a more hands on role, in order to make sense of problems that occur on a daily basis. She maintains that having made her production manager redundant, she was forced to take on a more active role. From my first-hand knowledge, she appeared to have replaced the production manager with an accountant, so that she could release herself from financial duties and locate herself in the centre of organisational activity.

"I think, to be fair, at the time I spent a lot more time in the business. I worked lots and lots of hours and what's confusing for me now, having this conversation Andy, is that in one way I feel as if I've gone a bit full circle, because I had to make redundancies last year and I made the production manager redundant, and when I did that I basically had to take on more work myself. So, although I said to you earlier that I've delegated more, I have taken on certainly more roles, but I think that ... analysing it … I've taken on more production management roles but more on the financial and accounting aspect. I've probably delegated more of that out, so I've switched". (ET, Int 6:p8)

AW- *Switched?*

ET- *Yeah, the focus... Slightly … I've forgotten what I was going to say. So, what's difficult for me when I'm thinking about all the different phases? It's sort of like, I came into the business, I was not too happy with existing management, dealt with*

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that, got quite involved myself, then brought in other management and probably stepped back a bit. I've since then made some of the management team redundant, and I've got back involved … What I've done is split one of the positions between three people and I've taken a third of it (ET, Int 6:p9)

It would appear that having replaced ineffective managers with new staff, Elizabeth retreated slightly, but was still watchful. When the new recruits failed to meet her expectations, she decided to take part of the role of production management herself. It seemed that when she was unable to find out what she needed to know, or was unhappy with the performance of production, she simply placed herself firmly in the middle of it. She clearly considers the appointment of an accounts person, at the expense of a production resource, was a sound business decision. This was on the basis that she could manage production more effectively. Although Elizabeth had little to no experience in manufacturing, and lacked the relevant technical knowledge needed in the role, she clearly believed it was the right move for the business.

"And what is quite inspiring to me now is that the bit of the role I've taken on … and the insight into the business that it gives me is just awesome. That's why I feel, and it's taken me a long time to get here, that we are so geared up to be successful. The economy, however, is doing what the economy is doing and we can't get the turnover in, to sort of, really reap the benefits of the hard work that we've put in". (ET, Int 6:p8)

Justifying her position as production manager, Elizabeth emphasises the insight that her new role has given her. It is not clear if this is about the needs of the business, or providing her with the knowledge to determine who she can trust. Elizabeth argues that

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the business, as a result of her involvement, has become more efficient. She expresses that her frustrations now concern things outside of the business, beyond her control; for example, the economic climate and its effect on her business.

Elizabeth reflects on her time in the business…

"I just didn't feel that the management that was in place was that in tune, although, at the time, it was probably the shop floor because there are two sides to the business. We have contracting and production, and my primary concern with those, at that initial time, was the management of the shop floor. To be fair (and I'm thinking back 6 years now), it's difficult to put myself back into that timeframe, but my recollection is that, that type of business was by far the biggest side, at that point in time, and that's why I was focused on that part of the business. I just didn't feel that the management, on that side of the business, was effective, or I just didn't think it was working really, and so I felt that I had to get more involved myself. Also I think, because I didn't come from the industry, I felt I needed to understand it more myself. I probably threw myself quite heavily into it to get more of an understanding, because I come, very much, from the ethos that I don't like giving people something to do that I don't know how to do myself. I can't, I haven't got the confidence to" (ET, Int 6:p3)

The dialogue is very repetitive; she states a number of times that her main issue was with the production side of the business. To solve the problem she believes that there was no choice but to occupy the role of Production Manager in order to assess and clarify what the issues actually were. Elizabeth maintains that you cannot instruct people to do something unless you are able to do it yourself. Ron and Mo however,

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agree that this should be the job of the managers. Elizabeth is clearly not prepared, or lacks the confidence to act decisively until she has created order and made retrospective sense of events and situations.

ET- *"I can`t wing it like some people can, but that comes from my way of dealing with stuff. I need to understand it myself so that if someone's having a problem with it, or if they are not doing it correctly, I've got a view on it myself, kind of thing"* (ET, Int 6:p3)

Yet again, the passage exposes the fact that she believes she has to be able to control all functions of the business, rather than putting her faith in the relevant managers. This is in total contrast to Ron and Mo and the way they deal with accountability in their respective businesses. Jamie does, however, suggest that Elizabeth's involvement in production is a positive step.

JL- *"Well now she is involved with production, raising job sheets and running production, and she's actually doing a good job. She also looks like she's enjoying it".* (JL, Int 2:p4)

AW - *"Has it changed her outlook?"*

JL- *"I'm not sure, but now that she's preoccupied with production, she has less time to analyse and speculate. I guess by being more hands on, she can see issues first hand, rather than rely on information from someone else. I've certainly spent less time in her office, which for me has to be a good thing".* (JL, Int 2:p4)

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I considered, Jamie might simply be celebrating the fact that she doesn't have as much time to analyse and question various day to day events. Jamie, as a consequence, is free to get on with his work.

AW- *"Do you think she is actually contributing to a functional area of the business?"*

JL- *"Never really thought about that, but I suppose she might think she's adding more value to the business this way"* (JL, Int 2:p3)

Jamie openly admits, he hasn't actually considered how Elizabeth's involvement is benefitting the business, but clearly doesn't sound convinced. I asked Elizabeth the same question…

"Yeah, do you know what, Andy? We've started reaping the benefit with the role I now do; looking at the loadings, you're going to think I'm mad that I do this – but the insight that that gives me to the business, Andy (ET, Int 6:p4)

It seems that Elizabeth has now got a sense of purpose, plus the identity that she craved. She is still intent, however, in justifying why she needs to do these things. During the course of the passage Elizabeth keeps repeating my name. I admit this made me feel rather uncomfortable. I concluded that this may have been another demonstration of her need for acceptance. In another act, she continues to justify her role change, claiming that it only takes a small proportion of her time.

ET- "*Throughout the day it might take up, some days perhaps, 2 hours*

AW - "*Yeah?*"

ET- *"Yeah, and some days it's nothing, you know, because there are no jobs that have come through that day, and you know they are working on big jobs on the shop floor so there's no changes kind of thing. So, I don't do anything much, except for looking at who's working on what job, I possibly only do it every couple of days, to make an assessment of where we are now. I mean, particularly if we are not that busy, it's not that crucial to me. I mean, as I'm sitting at the moment, I know I have got a massive paper load next week so it's really critical that, this week, we are where we are at. And in doing that, as well, I'm making assessments on whether or not we'll need overtime…. So I am now so much more involved in the production management side of things than I ever have been".* (ET, Int 6: p13)

In informing me that it doesn't take much of her time, it appears that Elizabeth wants me to acknowledge the value it's adding. She then clarifies how she spends the rest of her time.

"And just carrying on from what I do, you know, I will look over the VAT returns and I'll deal with final management accounts, although Bev will do the management accounts. They will come through to me and I'll sort of take a look at them in terms of reasonableness and see if there is any sort of … well I might think – what's in there this month and drill-down on it, and put some adjustments through. But then I will sort out the sending of the accounts to the bank, because I usually send them a covering letter with a little bit of a narrative, explaining what happened that month and so on ... and I still do that myself. I deal with the insurance, you know, which might not sound much, but you know, from time to time, it can be. For

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example, when cover is being renewed, last week we switched the insurance

company due to costs and so the new insurance company came in, and spent half

a day with me and stuff like that". (ET, Int 6: p13)

Elizabeth doesn't trust Bev to follow her job through. I know from my first-hand knowledge, however, that Bev is highly competent in her role. This is another demonstration of her rubber stamping things to demonstrate the value she is adding. She allows Bev to take it to a certain level but then takes over. I asked Bev much later on, when I re-purchased the business, how it made her feel. She explained that she rationalised it as being more Elizabeth's problem. Bev sustained that Elizabeth often manipulated the figures to satisfy the bank, so it would need her involvement in any case. The insurance renewal is yet another example of her staff not being allowed to have ownership of anything.

"Yeah there's a lot that only happens once every 6 months, or whatever, but there

are always lots of other things, you know. I mean the other morning the IT systems

completely went down. You know, so I'm working as well rebooting stuff up, which

is ridiculous probably, but I do". (ET, Int 6: p13)

Elizabeth openly admits that her involvement in technological issues is '*ridiculous'*, but she still has to make sure that she heads off potential disasters. I decided to change direction and ask Elizabeth how, in her opinion, communication flowed around the organisation.

"On the basis that I cannot give you an immediate answer, [communication is]

probably unstructured. Various things are communicated by email, which I know

some people aren't keen about, but I tend to send stuff by email, one - if I want documentation off it, and two - if I want more than 2 people to know about it, because I can copy other people in on an instruction. Sometimes I send stuff by email because I might think about something when that particular person isn't in the office. So I don't forget about it, I would send an email to them". (ET, Int 6: p13)

This demonstrates Elizabeth's reluctance to confront things head on. Like Dale and Justin, she prefers the use of email as a communication vehicle. The need for an audit trail provides a mechanism to prove that she has given individuals clear instructions to do something. It is also obvious that she is trying to making sense of the business activities outside of standard office hours. Many of her staff told me that they received emails late at night. Earlier in the interview, Elizabeth maintained that she had, in fact, stood back from the Contracts side of the business. I decided to investigate how accurate this was.

AW- *"You've just said contracts just pretty much get on and do it. How do you know what is going on?"*

ET- *"Well I know what's going on, on a day to day basis … it's unstructured in terms of… well, Tony will talk to me in terms of when we are winning a contract, but the probably more structured communication is on the sales side of things. We have a sort of monthly meeting on where we are. So from early on, I'll be aware of the contract – obviously as soon as Tony wins the contract he just comes in and tells me, so it's good news time, kind of thing. It's just done in an unstructured way so I'm aware of it, at that point in time. Then with my production hat on I sort of,*

again, in an informal way, I might just walk into their office at five o clock or something, or the office area at five o clock when they are still working, and say you know, "how much, how much production is there in this job". And to be fair I'm being quite proactive on that, and I could possibly be having a go at them for not leading it to me". (ET, Int 6: p14)

The necessity to inform Elizabeth at the point Tony had secured a job that reveals she is far from staying out of the business. She admits taking her staff to task if she is not instantly told something. It is also interesting that she regularly collar managers at five o'clock, when the rest of the staff had left the building. I considered it was perhaps easier to have a frank conversation when everyone has gone, or it could have been simply a way of making sure she was getting her money's worth from these employees, in stretching their working hours. Elizabeth again justifies her involvement...

"I'm trying to stop that road traffic accident happening and I'm getting in there pretty early – they've only just won the contract – and I'm just saying to them you know, what is it? – The doorsets – how many doorsets is there? – So that I can then put some provisional plan into the loading so that I don't end up with a massive overload in a month's time. And this all comes from experience of what's happened in the past, you know, so... but that communication is quite unstructured but the fact that it is an open-plan office assists". (ET, Int 6: p5)

Elizabeth's cognitive experiences dictate a need to make sense of things in order to prevent mistakes from occurring. Rather surprisingly she maintains that the ability to listen in to conversations is a positive thing.

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AW - *"Because you can hear what's going on?"*

ET - *"Yeah and I know it sounds, perhaps, a bit unprofessional, but it generally does work now. I question if the business grew again, because in terms of scale we're turning over probably not even half of what we were turning over 2-3 years ago. I would also question – I'd probably have to go back to the drawing board because I think things might flip".* (ET, Int 6:p13-14)

The use of the phrase '*road traffic accident',* points to the seriousness of the issues that have presented themselves. Elizabeth has to stop them happening; the implication being that without her involvement, the outcomes would be disastrous. She uses her past experiences to paint a picture of what might occur, if she simply let things take their course. What she perhaps failed to consider is that most employees, knowing that she would always involve herself, gave up accountability.

Elizabeth's access to issues that surface daily, results in her analysing and decoding information sources to solve problems. This results in her being unable to focus on taking the business forward. Instead of planning for the future, she is spending her time listening in to conversations, and involving herself in the detail of every, event no matter how trivial they may be.

It is clear therefore, Elizabeth, Dale and Justin's obsession with analysing and sense making, results in them being far too involved in the day to day activities, at the expense of strategic matters. As a result, their behaviours surfaced in their mistrust of the staff they employed. This related to both competence and relational issues, the outcome of which was an apparent need to control all aspects of business life. The next two sections

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examine the effects of control and mistrust on the entrepreneurs, their followers, and the business.

The Effects of Trust on Performance

According to Noteboom (2002), Brenkert (1998), Rousseau et al (1998) and McEvily et al (2003), trust is a propensity to willingly expose oneself to vulnerability and risk, based upon the positive expectations of the behaviour of others. Rousseau maintains that trust can take on many forms; deterrence based, which suggests that the benefits of compliance out way the gains for breaching trust, calculus, which is based on a rational outcome; relational, which is derived from historical interactions between parties; and institutional, i.e. the use of legal mechanisms. Goel and Karri (2006, p477) argue, "Entrepreneurs need to trust others and serve as trustees in order to grow their organisations". They state that the ability of stakeholders to trust one another not only plays a key role in early growth stages, but can also substitute's institutional deficiencies. Goel and Karri (2006) believe that the psychological traits shown by successful entrepreneurs allow them to engender trust, but can also sometimes lead to over-trust. Sarasvathy (2001) supports this claim, upholding that entrepreneurs are generally more inclined to over trust than non-entrepreneurs.

Kets de Vries (1985), however, proposes that many entrepreneurs are inclined to be suspicious of others and distrust the world around them. The empirical evidence seems to support his view. The data suggests that the majority of individuals were unable to trust, in fact, in some cases their behaviour bordered on paranoia. Ron admits that he has seen others struggle once they begin life as an owner manager, and discloses that he has seen many individuals who have issues with trust and control.

> AW- *"But do you think that people who have not had the experience, you talk about, will find it difficult to trust?"*

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It was evident, during my time with Dale and Justin that they didn't trust anyone. I witnessed a conversation between a wage clerk and a senior manager who had been asked to provide proof that his car had been in the garage for two weeks. Dale and Justin were not convinced. Burnsy was stunned, "*what, you think I'd actually make this up*?" Lisa sheepishly acknowledged she was simply carrying out instructions. Dale had been presented with an expense form detailing the cost of a courtesy car, which Burnsy had paid out of his own pocket. As his existing car was under warranty, he claimed he could not provide any supporting paperwork. Dale's deep level thinking skills influenced him to suspect that the car may not have actually been in for repair, and that his employee's wife could have been using it. Burnsy presented the paperwork the next day; I asked Lisa how he had reacted. "*He just slats the receipt on my desk, mumbled something like...unbelievable, and asked when he would get the money*". Lisa admitted to feeling embarrassed about the whole incident. I considered that Dale and Justin knew they were being unreasonable, otherwise they would have dealt with it themselves.

This mistrust extended too many of their employees. Dale and Justin told me that they believed employees would regularly skive off early. One employee, in particular, was deemed untrustworthy by Dale and Justin. Their suspicions were proved correct when Justin informed us; the employee had been spotted forty miles from where he had supposed to have been. A plan was quickly put into action. The employee was called

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and asked to collect a package from a supplier, who was based five minutes from the site he was presumed to be working at. He initially accepted the task, but then must have realised that he had been rumbled, informing his line manager that he was at a dental appointment. I was in the office with Dale, when Justin informed us that he'd finally '*got him'*.

There is often a vicious circle where employees experience mistrust, and as a consequence, they do things they perhaps wouldn't normally do. Getting caught out reinforces the point that they were untrustworthy.

The continual lack of trust shown by these entrepreneurs had negative implications for the development of their organisations. According to Zahra et al (2006), relation based trust promotes cohesion, unity of direction, and the co-operation needed to grow business ventures. He advises it enables employees to capitalise on skills and competencies. Other writers (Axelrod, 1984; Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995; Roberts and O'Reilly, 1974), maintain that it aids cooperation and communication, and (Zand, 1972) states, trust improves problem solving skills and helps performance. Where trust was lacking in the organisations studied there was also evidence of employees pulling in different directions, managers demonstrated a lack of expertise and aptitude for development, communication did not flow around the organisation, and individuals were not inclined to collaborate willingly.

Zahra et al (2006), argues that where relational trust exists, the psychological contract with the organisation is strengthened. Employees feel a strong attachment to their firm and, as a result, invest time and energy to develop ways to improve performance. It was

clear that in the organisations where trust did not exist, employees were not motivated to achieve, and simply went through the motions.

I asked Elizabeth on what basis she formed trust.

"I'd think that I work from a position of semi-trust. I wouldn't say a hundred per cent you know I wouldn't … I think you've got to make an assumption, when employing a new member of staff, that they are a reasonable person, as you wouldn't be employing them. Then I take a little bit of time to see how they work. To answer your question, I think I'm open to start off with, but I don't think I trust or mistrust to start off with … I think I've got an open mind, I think". (ET, Int 6:p9)

Elizabeth is hesitant and unsure, but argues that she is open-minded about people. She maintains that she is neutral when it comes to trust, she continues…

"But I am always mindful that as, and I hate to use the word, an entrepreneur, again, because I can't define it, or a manager, that I always have it in the back of my mind that … this is going to be a giveaway moment comment … that you always think you are going to be let down by people. You always think they're not going to be as good as you, and that's probably emotive language, but they haven't got the same investment in the business as you've got, so even if they are committed and conscientious they are not going to go, generally, to the ninth degree that you will yourself. You know one of my great sayings is that if we are all seven's there would be no eights, so you have to bear in mind that everybody's different, and as they say they might be conscientious, they might not see the big picture, they might not just appreciate". (ET, Int 6:p9)

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It is clear from the '*giveaway moment'* that Elizabeth is not inclined to trust individuals. She argues that she '*semi-trusts'* people, but admits that in the back of her mind that she expects to be '*let down'*. Elizabeth's position is, trust has to be earned, in other words employees have to prove themselves. I wasn't sure if she was talking about their ability to carry out tasks, or their attitude towards work.

AW - *"So it depends on what you see trust as. Is trust about trusting that person to do a job in terms of their attitude, or is it in terms of their errr…*

ET - *"Capability?"*

AW - "*Yes, capability?"*

ET – "*Yeah"* (ET, Int 6:p8-9)

Ron rationalises an inability to trust, down to a fear of failure'. He believes that if you don't trust your staff you cannot expect ownership off them. He suggests a lack of trust can affect entrepreneurs, to the extent that it destroys their business.

"Other business men I know, in fact the guy that was here, find it difficult to trust…they just can't let go. They seem to be frightened of failure and can't let go. It doesn't work, I've seen it many times, no one takes ownership and the owners get themselves into a terrible state" (RW, Int 7:p).

This reinforces the contention that many entrepreneurs are rarely free to be creative and develop the business. Being emotionally charged they are unable to focus on the needs of the organisation. Les is another example of someone who found it difficult to trust employees within his organisation.

"The person I trusted the most at work would be – there were two blokes actually – they were Billy Potts and Jimmy Edwards, and I would have trusted them with my life and with all my money, because I know that they wouldn't put it across me. But, any of the others, I wouldn't trust them as far as I could throw them, because they used to prove themselves that they could let you down; I'd catch them out every day of the week". (LW, Int 4:p6)

On the basis that Les has employed hundreds of people over the years, it is perhaps surprising that he could only trust a couple of individuals. Les shares the phrase used by a number of entrepreneurs, '*he would always catch them out'.*

AW - "*Example?"*

LW- "Yeah I'll give you an example. I remember I had a bloke, Cliff Cartwright, and he had his cartilage done. Six weeks he was off. Full pay, because he was one of the staff, and the day before he was due to start back, he came into the office to give his notice in – said he'd got another job". (LW, Int 4:p6)*.*

AW - "Nice".

LW- *"So I sacked him on the spot. I said you don't need to bother serving your notice, mate. So that's why I didn't trust a lot of them. That was one instance… and little things, you know, you were let down, and in the end I didn't, I only trusted those two people who I worked with. I'm not saying people I didn't work with, but I wouldn't…I wouldn't trust them.* (LW, Int 4:p6)

Les clearly had a number of bitter experiences, these led him to the opinion that people would eventually let him down. The last sentence in the passage, again, suggests how like others, he has had difficulty admitting his mistrust of others. Elizabeth, Dale and Justin all doubted their employees, but maintained that they were inclined to give their employees the benefit of the doubt.

Closely related to, and as a symptom of mistrust, is a need for control (Kets de Vries, 2005).

Balancing Control

This section highlights the balance between the degree of control needed by organisations, and the extent to which their continual interference can affect relationships with employees. Entrepreneurs have to recognise the need to implement ongoing management systems, in order to plan and control their organisations performance. Anthony & Govindarajan (2007), acknowledge that organisations need verification (the systems used for monitoring progress, and the procedures for handling the numbers), volition (the structures required for accountability and reporting arrangements), and vision (the strategy's that are employed). Without these mechanisms in place, entrepreneurs and managers may be too late to intervene when things are going wrong. It is unlikely that any venture will succeed if there is no responsibility or accountability amongst line managers. Organisations without vision will usually stagnate or pull in different directions; this gives mixed messages to their employees.

On the other hand, entrepreneurs' obsessions with control can result in serious consequences, especially for organisations whose people stop acting independently, and are either terrified of making mistakes, or past caring. A conversation with Danny (one of Dale and Justin's trusted lieutenants) illustrates this effectively, '*there's no point in finalising it because he's only going to change it anyway'*. The control exercised by Dale was so claustrophobic that ownership never passed to anyone, '*if I don't finish it Dale will, so let him'* an employee stated. Dale never stopped complaining about what he called, '*the lack of ownership in this place'…'if I don't drive it no-one will'*. It is of little surprise that employee's give up on entrepreneurs who act in this way. According to

Burns (2007), this type of behaviour creates frustration, resentment, and an unwillingness to accept responsibility. He advises that this is because their decisions are often questioned and reversed, and their performance is regularly policed by the entrepreneur.

Dale and Justin had been reasonably successful in the early stages of their venture and as a result, were convinced they had the secret to success. Their approach became inflexible, insisting that their employees followed their procedures. One of the ways they controlled the activities that their followers undertook, was to manipulate their accredited Quality Management System. The system used milestone records at each step of a given process. Data, obtained at different stages of projects, was used as an audit trail to uncover any non-conforming works, and to implement corrective actions preventing similar occurrences. The audits were often used to validate their suspicions of poor performance, or to identify policies and procedures that had not been followed. I witnessed an incident where an innovative approach taken by one individual was condemned and considered non-compliance. Johnson and Gill (1993) refer to administrative controls as 'those mechanisms, techniques and processes that have been consciously and purposefully designed, in order to control the organisational behaviour[s] of other individuals, groups and organisations'. This quote reflects the extent to which entrepreneurs adopted processes, to close off opportunities for employees, to use their own initiative.

Elizabeth described the way in which she had '*led business unit managers into accepting budgets that were substantially higher than if they had prepared the budgets herself.'* The sense of achievement she felt was ill founded, employees had dismissed the figures as unrealistic. Any accountability was lost, the business unit leaders talked

about the budgets being *'pie in the sky numbers',* the management were clearly going to ignore the targets. Deming (1986), is dismissive of 'management by objectives'; he suggests, 'Management by fear' would be a better name. The effect, he suggests, is devastating. 'It nourishes short-term performance, annihilates long-term planning, demolishes teamwork, and encourages rivalry and politics.'

Most of the entrepreneurs interviewed displayed a need to control their functional departments. Employees were simply treated as followers or disciples. Kets de Vries (1985) elucidates that this kind of behaviour leads to subordinates being 'infantilised'. In other words, they are expected to behave like idiots and end up doing very little; they make no decisions, circulate very little information and eventually leave the organisation.

Les' inability to release control drove him to a serious illness.

> *"I wasn't very good at delegating, Andrew. Because I used to think that I could do everything. But I did leave a lot to Billy and Jimmy in that sense … I mean Billy used to say to me, I don't want you in the yard 'til 9 o clock until all the blokes have gone because we won't have anybody working here… yeah I can remember that. But no, I wasn't very good at delegating, and I used to think that…well I could do everything but you can't, can you? That's how you finish up in Ward 76".* (LW, Int 6: p8)

Martin was unable to 'take a step back' despite having people in place to run the organisations projects. Martin didn't seem to realise how his continual interference de-motivated his staff. Martin, like many of the entrepreneurs, felt the need to justify his actions.

"The problem is that they're all pretty new to the company, and I'm still overseeing much of the Bentley project. I'm still very much the commercial person in the project. I'm not heavily involved in where's this tool? Where's that tool? I'm actually going to people. I think I've had to step in once or twice, when they've lost their way a bit, and point them in the right direction, but it's a new team, so I've just had to drag them in the right direction…the right way. Richard Ronnie and Paul only started eight weeks ago and are really quite fresh to it. So I'm still going to have to fill the gaps for a couple of months, really just to pull it all together". (MM, Int 1:p2)

Martin legitimatises his involvement on the basis that the project teams are new to the business; suggesting that he will leave them alone once they understand the needs of the business. Although Martin argues he lets the little things go, it was obvious that he was fully involved in all aspects of project management. The word drag signifies the reluctance, on the part of his staff, to follow his lead. Martin again refers to filling in the gaps.

Jamie draws parallels with Martin's behaviour suggesting that Elizabeth,

"Has to have something to hang her hat on, she just can't let anything go, no matter how trivial. I don't know whether she's just seeking justification for her actions or… she does it in order to instigate action …I don't think she's doing it subconsciously, she just seems torn between not wanting to offend". (JL, Int 2:p2)

This is yet another demonstration of the entrepreneur's obsession with control. Although recognising her irrational behaviour, Elizabeth is still obsessed in her quest

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for the truth. Elizabeth admits that her management team find her controlling, one can clearly see why.

*"I honestly don't know … some people would say I am a control freak, and yes I probably am. I probably don't - I'm getting better – but in the past I probably haven't delegated as much as I should have done. But actually, I think I do that a lot more now, than I ever have done in the past". (*ET, Int 6:p8*)*

AW- *"What was it that made you feel that you couldn't?"*

ET- *"Fear".*

AW - *"Of?"*

ET- "*It going wrong and costing a lot of money, really, as shallow as that sounds– money" [laughs]*

Elizabeth realises that she needs to delegate more, but is clearly unable to do so until she gains real confidence in people. She is clearly embarrassed; assuring me that is not about her ego.

"Yeah I honestly don't think it's an ego thing because I've always wished I could delegate a lot more … and, as I say, I found it easier to do so once in this environment... but perhaps only more recently. But again that comes through – and this might sound perhaps bizarre – slightly due to my more grounded understanding, and having more confidence in other people".(ET, Int 6:p7)

Elizabeth admits to being involved in all aspects of decision making, although claiming, it is dependent on the scale of the problem. Although she argues that she wants to delegate more, it seems more like rhetoric than reality.

"It depends on what it is, if the timeframe is such that I feel I can talk to that person about it later on, or wait and get them on their own, I will. Sometimes, though, I just wade on in there. I'll just walk out there and go 'What's that? What's that happening?' which perhaps isn't the best way of managing the situation, but, again, I'm worried that the wrong decision is being made". (ET, Int 6:p13)

AW- *"It's, emotion, isn't it, again? Fear and all the rest of it, I guess?"*

ET- *"Yeah"* (ET, Int 6:p11-12)

The expression '*wade on in there'* portrays a picture of Elizabeth rushing to prevent mistakes, thus delaying the decision making process. Why she waits to get the culprits away from other work colleagues is unclear. Through direct observation, it was clear that she would procrastinate on courses of action for weeks on end. Examples include; a decision that needed to be made on a production manager who was deemed ineffective, final accounts that required negotiation, investments into training put on hold, strategic plans avoided and marketing opportunities missed.

Dale's control grew to obsessive levels; no-one was allowed to take the initiative, he interfered in all functional departments. The Business Development Manager (BDM); responsible for completing all Pre-Qualification Questionnaires (PQQ) and evaluating the organisations suitability for projects, was often undermined. The firm had been working

informally on a contract for over twelve months; it had been managed particularly well. Securing ongoing works through more formal channels was crucial to the organisation's long term sustainability. Dale, knowing that the contract was coming out to tender, intercepted the documentation as it came through the post. He spent days on the tender process before the BDM even knew it existed. I asked her how this made her feel.

"Well, obviously it does make you feel like you are not trusted, but I guess it's that important to him that he just can't let go…that's the way he is". (Conversation with the BDM, 2007)

Dale's employees are clearly not trusted, and certainly not motivated to be creative. The BDM was conditioned to simply follow instructions, knowing full well that Dale would oversee all activities. In addition to mistrust and releasing control, another behavioural issue relating to entrepreneurs, was their reluctance to confront issues head on.

Avoiding Conflict

It appeared, in most of the organisations that the entrepreneur coveted respect and had to be considered friendly, reasonable and fair.

"I'd like to think that I was respected, and I sort of think I am. They have seen me deal with situations effectively. Someone a long time ago – well not that long- when I first bought the business - a HR consultant – I always remember him saying to me, you know, every time you make a decision your staff will be taking note of how you handle it, and how you deal with other staff. So I'd like to think that I'm very fair and reasonable, and I do think they think that, and…oh I was going to say something else then (ET, Int 6: p7)

Elizabeth clearly failed to follow the advice given to her. The stories illustrate that she is mistaken if she thinks that her employees view her as fair and reasonable. Within the passage, the word '*think'* appears on four separate occasions. Elizabeth is clearly unsure of herself.

"I think that the reason they do respect me is that they've seen me get involved in things and they've seen me make difficult decisions. I'd like to think that, from a HR perspective, I've handled that quite well, and kept them in the loop and so on and … [pause] … I don't know … and I think they think I'm pretty … that they think I know what I'm talking about. I mean I've had comments made to me – I'm thinking about dealing with difficult HR issues, recently, where I've actually sacked people and got into sort of, you know, involved with, sort of, issues and having to deal with grievance procedures and whatever". (ET, Int 6: p7)

Elizabeth attempts to convince herself that she has dealt with Human Resource issues effectively.

"And … sort of senior staff here have, sort of, made comments to me in terms of they didn't know what they were taking on, you know, they've tried to come back and have a pop at me … that they underestimated me, which perhaps gives another answer – that some staff underestimate me, but I'd like to think that the core staff here know what my skill sets are, and therefore do respect me. They might not like me, but we all want to be liked, but you know, at the end of the day, I want to, I suppose more. I probably am the kind of business person that would feel more comfortable for being liked, but at the end of the day I just take the view- yes we come to work and we want to work in a nice working environment. Because, we are here a lot of the time, but I'd like to think I put the business first in terms of any decision and I'll make an unpopular decision if I have to". (ET, Int 6:p6-7)

In parallel with other entrepreneurs, Elizabeth needs to be liked and respected, this is apparent at various points in the quote. She offers a number of reasons why her employees should respect her, but these are not convincing. Elizabeth argues that respect is gained once her employees are convinced that she knows what she's talking about, and can witness her adding value to the business. She has a habit of trailing off and not finishing sentences. The words and phrases she uses, such as, 'quite well', 'I'd like to think', and 'sort of', suggests she is obviously unsure of herself. The only time she does sound convincing is when she maintains that employees are unable to get one over her, '*people underestimate me'*.

Most of the entrepreneurs observed in this study avoided conflict at all times. Some, for example, would use managers to send messages of displeasure, presumably, in the hope that it might dilute resentment from the offenders towards them. Dale and Justin were typical of the majority of owners who needed to be liked. Their obvious mistrust was, they believed, hidden from the staff. When direct conflict was needed, they would hide behind email, or use memos used to convey their anger and frustrations. Messages were often mixed and ambiguous. Many times they employed over justification for their discontent; aggressive displays were tempered by apologies, or they would retreat when challenged. This usually resulted in complete ramblings on the part of the entrepreneur. Messages were therefore ambiguous and often misunderstood.

On many occasions I voiced my concern at messages being delivered by email. I encouraged people to examine the context from which different incidents may have occurred. I asked staff to deal with situations head on, rather than letting them fester and become worse. I considered the absence of confrontation was due to reality challenging what the entrepreneur, in fact, wanted to believe. This convenient view of reality was highlighted in a number of stories, which, when passed on to others, were manipulated. To illustrate, a Project Manager John informed us that he had not confirmed delivery dates with a client, due to concerns about jobs planned into the diary actually taking place. The story, when retold by the entrepreneur to the diary planner became, "*John says, the fact that they're in the diary is irrelevant, nothing ever happens when it should, so there's little point advising the client a date, when it's likely to change".*

When Elizabeth had issues with her staff, she also failed to confront them directly, preferring instead to offload her frustrations on to Jamie.

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JL- *"Well we've got this girl [Jeanette] who's brilliant at her job but can be really annoying. Elizabeth just sees the negatives. Yes [Jeanette] she gets really pedantic about things, for example filling in all the details which can be time consuming when everyone's so pressured. I accept it because I know that's part of her job, and if she didn't, it would cause problems at later stages. We need discipline. She's also very loud and can be a touch aggressive when certain staff continually short cut things. Elizabeth, as you know, always leaves her office door open, nothing gets past her and she hears all this commotion, but she's blown it all out of proportion. She's decided that she just wants to get rid and had instigated situations through which she can do it.* (JL, Int 2: p1)

Jamie embraces Jeanette's approach because; he understands her job, and the traits required. Why Elizabeth fails to accept Jamie's view that, '*she is doing a brilliant job',* is unclear. Elizabeth is noticeably annoyed with Jeanette's manner, the absence of professionalism in a working environment. She is clearly determined to change the way Jeanette conducts herself. I considered that she was perhaps threatened by an individual, especially a female, knowing more than her, and this was an opportunity to assert her power. Elizabeth's daily interference obviously affects the way employees work and their approach to their specific tasks. I asked Jamie;

AW- *"Why do you think she wants to do this?"*

JL- *"I don't know, Elizabeth likes people to conform and Jeanette definitely doesn't. Maybe it's because she's female. Elizabeth seems to have problems with most female members of staff. We've had it before where strong characters just seem to rub her up the wrong way".* (JL, Int 2:p1)

Axelrod (1984) & Roberts & O'Reilly (1974), argue that entrepreneurs need to be approachable so that their staff can discuss their ideas, problems and issues. It is apparent, however, that Jamie doesn't feel he can discuss problems with Elizabeth, and surprisingly, won't even share his issues with anyone else either. He uses the word 'scared' when asked whether, he enlists his colleague's opinions.

"No I'd be too scared to discuss with anyone else, you say something to the wrong person and it gets back. Elizabeth has openly said to me "nothing gets past me" and it doesn't, she has moles, drivers, all as informants, all looking to score brownie points". (JL, Int 2:p2)

Elizabeth is unapproachable, and people are clearly afraid of challenging her views. Jamie maintains that Elizabeth recruits allies to uncover chaos, share data, and produce all sorts of information sources, which may have consequences for her organisation.

Using the theories that relate to the roles that entrepreneurs adopt and the extent to which they become involved in their ventures, this chapter demonstrates the disparity between the literature, which suggests that entrepreneurs simply focus on high level strategic decision making, and empirical data, which reveals they are deeply embedded in insignificant detail. Their heavy involvement in all aspects of the business appears to be based on; the lack of confidence they have in their employees. These behaviours originate from their past experiences and their views that they hold about people. As a result, they become obsessed interpreting daily events, in order to resume activities. Jamie uses the words '*witch hunt',* to illustrate the way in which Elizabeth exposes the sources of mistakes within the organisation. Most of the entrepreneurs studied spent large blocks of their time orientating towards situations, and labelling and categorising

events, to the extent that it distracted themselves and their employees, from the needs

of the business.

Chapter Eight – Embracing Risk or Avoiding Failure

The preceding chapter considers the way in which entrepreneurs spend their time making sense of the world. Their stories reveal that many find it difficult to trust, have a need to exercise control over others, and have problems communicating effectively. These behaviours cause all sorts of problems with their employees; as a result, the organisation begins to falter. The data suggests that as a business experiences difficulties, the entrepreneur loses confidence, becomes risk averse, and often succumbs to a fear of failure. The empirical data highlights that this has a significant bearing on their ability to make the right decisions at key times.

The section challenges the mainstream literature reviewed in Chapter Two, this depicts entrepreneurs as heroic figures and opportunistic visionaries, who, in order to advance their business, share a propensity to risk. The literature describes these individuals as positive, self confident and responsible when making decisions. Whilst the chapter offers illustrations portraying some entrepreneurs as confident decision makers, the majority appear paralysed by fear, and avoid decisions at all cost. The section demonstrates entrepreneurs burying themselves in their organization, and hiding from the decisions that have to be made at key times. Indeed, those who lack confidence often seek outsiders, to help them analyse highly complex situations.

Decision making is central to all organisational activity (Simon, 1947). As well as the need to formalise and codify management work, effective decision making promotes communication between managers and their subordinates (Mintzberg, 1983).

Entrepreneurs have a range of possible actions over which they can exercise discretion and choice. (Simon, 1947) Many, as a result of low self-efficacy, however, often seek to obscure, or avoid, making decisions; Mo seems to be the exception.

Embracing Risk

Mo, rather bullishly claims that business is all about dealing with risk, he argues that the judgment of risk is a skill that has to be harnessed. He contends that timing is also critical when making decisions and assessing risk. Mo disputes, if you take too long over a course of action, it often results in lost opportunities.

"The ability to take risk is absolutely essential, you know, if you haven't got the ability, and it is ability and it is a skill you require, you will develop without that ability, and then you are not going to get far. It's about making the right decision; what do we say about timing? Timing's everything – well it is isn't it? You know, in sport, timing is everything. Same in business, it's all about decisions … making the right decision at the right time gets you where you want to be". (MC, Int 8: p11)

I challenged Mo to concede that most people are unable to take risks. I suggested that some people cannot invest three hundred thousand pounds, even though they believe they might get six hundred thousand in return, because they are simply too afraid. I asked what it was that made him different in taking on a failing venture without any apparent hesitation.

"Well I look at it as an opportunity, that's the difference. I mean take Water-World, it was front page, I was sitting there – I remember this as if it was yesterday. I was sitting there in the living room reading The Sentinel, front-page "Water-World for sale", prior to that I'd never been to Water-World, and I thought, I fancy that. Because I was at that stage in my life when I'd had enough of bloody financial

services and their regulations, and I wanted out. I wanted to do other things in my

life". (MC, Int 8: p10*)*

Mo advises the framing of risk is an opportunity. It is the difference between those who act and people who do not. It seems that interpretive frameworks are influential in the process of decision making. The phrase '*Front Page'* appears twice in the passage, this signifies the importance of the venture to the general public, and possible exposure he might get as a result of him rescuing it. Mo admits to having little prior knowledge of Water-World, but it appears he has framed the opportunity as something that could not be ignored. The timing was perfect for him; it seemed that Mo's entrepreneurial spirit was being constrained by the regulations attached to financial services. The new venture was a way in which he could be creative. He continues,

"My wife's the very opposite to me; very conservative, very English and she asked

haven't you got enough? You know, haven't you done enough? You've made

enough money so take it easy. Why do you want to take more chances? To me it

wasn't actually a chance; it was actually a massive opportunity. When I looked at

it, people were missing an obvious opportunity right in front of their noses". (MC,

Int 8: p11)

Mo's wife is typical of non-entrepreneurs who cannot relate to the chances individuals take, when they do not need to. Mo dismisses the risk attached to this venture; he believes he acted with workable certainty, even though he had limited knowledge of the opportunity. I reflected on the ventures I had started or bought in to, and acknowledged there was always doubt in the back of my mind, this prompted me to ask,

AW- *"Was there nothing in you that said "Oh my God, what am I doing here – this is a lot of money?"*

MC- "*Look, the thought of the risk is a turn on right? It's the excitement and it's the buzz that we live for. Of course, you always have to have contingency, don't you, right? So when I take a risk I always make sure … what's the worst case scenario? Can I live with that worst case scenario? I never take a risk blind, it's always calculated. Somebody else might think this guy's reckless. I've never done a reckless thing in my life. I looked at this business and I thought first of all, they were selling it for £1.5 million, when you think it was a 12 acre site on probably one of the best sites in the city".* (MC, Int 8: p10)

Mo clearly relishes what others find troubling. The excitement he feels is perhaps based on his high self-efficacy (the belief that he can do what many others cannot). Mo makes sense of the opportunity. '*The worst case scenario',* he argues, is something he can '*live with'.* He considers it to be a better place than he was in before the purchase. Mo explains how the opportunity came about,

"Because they were a big company they had missed the plot, and they weren't interested in pennies anymore, right? – They had much bigger problems and issues. So they took their eyes off the radar, and of course it's been off the radar for some of the bigger companies, because it's too small in the price range. So it didn't really interest them, and it was above the range of most local business people, to take a chance on. So it's like, from this moment, I'd got something, like, a bit of niche, you know, and I thought what's the worst case scenario – I can't

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make it work – so what happens – I close it down – I've got 12 acres, even then

you know £300,000-£400,000 an acre. (MC, Int 8: p10).

Mo clearly believes that small entrepreneurial firms can be quick to mobilise, where bigger organisations are constrained by bureaucracy. He explains that the opportunity had been dismissed by large corporations who failed to see the value in the deal. He was quick to makes sense of the situation, believing he was in the right place at the right time, and had the necessary means to exploit the opportunity.

Mo does not see the risk attached to the opportunity; he argues that he always has a fall back plan when deciding to invest. Listening to Mo speak it is easy to be convinced. He explains that making decisions is all about instinct, again it seems, we are alluding to a traditional view of the entrepreneur.

"Another thing I have… my instinct is everything to me … gut instinct… it's another

thing I should add to those ingredients… instinct. To me it's not right – if I've got to

think about something, it's not right, I'm off. I thought its right, I'm in. So, I'm in,

now I want it, right?" (MC, Int 8: p10)

In adding instinct to the ingredients you need as an entrepreneur, I believe Mo is replacing the word traits with ingredients; the things entrepreneurs have that others do not. Instinct, he confirms, is everything, and he is clearly in no doubt that it is something he possesses.

"So I ring my bank up and I said I want to borrow some money and they said yeah,

fine, not a problem, we'll send you the money. Okay timescale. Well, we need to

get some due diligence done on this, so I said okay, who's is going to do it? KPMG, Why KPMG? You know, because they are obviously on the books of the big boys. A small purchase like this, how much is it going to cost? £25,000 How long will it take? About 2-4 weeks. I said bollocks. I didn't quite say bollocks to him, and I thought I can't be arsed with doing this; I'm just going to do it. So, I borrowed the money off MIC Properties and I literally went down with my little lawyer at the time, to London, Canary Wharf office of Rank Leisure, with about six of their lawyers in this big boardroom. You can imagine it was really quite intimidating, if you get intimidated. Me and my little lawyer, and then my guy gets stuck into all the contract and due diligence indemnities, and all this sort of shit, and I said Glynn I've not got time for all this crap. Where is the bloody contract? Let me sign the contract. I want it, it's going to work, I'm going to make it work, end of. Pay the bloody money, let's just sign it, pay them money, and piss off". (MC, Int 8: p12)

The language used in this passage could be considered extremely masculine, and could be construed as Mo adopting the profile of an entrepreneur; a hero, risk taker, one who is without fear, impulsive and acts without due care. Mo is certainly simplifying what is (buying a business) a complex process. He claims, once he's made his mind up, he has no interest in the detail that accompanies it. Mo is clearly impatient; he simply wants to get on with the job in hand. Most individuals, I believe, would need to make sure every last detail was covered, the due diligence period for many is a very long process. I argued that his approach could be construed as reckless, but Mo was having none of it.

"No. It isn't. Because what they were doing was being tedious. Lawyers get very tedious and there were indemnities in place, there was a separate company that

*was going to hold the asset… the whole thing was going to be separate. If you call that reckless, fine and the shit hits the fan, company folds up so what, end of. But I've still got my asset. That was my lifeline, that I'd always have the land and the asset. That was always going to be worth more than what I'd paid for it". (*MC, Int 8: p11)

Mo uses the word tedious on two occasions; this suggests he is clearly bored with detail. His schemata imply that it's not reckless as he has his bases covered. Mo acknowledges that he considers downsides and worst case scenarios, but always has fall back plans. It seems he has interpreted the situation, once he has the big picture covered; he is prepared to take a view on the deal. Mo went on to discuss the business case.

*"Yeah, again it's not rocket science, you see. It was losing about £500,000-£700,000 a year. That's how much it was losing. Now I suppose looking back I think ... how can I turn this round when Rank Leisure can't? Rank Leisure could have turned it round if they really put their mind to it, obviously. But they weren't interested, bottom line, so I'm not going to take any credit for it… I had something unique about me and somebody else didn't. I had the balls, I had the timing. I took the chance and bought it". (*MC, Int 8: p12)

Although he states it was a simple decision at the time, he reluctantly admits that once he had made retrospective sense of the deal, he could actually see the risk attached to the venture. He merely shrugged reasoning; it's too late once it's done. Acknowledging that the success he has made of the venture, he contradicts himself in the space of one sentence. Having maintained that he's no different to anyone else, and as such,

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shouldn't take any credit for the turnaround, he then boasts he had the courage, acted decisively, embraced the risk, and simply got on and did it.

Ron is in no way as buoyant as Mo, but is clearly relaxed about making decisions. According to Ron, there is little that he has not seen before. When something new came up, he used his schemata, applying the same logic to the inadequacy of his understanding, as he'd always done. Ron feels that he is always objective, and as such, acts in the best interests of the business. If a decision needed making, he was prepared to do it, whether it met with widespread disapproval or made him unpopular. There was little about Mo or Ron, to suggest they are fearful of failure.

The large majority of entrepreneurs, however, do not share the same attitude to risk as Mo, or, indeed, Ron. Most of the individuals participating in the study were clearly risk averse. The next section refers to their conservative nature when faced with decision making, and their reluctance to make themselves vulnerable to risk.

Avoiding Risk

In many cases the entrepreneur's aversion to risk was visible in many different ways. To illustrate, the selection criteria, so critical in the early days of new ventures, seemed to be, in Dale and Justin's case, based on minimising risk; they avoided paying high salaries and mainly employed people known to them. One of the first managerial positions created was that of an office manager. Kate had worked with them in their past company for many years, producing reports and completing associated administration tasks. Surprisingly, she was recruited into the role of office manager, and was compensated with a salary similar to the one she was paid in her past role. Kate had no managerial experience whatsoever. Consequently, issues began to surface once it was clear she was unable to match their expectations. All sorts of manoeuvres had to take place to move her into a role, for which, she was more suited, this cost the two entrepreneurs a significant amount of time, money and embarrassment.

The selection process that took place when the vacant position of Project Manager was advertised is another example of Dale and Justin's aversion to risk. A number of capable external candidates were overlooked in favour of two of their best field staff, who were short-listed for the position. I was present during the interviews; it was obvious that neither candidate had the necessary skills, or experience, to carry out the role effectively. After much deliberation, the position was split, both individuals taking on the role on a part time basis. Dale and Justin reasoned that they couldn't afford to lose either member of staff. The decision had to be reversed some time later, once it became apparent that dividing the role was unworkable; one of the Project Managers failed to meet expectations and returned to surveyor status.

Martin's aversion to risk was extremely transparent. His business was crying out for investment into management positions. His organisation had a fantastic product offering (design and development), and it was embraced by the few companies he dealt with. Martin needed to make other organisations fully aware of his value proposition, but was not prepared to bring in a sales resource. When Martin's development work transferred into large volume production, his organisation struggled with output, quality and delivery. Although Martin identified the person needed to solve these difficulties, he would not commit to employing him, despite months of deliberation.

In both cases, there is a reluctance to employ external candidates and create a different state from the one the entrepreneurs were accustomed too. In Dale and Justin's case, recruiting people from their past employees allowed them to continue their strategy of mimesis. Securing additional, and different, resources would have created an environment that was unfamiliar to Martin. I reasoned that all three entrepreneurs saw difference as a threat to their own position, and their identity. It appeared that people that might expose their weaknesses, or challenge their contribution to the organisation, was a situation they could not deal with.

Denise, aware that her offering was innovative and knowing the competition were likely to imitate, needed to exploit her business model quickly. Having early success, however, was not enough to persuade her to employ others, or to borrow money to take her business to the next level. In my own case, my attitude to risk in my latest venture was entirely different than in previous businesses, where I was not as financially exposed. From a personal point of view, my reluctance to keep investing in this business was entirely based on the businesses precarious position, this I reasoned, could result in me

losing a substantial part of my life saving. Various expansion plans were put on hold as I continued to make sense of the situation I was in.

Observing Elizabeth, at close quarters, exposed her inability to make key decisions at crucial times. She used all sorts all mechanisms to excuse her procrastination when faced with difficult choices. She would request more information despite having all of the facts, cancel meetings at short notice, ask for more time, and involve all sorts of other people in a sensemaking role. As a result, decisions were at best delayed, but often avoided.

When a decision needed making, Elizabeth would evaluate different options hoping that the problem would disappear. Involving others and seeking additional information resulted in overload and confusion. Elizabeth, Dale and Justin were simply not confident enough to make key decisions. I reasoned that as most courses of action involved some element of risk, a willingness to accept vulnerability can largely be connected to self-efficacy. Those with high levels, like Mo and Ron, embraced risk, whilst others who exhibited low self-efficacy, appeared fearful of failure and protected themselves from changes that involved uncertainty.

Fear of failure

Kets de Vries (1985), states that "an entrepreneur's rapid rise to prominence leaves them feeling that they are living on the edge that their success will not last." Individuals in proving their worth to family members, colleagues, friends and society, were clearly proud of their achievements. For many, it was a new experience, one that they were determined to hold on to. An entrepreneur's contemplation of failure appeared to stir up all sorts of fear, leading to emotions surfacing in mistrust, a need for control and an aversion to risk. It was evident that the majority of entrepreneurs studied became convinced that their senior managers were incapable of, and therefore not allowed to, carry out their respective duties. This often resulted in them taking control. The deeper they became involved, the more they used their interpretive frameworks to make sense of things and reduce uncertainty. As a result of the entrepreneurs' involvement, the manager's role became ambiguous, ownership was lost, and all forms of decision making returned to the entrepreneurs.

Martin's schemata led him to conclude any form of risk could lead to the failure of his organisations. On the basis his personal finances were tied to his business, there was no way that he could afford to gamble, failure would destroy his home life. Denise continually worried about her business and having to return to her old job, inevitably influencing the time she could spend with her children. Having bought in to a company which at the time was very successful, Elizabeth knew, the blame would lie squarely at her feet if it failed. Dale and Justin could not separate their social and business lives, appointing many people that they believed they knew and trusted. Failure for them, would amount to public disgrace. Faced with possible humiliation, many of these

entrepreneurs shielded themselves from decisions that would result in them being vulnerable to risk.

In all three cases, Denise was different in that she didn't employ anyone else; their respective fears resulted in mistrust, and a need to control their employees. This ultimately led to the entrepreneur becoming far too involved in their business. Their obsessive behaviors prevented each one committing to a course of action, at key times in the business. Feeling isolated and lacking in confidence, many turned to others, to help them make sense of the world.

Confidants

Forbes (2005), states that self-efficacy refers to an individual's perception of their entrepreneurial abilities, to bring about desired results in the performance of a particular task. Most of the entrepreneurs included in this study demonstrated low self-efficacy when faced with business dilemmas. Once they believed that they were unable to bring about desired outcomes, many entrepreneurs turned to external advisors (Consultants), or individuals that had experience in larger organisations (High Level Managers) for help. Although Consultants are used universally in the business world, it is usually specific, to certain projects. These entrepreneurs, however, appeared to need something more than advice, the consultants were used more as sense makers. Research has shown that entrepreneurs often use their social networks to seek information, counsel and help in the course of managing new ventures. (Pineda, Lerner, Miller & Philips, 1998)

I asked Elizabeth if she used consultants,

> *"Yeah, I've used consultants such as friends and past/ex colleagues, because I've just always found it really interesting to talk to people about problems/issues. Perhaps problem is too strong a word, but you know, you just sort of talk to one "oh yes this happened today" and it's amazing how it crystallises in your head when you are just talking to somebody and explaining what the problem is. And particularly, you know me, I will pre-empt, even if I am telling someone a problem, I know what they are going to say back to me, because I'm looking at it from their perspective. Sometimes you just need to take yourself out of the business".* (ET, Int 6:p4)

Elizabeth claimed that the reason she spent so much time with advisors, was not necessarily about the consultant offering solutions to her problems. She maintained that it was about taking her out of the environment, in order to make sense of what was happening in the business, looking at it from their perspective. Elizabeth suggested that rather than listening to advice, it was about helping her to get her thoughts straight, framing events, understanding connections, stabilising data, in order to control and predict the future. She went on to explain how it gave her confidence;

"It's a confidence thing to sort of make you realise you haven't got two heads, you know … to sort of say, you know, no it's not me, yeah, because sometimes, you do, at work, think you are beating your head against a brick wall". (ET, Int 6: p5*)*

The use of the word head twice could reflect the pain she is going through. I asked her if she questioned herself.

"Yes and you just think, is it me? Then you talk to someone whose judgment you trust, and that just reaffirms where you are coming from, and perhaps just gives you that confidence boost you need to get back on with it. To think, no, I'm on the right track, I need to just stick to it, kind of thing…because I think you know everyone thinks you are brimming in confidence, and you know – and perhaps a lot of people who run businesses are, I don't know, but I'm not" – *[laughs]* (ET, Int 6:p4-5)

Elizabeth is using an individual that she believes is qualified to judge whether she is conducting her affairs in a logical manner; an advisor who can help her make sense

of things and steer her in the right direction. She claims, it is someone who can support her in confronting events and issues that she is not used to dealing with, in order to prevent the wrong decisions been made. It also seems she needs an individual qualified to rubber stamp her decisions in order to make them legitimate. Elizabeth openly admits that she lacks confidence.

Les had a relationship with an ex Bank Manager that he would meet frequently.

LW – "*Yeah, I had people.*"

AW- "*Why did you feel the need to? What did they do for you? What was it all about?*"

LW- "*He didn't do anything for me actually*"…

AW- "*But you kept having him back so there must have been something*".

LW- "*He was a nice bloke; he was a nice bloke to talk to, he listened to your troubles*".

AW- "*That made you feel better?*"

LW- "*Yes, it did actually, yes. He'd listen but he never really, the guy was a lovely man, but he never really come with any advice. Can you understand that?*"

AW – "*Yeah, I think a lot of people just need to get it off their chest*".

LW – "*You know you could talk to him and say, "I'm pissed off, this has happened and that's happened…" but he'd never give you advice. I don't think he could give*

me any advice. I used to think sometimes when I talked to him – how was he a

senior bank manager, because he never advised you what to do". [Laughs] (LW,

Int 4:p11-12)

Les' seems to concur with Elizabeth's position; the people that she consulted with did

not offer anything tangible. Les simply needed someone who would listen to his

'*troubles'* and help him make sense of the world. It appeared that the events which

occurred were interpreted in a more balanced way by advisors, who were not directly

involved on a daily basis.

Bennett (1997) offers a number of explanations for the entrepreneur's use of

consultants; (1) wanting to exercise control but needing someone with the relevant

expertise to do so, (2) to influence or legitimise a course of action, or (3) purely for

reassurance. The data obtained from observation and interviews was consistent with

Bennett's views. Consultants and/or High Level Managers (HLM), used their own

schemata to; (1) offer reassurance when critical decisions were being made, (2) conduct

trouble shooting exercises and deal with conflict, and (3) manage a wide range of

stakeholders. The entrepreneurs all seemed to know what to do, but were unwilling to

implement many of their decisions, until they had made retrospective sense of their

choices. The Consultants and HLM's generally appeared to give entrepreneurs more

confidence to act decisively.

My own experience of external advisors engaged to help organisations, was however,

extremely negative; unsurprisingly neither Mo, nor Ron used consultants. Sturdy (1997)

Abrahamson (1996) and Huczynski (1993), all highlight the way in which consultants can

prey on entrepreneurs. The fashions or fads used by these individuals are often utilised,

to revolutionise aspects of organisational life. Observing entrepreneurs following these sessions, it seemed to me that the fads were a way to prove to their staff that they were creative and knowledgeable. The majority of these individuals seemed to need to appear entrepreneurial, and reinforce their identity within the organisation. Abrahamson (1996) contends that the adoption of new ideas stems from socio-psychological forces, for example, frustration, boredom, excitement, and the novelty factor. It could be that the knowledge being imparted helped to release the entrepreneurs from the daily grind, making sense of events and situations.

Elizabeth could sometimes spend as much as twelve hours per week glued to her confidant; analysing performance, expressing fears, discussing strategies, dissecting figures, and plotting courses of action. The reality of what was going on in her organisation was buried; her time was spent looking back at things which had happened over a number of months. Sturdy (1997), suggests that entrepreneurs can, if they are not careful, become passive victims of confident consultants. Many offered advice; this is based on their own interpretive frames of reference, which when applied in context with different organisations, unfortunately often resulted in a wrong course of action being implemented.

In my experience, the involvement of external advisors often has a negative effect on businesses. Sturdy (1997), insists that the relationship between consultant and entrepreneur often fails on the basis that mutual trust is not present. The entrepreneur can have concerns about the consultant's ability to understand their business, the changes that may be required and the effect it was likely to have on them personally, or indeed, the organisation itself. From discussions with consultants, it is clear that they

often believe that they are wasting their time and effort, on the basis that the entrepreneur does not want, or seemed unable to change.

I spent a number of years as a consultant prior to undertaking this thesis. My overriding experience suggests that most entrepreneurs, who appeared unable to complete the tasks set, were reluctant to invest in the projects identified to bring about change, or unable to commit to a course of action. On most occasions, business owners were looking for the consultant to implement the changes required. Many of the projects brought about little change. I reasoned that they were either too afraid of risking resources, too concerned about entering a world that was unfamiliar to them, or simply too engrossed in their respective businesses.

To summarise, we appear to have two fundamentally different groups of entrepreneurs. Firstly, Mo, who appears to make split decisions based on instinct, and Ron who is more considered but still decisive. In the second, entrepreneurs who seem unable to commit to a course of action on the basis that the decisions they make could spell failure for their organisation. The majority of entrepreneurs said that they simply never had the time to make decisions and work on their respective businesses.

If Only I was Free

Being extremely creative, Martin unearthed a number of clear opportunities. He complained, however that he never had the time to exploit them. What appears to differentiate Mo and Ron, from Martin, is the lack of confidence to act decisively. Whilst many of the entrepreneurs spent too much time analysing what might go wrong, and how it might affect them or their business, Mo simply relied on his instinct, and got on with the job in hand.

Martin describes how a lack of time inhibits his ability to be entrepreneurial,

"There are so many opportunities, we have talked about the need to split into different business units, and I'm interested in doing Consultancy. I've got a load of ideas. I just need to spend two weeks away from the business thinking about how I put this all together, putting a mini business plan". (MM, Int 1:p3)

Martin lays the blame on the gaps, as he calls them, the things that would never get solved without his involvement. Mo, however, would simply recruit an operations manager to solve the problems, so that he could get on exploiting the opportunities that presented themselves.

"Andy, this is the picture I see in front of me, hopefully, you know, you may say I'm seeing the gaps wrong or you may say that I've got more than one gap. I think I've got a couple of gaps. There are two gaps that scream out very loud to me; one, I'm going to find very difficult to solve, the other is going to probably be easier because…its finding an operations manager, its finding a Pete [someone he's

being trying to recruit for six months now] type character who can come in and do

that". (MM, Int 1:p3)

Martin explains that although he has placed himself in the middle of production, it's not what he's about; why then has he not employed an operations manager? My interpretation suggests it was so that he doesn't have to face further investment, the expense attached to the appointment, or the changes that may occur from a different management style. I reasoned that he might believe it would make him redundant, or that he would have to occupy a role that would result in him losing his identity within the firm.

"Where I can struggle from a production point of view is...I can switch on, switch off do a job. I can go in, do any job within the business, and I can solve problems but once I've solved problems I'm not consistent enough to revisit it and make it better. I know how to make it better, I know what to do". (MM, Int 1:p4)

Although Martin sustains that with his knowledge he could undertake any role in the organisation, he accepts, that as a result of his lack of discipline, it is unlikely he would be effective. The phrase Martin uses suggests that he longs to be entrepreneurial. What he fails to realise, however, is that in order to do so, he needs to fill the gap in operations by appointing an outsider.

"I'm an ideas man rather than an actual man and I think it's a team thing. If you actually look at the structures of teams, you need one of everything don't you? I'm an ideas man, I'm not a disciplined or structured person that keeps going round and round the loop and is happy to go round the loop, I get a little bit bored… I

recognise what I am I good at, this over here, I could be good at being that. But I would be bored of doing that very quickly, so I need somebody to caretaker that and develop that, so I can actually develop that. So that when I put more business into it, he could cope with it and grow with it". (MM, Int 1: p5)

This is an example of an individual wanting to match the traditional view of an entrepreneur. Martin describes himself as an ideas man. He accepts that he's not the right person to fill the vacant operations role, and admits to getting easily bored. Martin is clearly re-counting the widely acknowledged traits of an entrepreneur. He recognises that he needs people who are competent in different disciplines and knows what he needs them to do.

"Here's a new contract. Well, let's have a look at the contract, Martin. Yes I think it's a good contract, how many men? There's the materials we need. That equipment Martin, we could put it in there, we could start there. This is run of rate, this is how we are going to do it, go for it, thanks very much. Can you tell me what the reject rate is? What is the scrap rate? Are we doing OK? Do we need to change anything? That's what I need. I don't need to be told the problems. I don't want somebody to come to me every day, like Nick does, "excuse me Martin I've got a problem, what do I do here"? (MM, Int 1:p4-5)

Martin is spending most of his time in operational matters because he is not prepared to employ anyone else. In a rather surprising claim, he reasons that he could reduce this involvement to just one hour a week.

"If I have to be involved one hour a day, that's the maximum I should be involved for. I would actually prefer to be involved one hour a week. This was what we planned, this is what we did, everything's ok now. Can we talk about the new projects that are coming in? The one hour a day is about the new stuff and how we move it forward. It's not about, 'did I have to worry about Fred going to the toilet' for the wrong thing, and all that crap, and the disciplinary that I have to do. I need to be able to walk in and go, right, are we on plan? Have we agreed a plan right? We're OK with that right? What are the new plans? Because it's about developing the business, because we're still on that strategy, how are we going to sell out for two million, three million, four million, and five million? The number gets larger by the minute. I can't see that we are going to sell it for much [laughs] at the moment, but if all the ideas come together, and I can turnover five million next year, the figure gets quite nice doesn't it?" (MM, Int 1:p5)

In another bold claim, Martin believes that he can increase his firm's value and realise five million pounds, for a business that appears to be standing still. Martin is an example of someone who sees the bigger picture, but is incapable of interpreting events and situations in the positive way that Mo does.

Mo sums it up...

"You've got to develop a skill set where you can get on, you cannot progress in business if you are too hands on – that's very counterproductive, you know. There's a saying, you know, in business, which it's not all about working… To make real progress, it's not about working in the business, it's about working on the business; and the last 10 years have proven to me that actually it's about that

… improving on the business. … I actually did very little. I don't do any operational

*duties". (*MC, Int 8: p13)

Throughout the chapter the empirical data illustrates how some entrepreneurs are able to embrace risk, framing decisions as opportunities. Others, however, avoid or delay decision making until it is too late, spending their time over-analysing situations. This chapter reveals that the large majorities of entrepreneurs are far from confident and live in a fear of failure; this ultimately affects their ability to be decisive. The chapter highlights the extent to which entrepreneurs fail to seize the moment, despite recognising the opportunities that come their way. Many of these continue in the same manner they have always done when change was needed, and fail to advance through the evolutionary stages of business.

This chapter also presents the way in which entrepreneurs seek out confidants to make sense of the world, in order to assist them with the decision making process. The chapter portrays individuals, burying themselves in their organisation and delaying the process of decision making. Many of these entrepreneurs complained that they never had enough time to concentrate on the business, as they were continually involved in day to day activities. The next chapter draws together the empirical data gained from Chapter's Five to Eight, and applies it to the literature reviewed in Chapters Two and Three.

Chapter Nine - The Reality of Business Life

This section summarises the findings from Chapter's Five, Six, Seven and Eight utilising two levels of analysis. 'Who entrepreneurs are', based on their cognitive experiences and contextual differences, and 'what they do', their interpretive frameworks and the extent to which their retrospective sensemaking influences the behaviours that form decisions and shape evolution. In doing so, it compares the widely held theories, discussed in Chapter's Two and Three, with the empirical data collected throughout the study.

In order to establish 'who entrepreneurs are', this section examines the extent to which past experiences, context and motivations, influence the way in which they make sense of the world. The accounts demonstrate the varied interests and differences between the entrepreneurs. The data highlights the way in which they spend their days coming to terms with, and arranging the intrinsic flux of human action. In doing so, it describes individuals generalising and institutionalising particular meanings and rules (Maitlis, 2005) in order to move their business forward.

The study describes the sorts of irrational behaviours that can surface once entrepreneurs become immersed in daily activities. 'Who entrepreneurs are' can also be related to what they want to achieve – motivations, their goals, often influence what they do on a daily basis. This chapter examines therefore, the range of motivations that appear throughout the study, and makes connections to roles that different entrepreneurs assume, and the behaviours they exhibit.

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To determine 'what entrepreneurs do' the chapter analyses individuals readiness to start ventures, the decisions that are made at the outset, behaviours that are consistent, methods of interaction, and the extent to which different entrepreneurs become involved in their organisations. Throughout the chapter there is a focus on how individuals make sense of different events, the effect it has on confidence levels, and their ability to make decisions at key times. The chapter begins with an examination of the entrepreneurs past experiences, the relevance being that cognitions can influence the way in which they make sense of the world.

Past Experiences

An individual's diverse experiences can affect them in many different ways. Earlier in the study, there is reference to the experiences that occurred during entrepreneurs work life. These cognitions formed schemata which transferred into a range of different behaviours. It was evident that the relationships individuals had with their parents, siblings, friends and partners, resulted in either positive or negative memories. Most of the entrepreneurs used autobiographical memories, the past experiences they and the people close to them had, in order to deal with uncomfortable situations. These memories had special significance; they influenced their life goals 'the mental representations of what the future might be' (Perwin, 2003). As a result, they created extremely powerful emotions (Eysenck et al, 2010).

The empirical data suggests that an entrepreneur's standards for performance, and their moral judgments, are deployed on the basis of their observations and interactions with other people. Mo, Dale, Elizabeth and Martin's cases all demonstrate, that in early life, children are often treated differently than their siblings, this is in relation to rewards for certain achievements, and punishment for poor behaviour. At school, in academia or sport, some were extremely successful, which influenced their self-confidence, whilst others under-achieved, resulting in low self-efficacy. During their work life, some individuals impressed and rose through the ranks, or conversely performed poorly, and were passed over for promotion. It is clear that these successes and/or failures influenced the frames of references of different entrepreneurs.

According to Eysenck (2010), the close relationships we have with others, and the emotions that occur as a result, have a lasting effect on our cognitive appraisals and

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interpretations of situations. The empirical data divulges occasions where entrepreneurs have had their trust broken, or have been let down, in some way, by somebody. Each of these events caused negative interpretations of situations involving the people they employed. Whilst these memories were often stored at the back of their minds, they resurfaced when similar situations occurred. Kimble (1961, p.6), suggests, "learning is a relatively permanent change on behaviour, potentiality that occurs as a result of reinforced practice". It seems, although human learning is dynamic, comprising of individual information processing and problem solving it is also affected in the main by social organisms. Helgenhahn (2005) states that most of our learning involves other people in a social setting.

As well as direct experiences, behaviour can also be, as highlighted by Dale & Justin, influenced by indirect or vicarious experiences. Bandura (1977), theorises that individuals learn from what they see other people doing, this has a direct impact on their own behavior. The argument that humans learn by observing others, goes back as far as the Greeks, Plato and Aristotle (Helgenhahn et al, 2005). Dale and Justin spent a number of years observing their previous boss approach to business and the resulting outcome on his venture. In many cases this, and the feedback they received from colleagues whilst they were working alongside them, influenced how the entrepreneurs interacted with their followers. It appears that their past employers approach, towards their workers, influenced both positive and negative behaviors from Dale and Justin.

Learning experiences, whether they are positive or negative, are likely to influence individuals schemata in relation to what is right and wrong. The experiences entrepreneurs had, result in values, moral judgments and the deeply held assumptions that underpin their sense and decision making (Weick, 1985). To illustrate, Martin valued

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the security that his business would survive its ups and downs; this in turn allows him to safeguard his economic capital. For others, business ownership created self esteem, confidence, and gave the entrepreneurs the respect they craved from their peers. This, as a result, created cultural and social capital. The more confident entrepreneurs believed that they had what they needed to sustain the business and, therefore, able to focus more on creativity and the exploitation of opportunities.

According to Helgenhahn (2005), high self-efficacy appears to be cultivated from learning from past failures, personal accomplishments, and observing other people succeeding in business. Carsrud (2009) and Krueger (2007) both agree that intentions are driven by attitudes and perceived behavioral control. This is also known as self-efficacy (Bandura 1987, 1986).

The Influence of Motivations

The empirical data stipulates that past experiences and contextual differences shape schemata, these results in behaviours and attitudes which influence the evolution of business. Writers such as Carsrud et al (2009), Krueger et al (1993), Herron & Robinson (1993), and Bird (1989), all contend that motivations can also be linked to entrepreneurial behaviour. Although trait based research failed to link entrepreneurial personality as a key component to organisational success, it influenced researchers who recognised the link between ideas and action, to turn their attention to entrepreneurial intentions (Bird 1989, Krueger and Carsrud, 1993); the theoretical position that a person's intent towards an activity is likely to be the best predictor of that specific future activity happening.

Carsrud (2011), points out that motivations are the link between intention and action. They are based on instincts, this drives the behaviour where the goal is to survive, avoid failure, or succeed. Carsrud's research examined what activates a person? What makes an individual choose one type of behaviour over another, and why people respond differently to the same motivational stimuli? He offers two opposing viewpoints. First, drive theories; this is an internal stimulus, for example, hunger or fear, an individual seeks a way to reduce the resulting tension. Second, incentive theories based on an end goal, which pulls individuals towards their aims (achievement motivation). This suggests that motivations can be either opportunistic, or out of necessity. Opportunistic motivations arise out of a need to achieve or succeed at something. On the other hand, necessity is related to survival, or avoiding failure. Many entrepreneurs can ignore opportunities that have a long payoff period; this is on the basis that they cannot afford to wait for a return, due to their shortage of funds. (Carsrud, 2011)

The empirical data suggests that a large number of entrepreneurs use their ventures to portray themselves as heroes and role models, in order to gain respect and acceptance. Many of these individuals suffered insecurity, anxiety, and feelings relating to the unthinkable failure of their organisations, this inevitably destroyed their sense of being. Burns (2007) argues that entrepreneurs risk their reputation and personal standing should their businesses fail.

Dale and Justin's need to demonstrate their capabilities, relating to business management resulted in extending their social life into the working environment. The people they recruited were able to witness first-hand how successful they were in business. The messages carried even more significance when stories were told by people who are involved at close quarters. The study considers the extent to which Dale and Justin heighten their successes from their use of artefacts and monuments.

From my first-hand knowledge, Elizabeth was successful in her former role as an accountant. It would have been easy to remain in what was a successful career. Elizabeth believed that her skills would simply be transformational as a business owner. Elizabeth was searching for an identity where she could add value. She was desperate to gain acceptance, in an industry that didn't seem to take a female at the helm of a joinery business, seriously. Les' goal was to build relationships with large groups of employees; it was his best way of demonstrating his worth to society.

Denise saw her business as a means to spend quality time with her children, whilst earning sufficient money to pay her bills. This type of organisation is often classified a 'lifestyle business'. Unfortunately, Denise appears to be constrained by factors relating

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to her home life, which she chooses to put before the development of her business. Martin's business simply seemed to be based on survival.

The empirical data contemplates the extent to which he spends time managing his flow of cash, and negotiating with the bank to find the money to pay the school fees. Martin has chosen to elevate family commitments above the sustained growth of his business. The data illustrates his reluctance to change, which he seems to believe, could threaten his home life.

In contrast to the other entrepreneurs, Mo's motivation appears to be based on his perceived failure at school. He expresses, it was '*his spark', a need and a real hunger/desire'* to make a go of his life. Mo admits he reached a point where he needed '*self improvement';* he discloses that his desire to get into business was about self-esteem, self-actualisation and respect from society at large. (MC Int, 8)

Preparation for Entrepreneurship

Some entrepreneurs appeared better equipped for business ownership than others. Examining their readiness to start a business unearthed differences across each case. Les became a business owner because there was nothing else open to him, he was clearly not prepared for the demands that a new venture placed on him. Although he exhibited many entrepreneurial traits, he had not received any formal business training. There was no obvious business strategy in place, other than, securing enough work to keep his workers gainfully employed. Les had problems focusing on the needs of the business; he was too engrossed with his relationships with employees.

Dale and Justin's approach to business ownership was to mimic their previous employers strategy, difference, for them, appeared extremely uncomfortable. The business environment in which they operated was rapidly changing; this resulted in what was once relevant was becoming out of date. What their past experiences didn't teach them, was that business is contextual. They simply did not know how to deal with variances to their norms.

Elizabeth was unhappy with her current job and wanted a change. She should have been ready for the challenge in theory; she had the education, understood the problems inherent in organisations, and clearly knew what business was about. Her role as a corporate financier provided her with different business opportunities. She was certainly qualified to determine which of these were worth pursuing. Having bought into the organisation, however, all rationality seemed to leave her as she became obsessed with analysing and encoding different situations and events. Her interpretations of

occurrences caused a range of emotions that would affect her relationships with key members of staff.

There were parallels with many of the business owners studied. Vital research on the market was limited, ventures were often underfunded, and selection was generally based on recruiting people that the entrepreneurs had worked with previously. Throughout the empirical data, it was evident that most individuals were too, involved in' the business. In some cases it was all they knew; financial management was an afterthought, jobs were not analysed in terms of cost, and the owners had little knowledge of the different functional areas of the business.

Filling the Gaps and the Mistakes that Occur

As the entrepreneurs became involved in their organisations, the issues that occurred challenged their schemata. Elizabeth admitted to being naïve, she concluded that entrepreneurship was more than simply having management skills and business knowledge. Most of the entrepreneurs had issues with their staff; ironically, with those that they had recruited from their social circles, and who they had worked alongside previously. Almost all the individuals in the study (Mo and Ron being the exceptions) were embroiled in sensemaking activities. In most cases it affected their own performance and, indeed, their wellbeing. Many of the entrepreneurs exhibited problems with identity; most felt it was encumbered on them to match the established traits of an entrepreneur.

Dale and Justin had an incredibly high turnover of staff, over forty-four people (their headcount itself was only ninety) left in less than two years. Their rather peculiar selection strategy resulted in employees rarely matching their expectations; the organisation lacked experienced managers, in most, if not all, disciplines. The complex processes and procedures made the operation cumbersome and difficult to follow, mistakes became more and more frequent. Ownership appeared to be lacking in most departments, this resulted in Dale and Justin becoming involved in all levels of management. It impacted heavily on their ability to stand back from their business and make rational decisions.

Les paid little attention to the way in which the business environment, that surrounded him, was changing. The delivery of individual projects often came before Finance, Marketing, and Human Resource Management. Les became drawn into the private life

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of many of his staff; this resulted in him being unable to be objective about people. Often, he would secure projects, at a cost too low to make a profit, just to keep people busy. Although commendable from a social perspective, it was surprising that he would not consider laying people off at times when he was short of work. Business life, it seemed, was about protecting his comrades at all costs.

As things began to go wrong, Elizabeth concluded that certain individuals were not effective in their roles. Like Dale, Justin and Les, Elizabeth had problems with time management; this was as a result of her involvement in day-to-day activities that did not warrant her attention. Being embroiled in each of the functional departments, she was far from objective about decisions that needed making at key times. In parallel with Les, she lost sight of what was happening outside the business, once the economic climate deteriorated. Burns (2007), Rae (2007), Wickham (2004) agree that an entrepreneur should be as focused on changes in the environment, as they are on challenges within the business. Elizabeth, like Dale and Justin, had issues with her staff, many of which appeared poorly motivated and not prepared to have ownership of anything. Elizabeth was short term in her approach, having to make the figures work to keep the bank at bay. I frequently observed her being unable to make decisions until it was too late.

Martin argued that he spent most of his time filling in the gaps that everyone else left open, this created problems for his organisation. Although Martin's business experienced some success, it became stagnant. It needed to move to the next level. Martin could not alter his focus from that of survival; as a consequence, he lacked the confidence to invest in people who could have helped him take the business forward. Subsequently, he missed numerous opportunities in the market place. Martin's inability to separate his home/work relationships meant that risk, was never an option.

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The selection of management and the type of capital utilised is the foundation on which businesses are built. Hence, it is crucial that the individuals that the entrepreneurs recruited at the outset could take the business forward through all of its evolutionary stages. Many entrepreneurs made poor choices at the start of their business. In a lot of cases, they took the decision to employ people they worked with previously, or who were known to them on a personal level. This approach often left the entrepreneur with ineffective people in key roles within their business. The tactic of promoting staff into positions that they were not qualified for, or experienced enough in, created issues for the entrepreneur at a later date. In many cases, employees, through no fault of their own, were unable to cope with demands their new position placed on them.

The type of funding to produce working capital was also highly significant, this impacted on the entrepreneurs approach to investment and growth. Those, who were heavily in debt, or at risk of losing their own funds, appeared reluctant to take risk over the long term. They based their decisions on immediate gain, which resulted in them choosing the wrong course of action, when faced with important decisions.

In contrast, those who had either experienced life in bigger organisations, or had run businesses previously, seemed to cope with the issues that presented themselves in a much rational manner. Ron seemed to understand what his new venture needed in order to succeed; he used his experience to make things happen. Mo was clearly ready and able. He had handled '*tough situations, learned to confront and handle his demons.*' His previous experiences taught him how to adapt to problematic situations.

Recognising Inappropriate Behaviours

The empirical data demonstrates the extent to which entrepreneurs spend their valuable time making retrospective sense of events and situations, which differed from their past experiences. These individuals form a view of the world, which in many cases, stirs up emotions, which result in behaviours that shape the evolution of their organisations. Burns (2007) notes, an entrepreneur faces a rollercoaster of human emotions, which manifest themselves as the organisation grows, and the entrepreneur has to take on a different role, with new demands. An organisations culture is often formed, as a result of the behaviour of its founder (Schein, 1985). It is crucial for entrepreneurs to recognise that the way they act can have serious implications for their business. To illustrate, when entrepreneurs lost faith in their employees, they were unable to fulfil their duties effectively. In fact, many attempted to control their staff to the extent that they would step in to stop mistakes occurring. The empirical data suggests that the large majority believed their employees could not be trusted to behave in a manner that would serve the best interests of their business.

Tightening the Reins

Kets De Vries (1985) & Wickham (2004) believe that there is a need for control in most functional areas. Nevertheless, the data reveals that balance is required, as excessive control can become crippling if entrepreneurs do not allow others ownership. The data also highlights that many employees are terrified of making mistakes, and rely on others to make decisions for them. Excessive control creates fear, and infantilises staff to the extent they are unwilling to take responsibility. Throughout the observation period, it was unmistakable that the majority of entrepreneurs found it difficult to distinguish between accountability and control. In instances where employees were motivated, and allowed to get on with tasks related to their functional areas, the respective businesses appeared more successful. The granting of ownership should not be seen as an abdication of responsibility, performance could still be monitored effectively.

The accounts portray entrepreneurs obsessing over controlling of their staff. These individuals involved themselves in every single activity that occurred on a daily basis. In doing so, they were appraising the performance of each and every employee. The empirical data detects the way in which entrepreneurs adopt the process of sensegiving. This is in an attempt to influence behaviour and exercise control in operational and quality activities, and interactions with clients. The data suggests this approach was flawed as, (1) most individuals did not want to be controlled and became demotivated by the shadow of the entrepreneur, (2) the bureaucratic processes and procedures often hindered the ability of employees to function effectively, and (3) organisations suffered as the employees had no sense of ownership.

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Elizabeth relays a conversation she had with a Human Resource Consultant, *"I always remember him saying to me, you know every time you make a decision, your staff will be taking note of how you handle it, and how you deal with other staff"*. Elizabeth usually sat with her door jarred open, this was to listen in to conversations that were held in the office. As I worked alongside her, I witnessed her rising from her seat each time a decision was being made. Employees would often be hauled into her office to discuss the issues at hand. Elizabeth regularly interrupted conversations, challenged behaviors, and prevented her staff using their own initiative. She considered it incumbent of her to analyse the production schedule to ascertain which people were on what job. She would regularly question the changes that were taking place and establish why they were occurring.

Dale and Justin employed managers in all of their functional departments, but still had to step in and take over when they believed that things were going wrong. Dale and Justin's employees were regularly reprimanded for their mistakes. Although it seems that the punishment was designed to remove awkward, dangerous, or otherwise unwanted behavior, it appeared to have the opposite effect. Skinner (1971 p.61-62), theorises, "the person who is punished is considered to be less likely to behave the same way again. Nonetheless, punished behavior is likely to reappear after the punitive consequences are withdrawn".

Martin legitimises his involvement in operational matters, upholding that he is filling in all the gaps that others have left open. It seems that he is unable to let his employees take responsibility for projects going through the factory. In another demonstration of control, Les expects all his staff to come in early from their day's work, to ensure they have followed his instructions. What these individuals fail to consider is the effect that these

forms of control have on their followers. The way in which these employees make their own sense of their leaders' behavior also formulates beliefs, which can influence them to please their boss, rather than doing what is right.

The employees may also lose confidence in their own abilities, the outcome being that they generally avoid risk, and become demotivated in their working environment. This will inevitably have a negative effect on their own performance; consequently it will affect business objectives.

Mistrust

In contrast to many of the other entrepreneurs participating in the study, Ron and Mo are able to trust their staff. They appear to value collaboration and co-operation, and have open communication with their employees. They encourage members of their team to develop problem solving skills, and spend their time motivating and helping employees to optimise their performance. This form of relational trust allowed employees to question the way things were carried out, in order to improve effectiveness. These individuals appeared to act as though the organisation was their own; as a result, they too, became entrepreneurial. Entrepreneurs, such as Mo and Ron, gave clear direction, articulated what their organisations stood for and where it was headed. This, perhaps, is another demonstration of sensegiving used to create a greater unity amongst its members.

"Having all aspects of the organisation clear about and focused on the same values and sharing the same assumptions, simply eliminates many of the complications, disconnects and obstacles that can get in the way of effective performance" (Cameron and Quinn, 1999, p.64).

Many of the others entrepreneurs, based on their experiences, appeared rather negative and reluctant to trust, fearing that their staff would let them down in some way. The entrepreneurs seemed to believe that their employees would not, (1) give them a fair days work, (2) get the job done on time and to the right quality, (3) serve the customer in the same manner they would, and (4) be loyal to the goals of the organisation. In these organisations, trust had to be earned over time. These entrepreneurs waited for their employees to do something wrong and prove their suspicions correct. I witnessed some

entrepreneurs exhibiting extreme paranoia in relation to different stakeholders, both in and around their organisation.

The data illustrates the extent to which some entrepreneurs spend their valuable time trying to catch their staff out. It appeared, in isolated cases, that they gained immense pleasure at being proved right.

Being Engaged in the Detail

Entrepreneurial becoming, it seems, is about learning to deal with issues that occur in a positive manner. Mo contends that he sets parameters, agrees objectives, and lets his staff get on with the tasks in hand. Mo maintains that he does not relinquish control; he simply appoints and supports the people that he believes will take his business forward. Mo is very clear; he is intent on developing his staff in order to improve his business. This is in direct contrast to the majority of entrepreneurs who spend their time deliberating and making sense of situations, in order to gain the confidence to act.

Throughout the research period, it was clear that the majority of individuals studied were involved in all sorts of dramas, unravelling events and situations. These entrepreneurs would continually test their concerns on others, whilst justifying their involvement in things that they knew were somebody else's remit. Entrepreneurs regularly sought advice from their employees in interpreting ambiguous situations. This resulted in valuable staff being taken out of the business at key times. These entrepreneurs were clearly not working on their businesses, spending their time effectively, or motivating employees to perform at the highest level.

Dale and Justin had little concept of time during their working day. Their obsession with sensemaking prevented them from taking their business, which had considerable potential, through the next evolutionary stages. At all times, their inability to make decisions at key times had an adverse effect on their business. Meetings scheduled were either late taking place or cancelled at the last minute. Those that did go ahead were interrupted by constant phones calls taken by the entrepreneurs, and/or their managers, unloading problems rather than resolving the situations themselves.

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Dale and Justin would leave meetings for long periods, often they were not completed. It was clear that the majority of their time was spent fire fighting and solving problems.

Dale and Justin were not the only entrepreneurs that had problems managing their time. The majority were unable to delegate daily issues in order to concentrate on important decisions that needed to be made. Martin, Les and Elizabeth, all admitted to being poor delegators. Les believed he could do everything himself, Martin complained about not being able to take a step back, and Elizabeth owned up to being involved in all aspects of decision making, no matter how trivial.

Dale was charged with the task of securing new business. It was critical that he focused his time managing his sales resources effectively. Dale was extremely creative and knowledgeable; he could have developed his staff to become effective in their roles. Unfortunately, with no well thought out strategy, they simply got on and made calls, offering a service that had no obvious tangible value. Most of the buyers were unable to differentiate between their organisation and its competitors. Although having a lot to offer, Dale was always too busy to pass on his marketing skills, he was far too embroiled in operational issues.

Dale's involvement in these matters appeared to be based on his complete lack of confidence in his employees, to deliver the service he was selling effectively. He was extremely customer focused. Dale, rather commendably, was not content with matching expectations, he expected to exceed them. When the sales team were completing pre-qualification questionnaires and estimates, he would not allow anything to be sent out without his involvement. On the basis that the organisation only had one chance to get things right, he believed that the only way they could achieve it, was with his input. In

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service delivery, he made sure that his promises were, fulfilled guaranteeing that his employees always approached their duties in a manner that would result in repeat business. Dale rarely allowed his staff to make key decisions without his involvement, reasoning that they could make the wrong choices due to their lack of understanding.

Les and Martin had a similar approach in their organisations. They were regularly involved in specific projects resolving problems, such as, material delays and resource issues. They considered that recording variations, producing valuations, and spending time communicating with the client, was all part of their job. When they weren't involved in project management, they would balance the receipt of money with payments to their suppliers. Both individuals were also heavily involved in pricing work opportunities. As a result, there was little time to stand back and evaluate where their business was going, and implement the steps required to improve its long term prospects.

The Blurring of Work and Social Relations

As well as time management issues, most of the entrepreneurs had dificultly interacting in a positive manner with others. As Dale and Justin had little separation between their social and work life, it made it difficult for them to be objective, when their staff were not performing to an acceptable level. The communication channels, used by Dale and Justin, resulted in messages being vague and disjointed. The use of emails and third party communication created ambiguity and confusion. It appeared that Dale and Justin were reluctant to confront many of their staff, fearing they would be viewed in a negative light.

Elizabeth had similar issues; she preferred to use her management team to relay important messages to her staff. Motivations appear to weigh heavily in the apparent reluctance of entrepreneurs to confront issues head on. Those looking to increase their social standing coveted respect at all cost. Elizabeth argued that she could only gain acceptance as a result of the way in which she dealt with her employees. Getting involved at all levels, she maintained, was her best chance of convincing her followers that she knew what she was talking about. Mo contends that employees are more inclined to value trust, and respect their leaders, if they are straight and honest with them. Interaction, it seems, ought to be a two way process. During conversations I had with employees, most said they wanted a voice, so they that felt they were contributing to the decision making process. Ron clearly embraced this, welcoming feedback, negative or positive. This helped him to resolve issues within his business. His approach is based firmly on involving people and making them feel part of a team.

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The data obtained from the interviews, considers that in most cases, employees felt that their views were not only unwelcome, but discouraged. At times, employees admitted that they were scared of voicing opinions, fearing retribution. During an interview with Jamie, he divulged that nothing ever got past Elizabeth due to her team of moles, drivers and informants. It is not surprising, therefore that she became isolated, and lost valuable input from her followers.

The Faltering Organisation

Dale and Justin's business had grown significantly over the years. Their headcount rose from three, to over fifty staff, the business was extremely profitable. Both entrepreneurs made valuable contributions to the organisations success. Dale, for his part, built many sustainable relationships with clients; these were based on innovative offerings and unrivalled customer service. Justin developed effective policies and procedures ensuring that, the organisation not only fulfilled its quality obligations, but supported Dale's promises to customers. Justin managed the effective allocation of resources, gained high efficiency rates and produced consistent delivery standards. As the business evolved, however, issues surfaced in quality, productivity, delivery, and communication. The entrepreneurs had difficulty accepting that things were going wrong, and became obsessed interpreting and evaluating poor performance. Their concerns focused on human resources issues, in particular, relating to their high staff turnover.

Quality assurance was a crucial aspect of Dale and Justin's business. They were dealing with a dangerous substance, which, if not managed correctly, could put people's life at risk. The policies and procedures that they developed were designed to ensure that individuals were rigorous during the survey process. The pressure that the surveyors were under, however, began to result in defective surveys. Dale and Justin failed to understand how their constant meddling affected the people they employed. Employees simply needed to feel supported, valued and trusted.

As the economic climate began to deteriorate, the organisations margins became slimmer. Dale and Justin's focus, as a result, shifted from quality to productivity. Surveyors accustomed to completing three/four surveys a day, were now expected to

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increase their output to five/six, in the same time frame. This inevitably affected quality; employees had insufficient time to produce accurate surveys. Surveyors could not ignore the requirement to increase productivity, reasoning that it would result in losses for the company. The employees were clearly in a 'no win' situation. Low productivity, or lapses in quality, would inevitably cost the organisation money, or reduce their enviable reputation. The situation was viewed as unjust, consequently over a period of time, employees efforts either diminished or, they left to seek alternative employment.

Dale and Justin were not the only entrepreneurs experiencing problems with operations and delivery. Les' involvement in managing projects clearly stretched him too far. Although he employed site managers, he was still very much the driving force behind each project. Les lacked confidence in his managers being able to deliver jobs within budget, and to program. His work load resulted in him leaving key tasks to the very last moment. There were many times when he would have to employ subcontractors, or buy materials at premium prices, just to get the job done on time.

Martin's reputation in the design, development and prototype stages of his offering, allowed him to make significant profits. The following phase was to convert these one off samples into larger volume orders. Unfortunately, the expertise shown in the design and development process was not matched once his team was engaged in large batches. Examining his set up, it was clear that Martin needed an Operations Manager, someone who was able to create effective layouts, improve processes and procedures, identify the right types of work and develop an effective supply chain. Martin admitted that he couldn't achieve it himself, but was not prepared to commit funds in employing a specialist, to grow and sustain the business. In most organisations a lack of ownership was one of the common issues that prevented it from progressing to the next level.

Where entrepreneurs were obsessed with control and unable to trust, their workers shielded themselves from their boss' watchful eye, they minimised risk and went along with organisational norms.

> "Culture reflects the prevailing ideology that people carry around inside their heads. It conveys a sense of identity to employees, provides unwritten and, often, unspoken guidelines for how to get along in the organisation, and enhances the stability of the social system that they experience" (Cameron & Quinn, 1999, p.14).

Elizabeth's production manager often restricted the amount of orders he would put through the factory. He reasoned that taking on too much work would increase the possibility of delivering late. He appeared extremely risk averse. This gave Elizabeth the impression that he was effective in his role; there were very few instances of poor quality or late deliveries. The estimator she employed was similarly cautious in his approach to pricing jobs. He was conscious of Elizabeth's analytical nature, fearing that he would be taken to task, if the projects lost money. The result was that many opportunities were lost, as the organisation failed to be competitive.

From my observation and attendance in meetings, it was clear that employees would not intervene when the entrepreneur made poor decisions, or delayed the process. These employees were often best placed to evaluate the benefits and limitations of different courses of action, but generally kept their own counsel. The delays in receiving clear instructions often resulted in lost opportunities or unwarranted costs to the business.

Dale, Justin, Elizabeth, and Martin, all had problems confronting their employees with issues. The entrepreneurs appeared afraid that their employees may think badly of

them. Poor performance was often overlooked when feedback should have been offered, and innovative thinking ignored, when it should have been embraced. As time went on, the sub-standard employees assumed, wrongly as it turned out that their efforts were acceptable, this made it even more difficult for the entrepreneurs to discipline them at a later stage. It was also apparent that many of their employees were fearful of going against their leaders. On occasions, members of staff believed that their boss was following the wrong course of action but simply kept quiet.

The empirical data presents examples of poor selection procedures being adopted, and a failure to appoint the correct blend of managers. In certain organisations, ineffective managers remained in place, to the detriment of the business. Appointments of new recruits often had to be reversed at a later date. In Dale and Justin's organisation, they resourced, appointed, lost, or were forced to terminate the services of three different sales resources. Dale and Justin maintained that the role needed individuals with industry knowledge. As a result, they head hunted sales people from their competitors rather than recruiting people with transferable skills from other industries. The employees that they engaged worked previously for their competitors, in mainly larger organisations and they had spent their time developing relationships with existing clients over many years. It became obvious to me, soon after their appointment that these recruits had simply fulfilled a role of customer relationship manager in their past roles, there was little to suggest that they could penetrate new markets. Their strategy to secure new business was largely based on contacting customers that they had previous relationships with. These prospects, unsurprisingly, were reluctant to move to a less established business. In the majority of cases, they had long term agreements in place with existing providers, and were contracted for long periods of time.

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When entrepreneurs were successful in recruiting people suitable for vacant positions, there was a failure to train, develop and motivate them effectively. It is crucial that new employees know exactly what is expected of them. In a number of cases, however, issues surfaced, as a result of the perception that employers and employees had about their role, which was often not aligned. It was also clear that adequate training was not provided. Employees were not able to undertake many of the tasks that they were responsible for as a consequence. Entrepreneurs failed to recognise the importance of participation, or the so-called chemistry required for effective teamwork.

The few entrepreneurs who understood the importance of delegation and collaboration, developed competencies, and received greater commitment from their staff. Frost et al (1991), concurs that, 'These familial feelings provide subordinates with a feeling of security that makes it possible for them to challenge each other's ideas' (Frost, Moore, Reis Louis, Lundberg, and Martin 1991). Lynch agrees, 'The way an organization leads trains and supports its members, may be a source of advantage that others cannot match'. (Lynch, 2005, p.128).

I listened to Dale and Justin's employees complaining about the hours they were doing. Many, remarkably, worked four out of six weekends and averaged over sixty hours a week. Dale's stance was clear; they were in a reactive industry and their staff simply had to accept it. Their businesses employee turnover ratio became the highest I had ever experienced in the twenty five years that I had been in business. This was even more concerning as the selection and training of new recruits was a highly expensive process in this particular business. The fees paid to recruitment consultants, averaging six thousand pound each time a new surveyor was appointed, and the time it took from engagement to being authorised to work in the field, resulted in margin being reduced.

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The organization was often under resourced, and productivity suffered, due to the large number of staff being paid a salary, but were not fee earning until such time they became authorised to carry out surveys and/or analytical work.

In Dale and Justin's organisation I witnessed people giving up on life, avoiding decisions, reluctant to offer ideas, abdicating responsibility, and generally performing well below their abilities. Elizabeth lost focus on the deteriorating economic climate because she was too embroiled in internal business issues. The profits the business was making could have been set aside for investment into areas that needed developing. Elizabeth, however, was too focused on reducing costs. To illustrate, at a time when her only sales resource announced his retirement, she, rather surprisingly chose not to replace him. Her need to produce short term profits, to satisfy the bank resulted in her looking to reduce expenditure to generate profit, rather than concentrating on sustainability over the long term.

Martin, Les and Elizabeth all appeared to attach little importance to sales and marketing. There was no well thought out strategy, other than hoping they could sell something to somebody. I was amazed that none of them encouraged their staff to make visits to their valued customers. Instead, they rather naively, relied on their quality of service to sustain repeat business. Customers were inevitably lost; their competitors were far more proactive in developing relationships with clients. Incredibly, Martin only relied on three customers at any one time; the balance of power was clearly with his clients. Elizabeth's only real involvement with her customers was when things went wrong, or when they were late in paying their bills. Dale and Justin regularly carried out visits to their clients, but rarely chose to involve their employees in the sales process.

The contracts that Les' business carried out were, in a lot of cases, actually losing money. I took it upon myself to analyse the pricing structure. It was obvious that the approach to estimating was simply based on market rates. During an exercise to establish a charge out rate per hour, the productivity rates were manipulated to ensure that the business could offer the same rates as his competitors. The estimating procedure was far from rigorous; the price of materials was often guessed, items were missed, products were replaced with cheaper alternatives, and there were few contingencies built in to the quotation. The organisations margins were insufficient to recover their overheads, the company ended up making considerable losses, which inevitably resulted in cash flow problems. This shortage of working capital impacted on all functional areas of the business, suppliers were paid late, became nervous, and either increased their prices, or suspended deliveries. The materials needed by operations were, therefore, late arriving and created bottlenecks and inefficiencies. These issues created unnecessary costs for the organisation, the projects lost money or, their offerings were too expensive for the market.

The empirical data highlights that once an organisation begins to falter, entrepreneurs lose confidence, and the belief in their ability to bring about desired outcomes reduces. Having isolated themselves from their colleagues, many entrepreneurs turned to external advisors for help.

A Loss of Confidence

The empirical data demonstrates that although many entrepreneurs start their businesses with clear aims and objectives, once their view of the world is challenged they question the decisions they had taken previously. This leads them to react in all sorts of different ways. Elizabeth decided that she needed to get more involved in production, her confidence, in the people she employed and the processes being adopted, diminished. Martin toyed with the idea of recruiting an Operations Manager, but was not prepared to pay the necessary salary to the right person. Les didn't understand how his organisation could be losing money when his employees were always gainfully employed. Dale and Justin were frustrated with their employee's poor performance, but were unable to resolve the issues that they had with them. As they pondered their future, the entrepreneurs appeared to lose all confidence in their management team.

This lack of confidence resulted in many of the individuals questioning their entrepreneurial self. In order to re-establish self-esteem, they attempted to cultivate an identity where they were seen to be adding value to their organisation. Martin became a design expert, Les resorted to project management, Elizabeth swapped her role in accounts to operations, I became an estimator, and Dale and Justin drifted between all sorts of disciplines. 'Identity and sense making is a complex phenomena, who we think we are, shapes what we enact. How we interpret, affects what others think we are (our image) and how they treat us, this in turn stabilises or destabilises our identity'. (Weick, 1995)

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Dale, Justin, Elizabeth and Martin, all expressed fears relating to the failure of their business. Dale and Justin would be ridiculed by their social circle and the industry they worked in. Elizabeth's father would lose the considerable amount of money he had invested in her business. Weick (1995) expresses that the shame and embarrassment accompanying failure are greater when the task is easier (Elizabeth acquired what was a very successful business). For Martin, it could mean losing his house and having to the take his children out of private education. These fears influenced entrepreneurs to consider all the things that could bring about their demise, and protect themselves, by closing off the risk of danger.

Ron is aware that many entrepreneurs are frightened of failure; this, he suggests, results in an inability to trust and relinquish control to others. He explains that these types of behaviours bring about all sorts of issues for the organisation. Ron believes that his involvement at a senior level in larger organisations, gave him the necessary experience to consider what an organisation needs from their leader. He admits that it is impossible to teach people how to behave, suggesting, they have to learn it for themselves.

Ron clearly has high self-efficacy. He is secure in his belief, that he is ably qualified to mentor his employees, expand their knowledge and increase their expertise. Mo is even more confident and self-assured. If a decision was needed to be made, Mo acted decisively, his belief was that timing is everything. Whilst Ron and Mo are both decisive, others are much more reluctant to make decisions that could make them susceptible to risk.

Self Efficacy in Decision Making

Decisions that are required at key times during organisational life are generally full of risk. The empirical data demonstrates some individuals displaying high self-efficacy and embracing decision making, in comparison to others, who appear crippled with fear, avoiding or transferring decisions onto others. Life, in the early stages, can be particularly demanding. In starting their business, the decisions that are made often form the platform from which organisations evolve. The use of one's own capital can, for example, affect the way in which the entrepreneur makes sense of things and influences the way they act on a daily basis. This shapes the direction the business is taking. The fear attached to their economic capital often influences decisions taken by the entrepreneur to protect their investment.

The empirical data determines the need to make decisions that arise at different intervals, rather than in a linear fashion. At one end of a continuum, entrepreneurs react quickly, take risks and are forward looking. Whilst, at the other, they procrastinate and avoid decisions until it's too late. Martin is unable to pay a salary and recruit someone who can '*close the gaps everyone else is leaving open.*' He recognises, it is the right thing to do, but is still unable to commit to the decision. This has being going on for years. His reluctance to recruit sales and marketing specialists results in him being reliant on one main customer; as result, change rarely takes place. It seems that Martin is indicative of individuals who are more sensitive to potential losses than potential gains (Kahnerman, 2003).

One of the most common issues raised during the interviews process was the lack of employee involvement in the decision making processes. This is of concern, as

collaboration is crucial in increasing opportunities and improving profitability. The interface between culture and technology promotes teamwork, which can determine a company's overall performance in the marketplace. In many cases the collaborative effort of employees led to the creation of innovative ideas, but the input was reduced once the offering reached a critical stage. Ownership was rarely passed to anyone; there was clearly insufficient trust on behalf of the entrepreneur, who believed that leaving things to someone else could produce negative outcomes. Employees became demotivated and felt 'infantilised', many stopped trying, and just went through the motions, whilst the rest left, to find better opportunities. An organisation, whose culture is embedded with caution and compliance, is unlikely to innovate and create, as it fails to optimise the firm's development of new products and strategies (Ansoff, 1990).

An entrepreneur's desire for applause, their need to control, and their mistrust of others appeared to obstruct rational decision making. These behaviours reduced their ability to focus on strategic development and organisational capabilities. The study establishes a direct correlation between motivations, past experiences, sensemaking and action. There is evidently an adjustment that has to take place from an employed status to employing others; some embrace it others it seems, cannot.

Many entrepreneurs procrastinated when critical judgment was required. They appeared to lack confidence every time a key decision had to be made. Once a course of action was required, most sought the counsel of others to help them makes sense of things, '*we'll be alright wont we*?' '*There can't be any comebacks can there*?' Their reluctance to risk seemed to be bound up in a fear of failure. The vast majority of entrepreneurs turned to consultants to give them renewed confidence.

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Elizabeth, Les and Martin all relied on people whose judgment they trusted. This process, they claimed, allowed them to interpret events in a rational manner, and as a result, determine the best course of action when faced with critical decisions.

Neither Ron, nor Mo, appeared preoccupied with daily sensemaking activities, both seemed confident when faced with difficult choices. Ron seemed more rational, considering each decision based on its merit. Although more conservative, he was clearly willing to make himself vulnerable to risk. Mo, in another demonstration of the so called traits of an entrepreneur, saw opportunities as 'a turn on'. He uses the words like, 'timing', 'excitement', 'buzz' and 'contingencies'. Mo insists he always acts on instinct. It is apparent that he is not interested in the detail. In his latest venture, he assumed substantial debt, restructured the business, appointed individuals he believed in, put controls in place, and simply set about working on the business.

The empirical data challenges much of the literature which suggests that entrepreneurs are heroic individuals, opportunistic visionaries, and confident decision makers. The mainstream literature concludes that entrepreneurs have that something special. The data, however, reveals that many simply do not. It makes known that entrepreneurs are subject to all sorts of cognitive and social factors, and are affected by the effects of their organisations culture in many different ways. Previous approaches, which study them in isolation, fail to uncover these issues in a critical manner.

The empirical data acknowledges that entrepreneurs all have different past experiences, they are all motivated by varied interests, and each individual coveted their own forms of economic, cultural and social capital. When events and situations occurred, that opposed their beliefs, the entrepreneurs made sense of things in many disparate ways.

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The final outcomes of their interpretations helped to form decisions, which inevitably shaped the evolution of their respective organisations.

Chapter Ten Conclusion – Changing the Focus

This thesis concludes that past research is far too prescriptive, lacking the 'critical eye' required to analyse the 'critical mess' ubiquitous throughout the empirical data. The immersion of individuals into their organisations demonstrates that many of the theories relating to entrepreneurs are incomplete, and vague, as a result of long distance analysis. This thesis, however, provides a more detailed understanding of why entrepreneurs adopt particular roles, and the problems that arise during evolutionary change. In doing so, it highlights a connection between cognitions, motivations and sensemaking, and their influence on individual behavior which inevitably affects the development of organisations.

The thesis captures the important and insightful minutiae of conversations, thinking, and episodes that influence entrepreneurs' sensemaking and shapes the evolution of their business. The thesis depicts many entrepreneurs as 'flawed', damaged people, this is in total contrast to mainstream literature which portrays them as heroic and self confident figures. The study documents the importance of an entrepreneur's upbringing, early experiences, motivations and self-efficacy, and challenges mainstream literature relating to linear evolutionary stages. The main contribution is to the field of entrepreneurial and organisational studies, in advancing knowledge and understanding. The study also presents an innovative methodology; this combines auto-ethnography with ethnographic methods and offers a unique insight into entrepreneurial life.

Researchers, such as Wickham (2006), attach great significance to entrepreneurship and its contribution to economic wealth. It is of great concern, therefore, that the majority

of new ventures fail in the first two years. The research reveals, the collapse of these ventures stems mainly from; insufficient working capital, poor selection strategies, a lack of financial control, operational inefficiencies, a de-motivated workforce, and ineffective marketing activities. The study presents a detailed examination of the causes beneath these issues, focusing on the influence of motivations, the roles entrepreneurs occupy on a daily basis, and the extent to which their economic, cultural and social capital contextually influences the way they make sense of the world.

It considers, for example; the reasons entrepreneurs recruit people known to them to work in the business, examines the ability of entrepreneurs to motivate others, and observes the degree to which some entrepreneurs embrace risk, whilst others appear paralysed by fear and avoid decisions all cost.

The 'Theories of Enterprise, highlighted in Chapter Two maintain that it is critical for entrepreneurs to carefully plan their time as their business grows. It suggests that this allows them to be creative, form strategic objectives based on the input from organisational members, communicate with employees about different aspects of the organisations operation, assess culture and its impact on the firm, and ensure that there is accountability and feedback loops across the organization. The study applied these following principles to various entrepreneurs to, (1) observe infrastructural developments, (2) evaluate the extent to which, entrepreneurs are committed to uninterrupted strategic approaches, (3) examine their approach towards functional areas of the businesses, (4) analyse the different behaviours exhibited by leaders and the effects on their employees, and (5) determine a range of attitudes to risk, in order to determine how decisions are made.

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The research considers '*who entrepreneurs are'* and analyses the behaviours that different individuals exhibited - traits. The study concludes that individuals, in different settings, conduct their business in disparate ways. Throughout the data collection period, there was little consistency in entrepreneurial personality, each individual appeared intrinsically unique. Where entrepreneurs displayed traits that matched the mainstream literature, they were seldom fixed, and are often linked to past experiences, motivations and self-efficacy. The study aligns itself to Gartner's (1992) research, where the stories told, all had unique contributions which portrayed how individuals lived out a complex interplay of thoughts and actions, of the circumstances they encountered.

The study examined the extent to which decisions that are made in the early stages of businesses, shape the evolution of organisations, and demonstrated the influence that past experiences and motivations have on business decisions. The thesis highlights the roles that entrepreneurs occupy – classifications are significant in the development of their organisations. The empirical data underlines the influence of economic, cultural and social capital, on the methods in which individuals finance their ventures, and select a team to help manage their organisations. These are critical in shaping their business over time.

Having determined the importance of past events and experiences on sensemaking, the thesis offers an insight into different learning experiences of certain entrepreneurs. Unlike many other studies, the research describes many of the observable behaviours exhibited by entrepreneurs. In addition, it presents the reader with the opportunity to judge the extent to which past experiences influence the sensemaking properties that form attitudes. This inevitably shapes the evolution of organisations. To illustrate, entrepreneurs with positive personal experiences often developed high self-efficacy and

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became confident decision makers. However, those with negative experiences either used them as a spur (Mo), or shielded themselves from risk and vulnerability (Martin). The study determines past experiences can also form as a result of our observation of others. Dale and Justin, for example, imitated the experiences they had obtained from their past firm into their new venture, and instigated measures to counter those things that they deemed negative and potentially problematic in the future.

The study suggests that the way in which individuals make sense of the world, is based on a combination of childhood experiences, positive and negative outcomes, observation of others in a working environment, and indirect learning, i.e. social and the media. The data shows that sensemaking can be related to motivations, what we want to achieve is related to our judgment of others, and our own self-efficacy. As entrepreneurs begin their journey, their beliefs, based on learning experiences, are often challenged. Their behaviour, and the decisions they make, often change when the world varies from their expected state. The study also establishes that past experiences and motivations drive the roles that entrepreneurs occupy within their organisation, which, in turn, influences the decisions they make at key times.

Centering on motivations, entrepreneurs who focused on survival had a tendency to protect. Continual investment into their business was a risk that they were not prepared to take. In these organizations, decisions were often avoided, and the changes required to progress their business did not take place. Entrepreneurs, who felt the need to prove their worth to others and develop their social capital, built monuments and invested in artefacts to highlight their successes. Lifestyle businesses were often constrained by the entrepreneur's family life. Denise, for example, missed opportunities that were there for the taking.

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The empirical data exposes the extent to which many entrepreneurs were unable to release control and trust their employees. Consequently, the majority of these individuals became far too involved in their businesses. In many cases, they exhibited negative behaviors that had serious consequences for their organisation. The thesis depicts the way in which entrepreneurs became obsessed with control, for example, ensuring that products were delivered on time that they and conformed to their clients expectations. Their continual interference inevitably impacted on their time. In fact, many complained that they never had the opportunity to stand back and think about business decisions. The study emphasises the significance of the decisions made in the early stages of business. In many instances, it resulted in unqualified people, occupying key roles that they were not equipped to fulfill, or unable to bring about desired outcomes.

During the observation period, I witnessed the entrepreneur's confidence diminish once the organisation began to falter. Most lost sight of where they were headed, they became risk averse and avoided decision making at key times. The study highlights the degree to which an entrepreneur's disparate experiences influenced self-efficacy. Mo believed in his 'gut instinct' as a result of his cognitive experiences, this led him to believe he could do anything. Martin, having seen his business go wrong previously, could not bring himself to take on what he considered to be unnecessary risk. He was clearly unable to imagine a positive outcome through the investment into new resources.

The empirical data supports earlier contentions that entrepreneurship needs a more critical application, and positivist approaches do not give us the insight into the *'critical mess'* that surrounds entrepreneurial ventures. It is clear that entrepreneurs need to be aware, how their past experiences and motivations influence what they do, once they are placed in the centre of their organisations.

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The study clearly conveys, there is far more to entrepreneurship than simply classifying individuals into categories, examining the different traits they exhibit, and prescribing the way in which, they have to instigate change at given intervals. The study reveals most entrepreneurs seek out roles that offer them a positive identity. Traits can be formed as a result of past experiences, but they are rarely consistent, and often change over time. Businesses evolve over different time periods, are affected by a combination of the entrepreneur's intentions, sensemaking and their actions, when faced with different circumstances.

Methodological Contribution

The thesis offers an innovative methodology based on a combination of auto-ethnography and ethnographic methods. It employs autobiographical memories from my early life observing an entrepreneur of a joinery business, my own experiences after completing a share purchase, and data gained from various consultancy projects. The research also includes the participant observation of two entrepreneurs running a service based consultancy business, interviews with entrepreneurs, and an autoethnographic account of my experiences following a return to entrepreneurship.

Auto-ethnography was used to elucidate my cognitive experiences, and offer a rich description of events and situations that I had observed, and was directly involved in. The narratives of personal experiences present stories that the reader can absorb and relate to. The ethnographic study places the reader at the heart of an organisation and recreates the emotions experienced by entrepreneurs. The visual representations; the cleanliness of the office in the consultancy business, compulsory uniforms worn by the staff, identical workstations, and notes pinned to notice boards, all illustrate the importance of professionalism to Dale and Justin. The brochures, presentation packs, certificates and news stories, displayed in common areas, are all indicative of the monuments of success used by certain entrepreneurs.

The observations and interviews provide an array of data which offers an untidy reality of organisational life (Singer, 2001). The participant observation presents a cultural analysis of a small to medium enterprise; it provides visual representations, stories and rituals to portray a picture of a day in the life of an entrepreneur. Interviews and quotes from other entrepreneurs help us to draw comparisons to the behaviours shown in Dale

and Justin's organisation. Although qualitative research offers too much, rather than too little information at times (Yin, 2008), the empirical data presents knowledge and wisdom, that would not have been captured from quantitative data. Singer (2001) suggests that the knowledge and insights, which stem from empirics, appear to ring somewhat truer and clearer. This study is an honest representation of daily life of entrepreneurs when immersed in their organisations, and offers an entire spectrum of intentions, actions and circumstances. Singer (2001) advises that if you spend time looking at only the best, you will not have a critical eye.

The methodology unearths common problems that exist in organisations, and considers the wide ranging issues faced by many entrepreneurs. There are many examples of unorthodox behaviours emanating out of cognitions, motivations and self-efficacy. The methodology provides a deeper understanding of mistrust, control, and attitudes towards risk in the context of entrepreneurs, and the effect it has on evolution. The data creates important contributions towards levels of self-efficacy held by entrepreneurs, and the impact it can have on decision making. There is an original insight into the relationship between past experiences, motivations, and self efficacy on entrepreneurial behaviour and the evolution of organisations.

Many of the marginal issues, uncovered as a result of the methodological approach, would not have been revealed in positivist research, Elizabeth, for example, acknowledging that entrepreneurship was very much more than pure business knowledge; the insight she acquired by involving herself in the middle of production being 'awesome'. Ron insisting that the experience he obtained in larger organisations had prepared him thoroughly for business ownership. The complex relationships held in

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Les' organisation; the significance of Martin's wife in his decision making process, and Dale and Justin's strategy to promote internal candidates, to safeguard losing them.

The study uncovers and connects a range of contextual differences that would have been overlooked by quantitative methods. To illustrate, motivations are rarely explicit, decisions can be made easily in certain cases but avoided in others, and behaviours are subject to certain forces. Control, in another example, was released in certain situations, but heavily applied in others. The study substantiates that entrepreneurs approach life differently, depending on the circumstances attached to the organisation they are involved in.

It is also clear that they respond differently during the various stages of evolution, and it is apparent that confidence is subject to all sorts of factors. To illustrate, past experiences can result in negative reinforcement, or motivate the entrepreneur to succeed. Learning experiences often arise out of the observation of other people's situations, or can be directly related to their own personal encounters.

The approach unearths all sorts of conflict, and tensions surface through the production and exchange of communication. We feel the pain experienced by Lesley, Martin's struggle to get out of bed, and the stress of daily life for Les and Elizabeth in their organisations. The reader becomes conscious of Elizabeth's self criticism and embarrassment. When Gerry or Jamie is called into the office to '*have a word'* you can sense their frustrations and sympathise with their conflicts of interest. We acknowledge Mo's tenacity and persistence; you can actually feel the '*fire in his belly'.* There is a sense of frustration, as it is clear that someone else will adopt Denise's ideas. The study places you in the hearts and minds of different entrepreneurs. It is abundantly clear that

Dale and Justin take things personally. You can easily empathise with the plight of John and many would consider that Jamie is justified in being scared to talk to other colleagues in his organisation.

Overall, the narratives uncover dynamic processes and multiple realities in contextual conditions. We experience the drive to one of Dale's customers, where he is supposed to be preparing for the potential acquisition of their software business. In one story we sense his lack of confidence, obsession with control, mistrust of others, and overall persistence. We sense his commitment to certain things and dismissal of others, and his overriding need to prove himself to colleagues. Ron's narratives convince us that he is completely in control, and that business is in order. His constant use of the word '*we'*, compared with Elizabeth's 'I', tells us much about their attitude to teamwork and collaboration. You can sense the urgency displayed by Mo at all times, which reflects his decisiveness and dismissal of detail.

The language used in both the observation and interviews, is highly significant. Mo combines the will to succeed '*handling demons, tenacity, persistence and delivery',* with the attitude to risk '*decisiveness, timing, and a turn on'.* Ron's use of metaphors, '*been put out to grass'* and returning to a '*lush meadow'* displays his deep thinking skills. Martin uses dialogue like, '*changing his hats, filling in the gaps, dragging them in the right direction'.* Elizabeth is clearly unsure of herself '*what else do I do, I must do something else'* and describes her business as a '*coiled spring',* suggesting she is simply compressing the problem. She insists that her involvement in business matters is to stop '*road traffic accidents from happening',* conveying that everything is a potential disaster to her*.* Her justification for using consultants, to make sure she hasn't got '*two heads',* reflects her insecurities*.*

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The following statements are unlikely to have been captured in survey responses; Elizabeth arguing she thinks 'she's become an entrepreneur', 'manipulating things to make them worse', Martin dreaming about selling his business for a figure many times higher than he could ever have hoped for, Dale asking if he thought he should get someone to change the locks, when one of his employees left the business, Les' insistence that all his staff return to the yard everyday no matter where they were working, and Mo's experiences growing up. Observation and semi structured interviews have caught people off guard at all times. To illustrate, Elizabeth, '*on the basis I can't give you an immediate answer', and 'this is going to be a giveaway comment'*.

The combination of autoethnography and ethnography provides us with 'slices of total life'. The study provides the reader with a position at the heart of organisations; this enables them to experience the emotions of entrepreneurs. The atmosphere is reflected by the noise of the facsimile, and the murmurings and whispers of the staff relaying the tensions that are present. We can visualise through the fingers attached to keyboards, and the eyes fixed on computer screens - that employees feel they are being watched. We experience the change in atmosphere, once the entrepreneur's door closes. It is easy to imagine Elizabeth intervening to prevent decisions being established, or inappropriate behavior being displayed.

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Further Research

Mullins (2006) reasons that entrepreneurship may not be the path for everyone; on the other hand, this study suggests that certain aspects of entrepreneurship can be understood. Neck & Greene (2011) Gorman, Hanlon & King (1997) and Ronstadt (1987) all argue that we can equip individuals with a better chance of coping with issues that arise in their ventures; the study provides significant insight for those wishing to become entrepreneurs. Zeithaml & Rice (1987), Plascha & Welsch (1990) and McMullan & Long (1987) all concur that entrepreneurship education should cover all aspects of business. This thesis elucidates that, as a large proportion of entrepreneurs are involved in their ventures on a daily basis, they need to be aware of the issues and emotions surrounding general business management. The research corresponds with Ireland, Hitt and Sirmon (2003) that entrepreneurial and managerial domains are not mutually exclusive and that there is a continual overlap.

Further research should explore the extent to which past experiences form frames of reference, which in turn manipulates intentions and actions. It is crucial, therefore, that before individuals start new ventures, they understand the issues they will inevitably face on a daily basis. In doing so, they acknowledge how their past experiences, motivations and levels of self-efficacy may influence they behaviours. Research should analyse the way in which motivations influence the roles that entrepreneurs occupy, and the ensuing decisions they make. Research should also regard the extent to which behaviours such as mistrust and control, can negatively affect employees. Overall, future research should concentrate on the factors and forces that impinge on the evolution of organisations, rather than treating entrepreneurs in isolation.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Project Summary Report

Appendix 2 – Node Summary Report

Appendix 3 – Source Summary Report

Appendix 4 – Coding by Node Report

Appendix 5 – Coding by Source Report

Appendix 6 – Email from Dale

Appendix 1

<p style="text-align:center">Project Summary</p>

<p style="text-align:center">Entrepreneurs</p>

<p style="text-align:center">22/03/2016 21:19</p>

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On

C:\Users\Public\Documents\NVivo 10 Samples

Created By: Andy

Created On: 07/04/2009 16:29

Last Modified By: Andy Wagg

                    05/11/2012 20:15

Externals

Externals\\Written Papers

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Externals\\Written Papers\\Behind Closed Doors	External	Andy	28/10/2009 21:16	Andy	28/10/2009 21:17
Externals\\Written Papers\\Entrepreneurial Motivations	External	Andy	20/02/2011 20:28	Andy	20/02/2011 20:28
Externals\\Written Papers\\Ethnographic Study	External	Andy	28/10/2009 21:18	Andy	28/10/2009 21:18
Externals\\Written Papers\\Methodology	External	Andy	28/10/2009 21:18	Andy	28/10/2009 21:18
Externals\\Written Papers\\Risk	External	Andy	28/10/2009 21:19	Andy	28/10/2009 21:19
Externals\\Written Papers\\Trust & Vulnerability	External	Andy	28/10/2009 21:20	Andy	28/10/2009 21:20
Externals\\Written Papers\\Weiskopf	External	Andy	20/02/2011 20:25	Andy	20/02/2011 20:25

Extracts

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Extracts\\Coding Summary By Node Extract	Extract	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Extracts\\Coding Summary By Source Extract	Extract	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Extracts\\Node Classification Summary Extract	Extract	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Extracts\\Node Structure Extract	Extract	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Extracts\\Node Summary Extract	Extract	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Extracts\\Project Summary Extract	Extract	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Extracts\\Source Classification Summary Extract	Extract	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Extracts\\Source Summary Extract	Extract	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On

Framework Matrices

Internals

Internals\\Artifacts

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Artifacts\\Corporate Image	Document	Andy	29/04/2009 20:31	Andy	06/05/2009 19:47
Internals\\Artifacts\\Fashions and Fads	Document	Andy	02/05/2009 12:04	Andy	04/05/2009 11:41
Internals\\Artifacts\\Information System	Document	Andy	02/05/2009 11:59	Andy	04/05/2009 11:41
Internals\\Artifacts\\Public Relations, Hospitality and Entertainment	Document	Andy	02/05/2009 12:03	Andy	04/05/2009 11:41

Internals\\Documentary Evidence

Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\AJ caught out	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:11	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\Climdown AJ	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:11	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\Holidays Policy	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:11	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\KPI's	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:11	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\Member of staff not performing	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:11	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\New applicant	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:11	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\RE AT	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:11	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\RE Re Early Finish	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:11	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\RE Survey Teams	Document	Andy	10/04/2009 17:07	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails JR\\Unauthorized Visit to the Dentist	Document	Andy	10/04/2009 17:10	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27

Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\AJ	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	02/05/2009 12:33
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\FW Kier Stoke Contracts	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	02/05/2009 12:17
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\FW MCP	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	02/05/2009 12:33

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\FW Re; Gemma	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\Important!	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	05/05/2009 17:19
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\Quality - IMPORTANT!	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\RE FYI - Louis Taylor quote	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	05/05/2009 17:19
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\RE Ivy House	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:36	Andy	05/05/2009 17:19
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\RE NCC ASBESTOS FRAMEWORK TENDER Virus checked	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:36	Andy	05/05/2009 17:19
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\RE Project Managers	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	05/05/2009 17:19
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\RE RE Radio	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:36	Andy	05/05/2009 17:19
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\RE Scotland	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:36	Andy	05/05/2009 17:19
Internals\\Documentary Evidence\\Emails RP\\RE Vacancies	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:35	Andy	06/05/2009 18:27

Internals\\Interviews

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 1	Document	Andy	29/04/2009 20:14	Andy	18/08/2009 08:48
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 2	Document	Andy	02/05/2009 11:47	Andy	18/08/2009 08:48

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 3	Document	Andy	22/05/2009 17:58	Andy	22/05/2009 22:14
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 4	Document	Andy	18/08/2009 08:47	Andy	27/08/2009 16:30
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 5	Document	Andy	18/08/2009 08:49	Andy	18/08/2009 09:16
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 6	Document	Andy	07/09/2009 18:12	Andy	09/09/2009 17:10
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 7	Document	Andy	09/09/2009 17:12	Andy	09/09/2009 17:12
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 8 2009 part 1	Document	Andy	21/02/2010 21:08	Andy	02/04/2010 16:30
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 9 Oct 2009	Document	Andy	21/02/2010 21:08	Andy	02/04/2010 16:44
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview RP	Document	Andy	08/04/2009 15:02	Andy	06/05/2009 15:38
Internals\\Interviews\\Quality Manager - EEL	Document	Andy	08/04/2009 14:37	Andy	06/05/2009 19:55

Internals\\Observation

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Observation\\Blame & Claim	Document	Andy	29/04/2009 21:04	Andy	29/04/2009 21:06
Internals\\Observation\\Contemplating failure	Document	Andy	29/04/2009 20:21	Andy	06/05/2009 17:17
Internals\\Observation\\Heroes	Document	Andy	29/04/2009 20:23	Andy	06/05/2009 15:54

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Observation\\Obstructing rational decision making	Document	Andy	29/04/2009 20:26	Andy	06/05/2009 17:17
Internals\\Observation\\R&J Examples of Control	Document	Andy	08/04/2009 15:09	Andy	06/05/2009 15:54
Internals\\Observation\\R&J Examples of mistrust	Document	Andy	08/04/2009 15:00	Andy	18/05/2009 14:39
Internals\\Observation\\R&J On confrontation	Document	Andy	09/04/2009 14:17	Andy	06/05/2009 15:54
Internals\\Observation\\R&J time spent analysing	Document	Andy	08/04/2009 14:39	Andy	06/05/2009 17:17
Internals\\Observation\\Sypol	Document	Andy	29/04/2009 20:14	Andy	06/05/2009 17:17
Internals\\Observation\\Vignettes	Document	Andy	28/10/2009 21:23	Andy	28/10/2009 21:30
Internals\\Observation\\VT Examples of control	Document	Andy	08/04/2009 15:10	Andy	06/05/2009 15:54
Internals\\Observation\\VT on Mistrust	Document	Andy	18/05/2009 13:22	Andy	18/05/2009 14:24

Internals\\Project Notes

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Project Notes\\Andrew Wagg approved letter	Document	Andy	20/02/2011 20:24	Andy	20/02/2011 20:24
Internals\\Project Notes\\AW - part two pro forma (2)	Document	Andy	20/02/2011 20:22	Andy Wagg	05/11/2012 20:15
Internals\\Project Notes\\AW - student pro forma	Document	Andy	20/02/2011 20:22	Andy	20/02/2011 20:22

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Internals\\Project Notes\\AW- part one pro forma	Document	Andy	20/02/2011 20:22	Andy	20/02/2011 20:22
Internals\\Project Notes\\ERP App form 1	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:13	Andy	23/04/2009 15:13
Internals\\Project Notes\\Info Sheet and Consent forms	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:13	Andy	23/04/2009 15:13
Internals\\Project Notes\\Journal Log	Document	Andy	07/04/2009 16:40	Andy	02/04/2010 17:00
Internals\\Project Notes\\Project Proposal	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:13	Andy	23/04/2009 15:13
Internals\\Project Notes\\Research Proposal on Entrepreneurship mod CR	Document	Andy	23/04/2009 15:21	Andy	23/04/2009 15:21
Internals\\Project Notes\\Research Questions	Document	Andy	09/04/2009 13:25	Andy	05/06/2009 12:56
Internals\\Project Notes\\The Myth of Entrepreneurship An Alternative Research Method	Document	Andy	20/02/2011 20:25	Andy	20/02/2011 20:25

Memos

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Memos\\Chapters	Memo	Andy	23/07/2009 19:02	Andy	15/10/2009 16:55
Memos\\Entrepreneurship	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 18:53	Andy	28/10/2009 21:30
Memos\\Entrepreneurship (2)	Memo	Andy	06/05/2009 20:24	Andy	28/10/2009 21:30
Memos\\Meeting with Colin Rigby 020609	Memo	Andy	02/06/2009 16:29	Andy	15/10/2009 16:55
Memos\\Overview	Memo	Andy	23/07/2009 19:03	Andy	18/08/2009 15:42
Memos\\Reality	Memo	Andy	07/05/2009 15:09	Andy	22/07/2009 13:44
Memos\\Thoughts on NVIVO Structure	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 16:40	Andy	09/04/2009 14:06
Memos\\To Do List	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 16:40	Andy	10/09/2009 17:46

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Memos\\Topics	Memo	Andy	04/05/2009 12:11	Andy	18/08/2009 15:32

Memos\\ Literature Reviews

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Artifacts and Stories	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:12	Andy	12/08/2009 15:11
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\ Bibliography	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:06	Andy	18/12/2009 10:31
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Cognitions	Memo	Andy	04/06/2009 15:18	Andy	12/08/2009 14:35
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Consultants	Memo	Andy	09/04/2009 14:37	Andy	12/08/2009 14:43
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Control	Memo	Andy	09/04/2009 14:08	Andy	30/07/2009 13:08
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Culture	Memo	Andy	28/07/2009 14:25	Andy	30/07/2009 13:32

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Decision Making	Memo	Andy	27/07/2009 14:34	Andy	27/07/2009 16:49
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Entrepreneurship General	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:01	Andy	30/07/2009 13:32
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Entreprenurial Education	Memo	Andy	22/07/2009 12:58	Andy	07/03/2011 21:08
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Ethics	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:10	Andy	05/06/2009 13:19
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Ethnography	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:04	Andy	04/06/2009 14:07
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Family Businesses	Memo	Andy	04/06/2009 15:07	Andy	27/08/2009 16:30
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Finance	Memo	Andy	28/07/2009 14:23	Andy	18/12/2009 10:40
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Grounded Theory	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:09	Andy	04/06/2009 14:12
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Growth & Decline	Memo	Andy	03/06/2009 14:55	Andy	04/06/2009 15:30
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Individual Personality	Memo	Andy	27/07/2009 14:31	Andy	28/07/2009 14:18
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Induction	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:12	Andy	04/06/2009 14:01
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Interviewing	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:12	Andy	03/06/2009 19:17
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\johannissonstgallen03	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:03	Andy	04/06/2009 14:01
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Leadership	Memo	Andy	28/07/2009 14:22	Andy	28/07/2009 14:40
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\LRS	Memo	Andy	30/07/2009 12:50	Andy	30/07/2009 13:02
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Mimetic Isomorpism	Memo	Andy	27/07/2009 16:49	Andy	27/07/2009 16:49
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Mission Vision - Aims and Objectives	Memo	Andy	05/06/2009 14:50	Andy	28/07/2009 14:21
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\NVIVO	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:11	Andy	04/06/2009 14:08
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Operations	Memo	Andy	30/07/2009 13:02	Andy	30/07/2009 13:02
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Opportunities	Memo	Andy	30/07/2009 13:01	Andy	30/07/2009 13:02
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Participant Observation	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:12	Andy	06/05/2009 17:17
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Researching Entrepreneurship	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 17:04	Andy	05/06/2009 13:19
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Risk	Memo	Andy	03/06/2009 15:49	Andy	27/08/2009 16:30

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Selection	Memo	Andy	04/06/2009 14:13	Andy	30/07/2009 13:36
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Sense of Applause	Memo	Andy	09/04/2009 14:55	Andy	04/06/2009 14:46
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Stakeholders	Memo	Andy	28/07/2009 14:16	Andy	30/07/2009 12:53

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Structures	Memo	Andy	06/06/2009 14:53	Andy	28/07/2009 14:24
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Success & Failure	Memo	Andy	27/07/2009 14:51	Andy	30/07/2009 13:37
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\The Market	Memo	Andy	28/07/2009 14:26	Andy	28/07/2009 14:27
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Time	Memo	Andy	28/07/2009 14:20	Andy	28/07/2009 14:21
Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Trust and Mistrust	Memo	Andy	07/04/2009 19:06	Andy	04/06/2009 14:46

Models

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Models\\Individual Personaility	Model	Andy	30/07/2009 13:56	Andy	30/07/2009 14:00
Models\\Initial Thoughts	Model	Andy	30/07/2009 13:38	Andy	30/07/2009 13:55

Nodes\\Cases

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Nodes\\Cases\\Vignettes	Node	Andy	28/10/2009 21:23	Andy	28/10/2009 21:23

Nodes\\Free Nodes

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Analyzing	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:30	Andy	22/05/2009 18:09
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Being an entrepreneur	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:09	Andy	02/04/2010 16:56
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Confrontation	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:28	Andy	09/09/2009 17:10
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Confusion	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:19	Andy	06/05/2009 20:03
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Control	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:18	Andy	02/04/2010 16:55
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Insecurity	Node	Andy	12/08/2009 14:41	Andy	09/09/2009 17:10
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Life before an Entrepreneur	Node	Andy	12/08/2009 14:39	Andy	02/04/2010 16:42
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Momuments and Symbols	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 17:14	Andy	18/08/2009 14:46

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Procrastination	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:20	Andy	02/04/2010 16:33
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Reality	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:31	Andy	18/05/2009 15:37
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Risk	Node	Andy	12/08/2009 14:51	Andy	02/04/2010 16:53
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\The effects of being entreprenurial	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:10	Andy	02/04/2010 16:57
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Trust & Mistrust	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:49	Andy	02/04/2010 16:56
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Ups and Downs	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:15	Andy	02/04/2010 16:38
Nodes\\Free Nodes\\View of an entrepreneur	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 16:55	Andy	02/04/2010 16:44

Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Wishful thinking	Node	Andy	06/05/2009 15:17	Andy	09/09/2009 17:10

Reports

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By	Created On	Modified By	Modified On
Reports\\Coding Summary By Node Report	Report	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Reports\\Coding Summary By Source Report	Report	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Reports\\Node Classification Summary Report	Report	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Reports\\Node Structure Report	Report	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Reports\\Node Summary Report	Report	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Reports\\Project Summary Report	Report	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Reports\\Source Classification Summary Report	Report	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Reports\\Source Summary Report	Report	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41

Results

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Created By Username	Created On	Modified By Username	Modified On

Search Folders

Search Folders\\All Nodes	Search Folder	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Search Folders\\All Sources	Search Folder	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41
Search Folders\\All Sources Not Embedded	Search Folder	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41	Andy	01/02/2013 19:41

Appendix 2

Node Summary

Entrepreneurs

22/03/2016 20:42

Source Type	Number of Sources	Number of Coding References	Number of Words Coded	Number of Paragraphs Coded	Duration Coded

Node

Nickname:	**Nodes\\Cases\\Vignettes**				
Classification:	**Case**				
Aggregated:	**No**				
Document		1	1	6,334	118

Nickname:	**Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Analysing**				
Classification:					
Aggregated:	**No**				
Document		3	7	537	7
Memo		1	1	48	1

Nickname:	**Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Being an entrepreneur**				
Classification:					
Aggregated:	**No**				
Document		7	39	4,194	108
Memo		8	20	1,361	103

273

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Confrontation

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	4	11	1,174	42

Source Type	Number of Sources	Number of Coding References	Number of Words Coded	Number of Paragraphs Coded	Duration Coded

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Confusion

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	1	4	167	6
Memo	1	1	21	1

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Control

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	8	30	3,917	110
Memo	1	7	558	31

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Insecurity

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	2	4	781	56
Memo	1	2	120	10

274

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Life before an Entrepreneur

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	6	16	1,773	52
Memo	4	6	543	111

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Monuments and Symbols

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	2	3	483	58
Memo	2	4	241	11

Source Type	Number of Sources	Number of Coding References	Number of Words Coded	Number of Paragraphs Coded	Duration Coded

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Procrastination

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	5	9	1,045	9
Memo	1	1	327	27

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Reality

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	2	2	79	2
Memo	2	2	294	7

275

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Risk

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	2	8	1,212	18
Memo	3	4	778	124

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\The effects of being entreprenurial

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	6	11	850	25
Memo	6	17	669	58

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Trust & Mistrust

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	12	28	3,546	117
Memo	1	11	1,114	67

22/03/2016 20:42

Source Type	Number of Sources	Number of Coding References	Number of Words Coded	Number of Paragraphs Coded	Duration Coded

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Ups and Downs

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	8	15	2,385	57
Memo	5	7	298	16

276

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\View of an entrepreneur

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	5	12	1,838	56
Memo	7	20	870	64

Nickname: Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Wishful thinking

Classification:

Aggregated: No

Document	3	5	416	9

277

Appendix 3

Source Summary

Entrepreneurs

22/03/2016 21:19

Total Words in Source	Total Paragraphs in Source	Number of Nodes Coding Source	Coded Percentage of Source	Number of Text References	Number of Audio Video References	Number of Image References
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 1						
3297	95	7	0.3136	24	0	0
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 2						
1267	61	5	0.4878	9	0	0
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 3						
6473	273	9	0.4973	31	0	0
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 4						
5997	411	10	0.6655	28	0	0

22/03/2016 21:19

Total Words in Source	Total Paragraphs in Source	Number of Nodes Coding Source	Coded Percentage of Source	Number of Text References	Number of Audio Video References	Number of Image References
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 5						
1101	77	5	0.8688	7	0	0
Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 6						
7920	411	11	0.6435	36	0	0

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 7

| 1628 | 134 | 5 | 0.6768 | 9 | 0 | 0 |

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 8 2009 part 1

| 641 | 11 | 2 | 0.3535 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 9 Oct 2009

| 8875 | 217 | 8 | 0.4637 | 26 | 0 | 0 |

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview RP

| 81 | 11 | 1 | 0.5948 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Internals\\Interviews\\Quality Manager - EEL

| 247 | 37 | 0 | 0.0000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Internals\\Observation\\Blame & Claim

| 12 | 4 | 0 | 0.0000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Internals\\Observation\\Contemplating failure

| 234 | 15 | 1 | 0.9771 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Internals\\Observation\\Heroes

| 318 | 7 | 0 | 0.0000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Internals\\Observation\\Obstructing rational decision making

| 101 | 4 | 0 | 0.0000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Total Words in Source	Total Paragraphs in Source	Number of Nodes Coding Source	Coded Percentage of Source	Number of Text References	Number of Audio Video References	Number of Image References
Internals\\Observation\\R&J Examples of Control						
446	15	1	0.9636	3	0	0
Internals\\Observation\\R&J Examples of mistrust						
984	31	1	0.8643	7	0	0
Internals\\Observation\\R&J On confrontation						
498	11	1	0.9863	5	0	0
Internals\\Observation\\R&J time spent analysing						
681	36	2	0.4585	4	0	0
Internals\\Observation\\Sypol						
66	5	1	0.8133	1	0	0
Internals\\Observation\\Vignettes						
6334	118	1	1.0000	1	0	0
Internals\\Observation\\VT Examples of control						
166	4	1	0.9731	1	0	0
Internals\\Observation\\VT on Mistrust						
391	12	1	0.9982	2	0	0
Internals\\Project Notes\\Andrew Wagg approved letter						
73	32	0	0.0000	0	0	0
Internals\\Project Notes\\AW - part two pro forma (2)						
1021	557	0	0.0000	0	0	0

Total Words in Source	Total Paragraphs in Source	Number of Nodes Coding Source	Coded Percentage of Source	Number of Text References	Number of Audio Video References	Number of Image References

Internals\\Project Notes\\AW - student pro forma

355	64	0	0.0000	0	0	0

Total Words in Source	Total Paragraphs in Source	Number of Nodes Coding Source	Coded Percentage of Source	Number of Text References	Number of Audio Video References	Number of Image References

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Cognitions

665	107	4	0.9012	12	0	0

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Consultants

732	41	6	0.5726	10	0	0

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Control

778	58	1	0.7374	7	0	0

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Culture

3568	166	0	0.0000	0	0	0

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Decision Making

329	30	1	0.9890	1	0	0

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Entrepreneurship General

1656	130	5	0.7600	26	0	0

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Entreprenurial Education

645	94	2	0.5788	3	0	0

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Ethics

281

| 217 | 30 | 0 | 0.0000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Ethnography

| 655 | 86 | 0 | 0.0000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Family Businesses

| 585 | 93 | 2 | 0.5489 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Finance

| 288 | 48 | 1 | 0.5928 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

22/03/2016 21:19

Total Words in Source	Total Paragraphs in Source	Number of Nodes Coding Source	Coded Percentage of Source	Number of Text References	Number of Audio Video References	Number of Image References

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Grounded Theory

| 1113 | 119 | 0 | 0.0000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Growth & Decline

| 513 | 67 | 2 | 0.4331 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Individual Personality

| 335 | 49 | 1 | 0.2662 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Induction

| 29 | 4 | 0 | 0.0000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Appendix 4

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On

Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Analyzing

Document

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 2

No		0.1233	1			
				1	AW	06/05/2009 15:30

Well you know how it is. I get called in "Jamie can I have a word" and you know by the tone of her voice that it's going to be more than a word. So she relays the story of the Xmas do where J doesn't want to go (it's in works time) so V says she is going to make her sit in the office whilst we are at the do. I have the conversation with her and persuade J to go the do. After one drink J ups and goes much to the disgust of V she's been challenged, thinks J is taking the Mickey, V is not going to let her get away with it. So I spend [waste] forty minutes listening to V talking about J, the conversation does as it always does, move onto something else [another moan] V has a habit of apologizing for not sticking to the point but then digresses once again, it happens regularly, there's never an outcome I just think she's letting off steam .

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 3

No		0.0108	3			
				1	AW	22/05/2009 17:59

You can imagine how that went down and I got the… Jamie can I have a word please—

				2	AW	22/05/2009 18:00

I sort of got a whiff and obviously I know Victoria extremely well and I knew this was coming I just felt it coming

				3	AW	22/05/2009 18:09

It does take a lot of …. … I just laugh about it the fact that [in a raised voice] 'ring, ring; ring, ring' - 'Tony, can I have a word….?', 'Jamie, can I have a word?' [laughs]…

Internals\\Observation\\R&J time spent analyzing

No		0.3956	3			
				1	AW	06/05/2009 15:42

R had been to see a client and seen that seen a competitors name in the signing in book. Why had they been to see his client, he would say to me and J that he was sure the client was going to kick us into touch. His imagination would run riot, was it personal, do you think our client has told them our price?

| | | | | 2 | AW | 06/05/2009 15:43 |

In the early days R & J would meet with the team in the pub after work. On many occasions I would come into work and be called into the office to hear what the guys thought about activities within the organisation. For example what G had to say about a policy[annualized hours] introduced to address the massive amounts of overtime being paid to surveyors for after hours work despite the fact that they could often sit around in the afternoons with little to do. I would hear who certain staff believed would leave and R&J hours would be spent trying to guess which members of staff would react in what way.

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On
				3	AW	06/05/2009 15:45

Each time the account was tested in a triangulation process, a first person was asked "what do you think"? Following their response another person was identified as having more knowledge on a particular incident and therefore questioned about their interpretation. Unfortunately the office used for this process had an office door which had no latch mechanism and therefore the action of the closing door was exaggerated and reverberated around the whole office. This signaled an immediate change in atmosphere in the environment we all worked in. Sitting a little away off only murmurings could be heard which rose and fell like the scales of a piano.

Memo

Memos\\Literature Reviews\\Consultants

No		0.0640	1			
				1	AW	06/05/2009 20:04

One entrepreneur spent over 20 hours per week glued to her Consultant communicating her fears, discussing strategies, designing structures, dissecting figures. Gradually she lost the reality of what was going on in her organization as her addiction to management knowledge grew and her interest in the business declined

Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Being an entrepreneur

Document

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 1

No		0.1341	10

284

				1	AW	06/05/2009 15:09

no cash, struggled for work, all working up to this point now. It's been hand to mouth, very little work

				2	AW	06/05/2009 15:13

My job for the past three weeks has been talking to the bank, talking to Michelin, talking to – staving off people chasing money, to gives us the room so that we could pay the wages and stuff like that

				3	AW	06/05/2009 15:16

where I honestly thought between you and me we shouldn't be trading, basically fought our way out of it

				4	AW	06/05/2009 15:16

No I've fought my way out of it. We've been inching away and clawing back, I'm ahead of the game, and I'm not miles ahead just doing enough

				5	AW	06/05/2009 15:17

Filling in all the gaps that everyone leaves open, I've got like 8 quotes to do at the moment or materials to get in, just filling in the gaps, I've got my strategic hat on or my financial hat, project manager hat on. I'm doing a lot of commercial stuff with Bentley to make sure the orders are coming through.

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On
				6	AW	06/05/2009 15:21

If an entrepreneur is someone who can identify opportunities within their remit and work out ways to actually seize those opportunities then that becomes therefore that I am an entrepreneur. If I want to do that and I've been talking about it for six months then I must be an entrepreneur

				7	AW	06/05/2009 15:21

AW - Why don't you err......interrupts?

MM Give up

				8	AW	06/05/2009 15:23

I'm an ideas man I'm not a disciplined der… der… der structured person that keeps going round and round the loop and is happy to go round the loop. I get little bit bored… I recognize what I am I good at this over here I could be good at being that, but id be bored of doing that very quickly

				9	AW	06/05/2009 15:24

I want them to come in and say… right these are the KPI's, this is the value added, this is the profit levels or depending on how you want to measure it, these are our right first time, this is our delivery performance and this is you know how much you know value added your getting or is how much money we are making what more do I need to know

				10	AW	06/05/2009 15:25

If I have to be involved one hour a day that's the maximum I should be involved for. I would actually prefer to be involved one hour a week. This was what we planned, this is what we did, everything's Om now can we talk about the new projects that are coming in. The one hour a day is about the new stuff and how we move it forward, its not about did I have to worry about Fred going to the toilet for the wrong thing and all that crap and the disciplinary that I have to do

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 3

No		0.0549	4

	1	AW	22/05/2009 22:10

Definitely. I don't know enough about it, You might know more—you might know better—Ive had a close look at her over the last 2 years—but I believe her financial control of the business must have been brilliant and her resilience in managing the finance part of the business must have been pretty good

	2	AW	22/05/2009 22:11

I think she's got the …errrr… the .financial control of the business, getting money in, getting finance in when she needs it , her relationship with the banks presumably, she must just have that well and truly under control. And so she should with the amount of time she spends on it. But…but that's the crop she yielded from the work she put in I think.

	3	AW	22/05/2009 22:11

Mmm, yeah, I'd like to think, I'd like to think, that she is fairly receptive to it. But if I follow my own advice on people on never to judge people on what they are saying but on what they do she must be risk adverse…she'd never try anything daring. That thing with Tony Brown—from her point of view it could be a fairly big decision but she was left with no choice at the time and …

	4	AW	22/05/2009 22:13

She probably thought that if she, that she probably listened … and I'm inclined to do this as well. If I find someone who I think knows more about the subject than I do and I'm tasked with having to make decision. I have to take that decision on board. So… but that's me. But you have to pick the person extremely well…and be certain that that decision that they made is the one you should be ………. Getting/hiring good people to be around…. . And she's happy to do that but she's… interesting because that contrasts obviously with her controlling mentality. But people like David Pankhurst …mm—he's probably the best example of ………an external influence…— he sold software to her that she didn't need as far as I can tell. And I heard her saying, she took the decision … she gave the decision to Dave Pankhurst who was the one who was selling her the software

Appendix 5

<div align="center">

Coding Summary By Source

Entrepreneurs

22/03/2016 21:17

</div>

Classification	Aggregate	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On

Document

Internals\\Artifacts\\Corporate Image

Node

Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Momuments and Symbols

	No	0.8292	1			
				1	AW	06/05/2009 19:39

Written Presentation
Capability Document
Folders
Three different types of brochures
CD Cases
Presentation Binders

Decoration
Designed logo on pictures
Picture/Certificate Gallery
Portable Sign

Clothing
Trousers
Shirts
Polo Shirts
Sweat Shirts
Jackets
Fluorescent coats

Aids
Rulers
Diaries
Pens
Mats

Company Vehicles

All Vehicles the same colour with the same logo all brand new - obsession with cleanliness

Premises

Classification	Aggregate	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On

Internals\\Interviews\\Interview No 1

Node

Nodes\\Free Nodes\\Being an entrepreneur

	No	0.1341	10			
				1	AW	06/05/2009 15:09

no cash, struggled for work, all working up to this point now. It's been hand to mouth, very little work

				2	AW	06/05/2009 15:13

My job for the past three weeks has been talking to the bank, talking to Michelin, talking to – staving off people chasing money, to gives us the room so that we could pay the wages and stuff like that

				3	AW	06/05/2009 15:16

where I honestly thought between you and me we shouldn't be trading, basically fought our way out of it

				4	AW	06/05/2009 15:16

No I've fought my way out of it. We've been inching away and clawing back, I'm ahead of the game, and I'm not miles ahead just doing enough

				5	AW	06/05/2009 15:17

Filling in all the gaps that everyone leaves open, I've got like 8 quotes to do at the moment or materials to get in, just filling in the gaps, I've got my strategic hat on or my financial hat, project manager hat on. I'm doing a lot of commercial stuff with Bentley to make sure the orders are coming through.

				6	AW	06/05/2009 15:21

288

If an entrepreneur is someone who can identify opportunities within their remit and work out ways to actually seize those opportunities then that becomes therefore that I am an entrepreneur. If I want to do that and I've been talking about it for six months then I must be an entrepreneur

	7	AW	06/05/2009 15:21

AW - Why don't you err......interrupts?

MM Give up

	8	AW	06/05/2009 15:23

I'm an ideas man I'm not a disciplined der… der… der structured person that keeps going round and round the loop and is happy to go round the loop. I get little bit bored… I recognize what I am I good at this over here I could be good at being that, but id be bored of doing that very quickly

	9	AW	06/05/2009 15:24

I want them to come in and say… right these are the KPI's, this is the value added, this is the profit levels or depending on how you want to measure it, these are our right first time, this is our delivery performance and this is you know how much you know value added your getting or is how much money we are making what more do I need to know

	10	AW	06/05/2009 15:25

If I have to be involved one hour a day that's the maximum I should be involved for. I would actually prefer to be involved one hour a week. This was what we planned, this is what we did, everything's Om now can we talk about the new projects that are coming in. The one hour a day is about the new stuff and how we move it forward, its not about did I have to worry about Fred going to the toilet for the wrong thing and all that crap and the disciplinary that I have to do

Appendix 6 – Email from Dale

From: xxxx

Sent: 28 February 2009 23:48

To: xxxx; xxxx; xxxx; xxxx

Cc: Andy Wagg; xxxx; xxxx; xxxx

Subject: Quality - IMPORTANT!

Guys

On reflection to Friday's quality issues raised by Severnside - it now sounds like we now have problems with JD / AV / JC / AT (to add to AB's last week):

1) Danny - can you, as priority, identify what needs re-surveying and get out to them ASAP

2) Danny - meet / speak with me and Mark H on Monday (am) to discuss how to deal with Client

3) Danny – have you raised AJ's Severnside issues as NCW's?

4) Martin / Mark – can you arrange a surveyor refresher / meeting asap – I also wish to be present (Paul / john can you identify which morning this week is most convenient – if we need to cancel jobs then so be it!) Wednesday would suit me – I think Mark maybe off so possibly Martin / Myself??

5) Mark / Martin – where are we with previous NCW's? I'm conscious that the UKAS visit will be with us before we know it

6) Mark – do what you need to with regard to investigations / suspensions etc

7) Ian – you mentioned a miss by AJ at Frankley Services – again is NCW raised?

8) Mark what resources are needed to get these issues dealt with ASAP (and satisfactorily closed as soon as is practicable)?

I'm sure that you all join me in my opinion of **extreme** disappointment at the recent issues, having spoken to Danny it seems that the "misses" are blatant i.e. AIB lining to heater cupboards and referencing asbestos roof tiles as slate for an entire estate!!!!

I'm trying to be balanced / reasoned with my thoughts as to how this could happen……………but I can't help feeling let down by these guys – we are dealing with domestic surveys not complex industrial sites!

We (the Management Team) are all noticeably breaking our backs to try and remain successful in the face of the current recession to ensure that everybody's jobs are secure – I don't think that some of the site staff can be thinking in the same vain?

On the sales front we've been getting out to see as many new Clients as possible - not to mention tendering for new contracts as well as striving to maintain the valuable

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relationships that we've spent 5 years building up! Issues such as this (as you know) just throw all the good work back in your face – sorry….. but we need to get firm with people!

Being totally objective, I feel that we need to assess the management systems to identify if there are any factors that have contributed to the recent "misses"? Thoughts please We are selling a dedicated, conscientious, highly skilled and innovative service to our Clients – we need to deliver it every time and as Managers we are responsible for ensuring this happens - **so let's work together to get this sorted once and for all guys**!....................The only thing certain about poor service is that Clients will be lost.

Regards

Dale

Director

Mobile: xxxx

Email: xxxx

xxxx

Tel: xxxx

Fax: xxxx

Web: xxxx

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